



FELLED TREE STRIKES CREW CAB TRUCK

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SAFETY ALERT • JUNE 2022

22-S-05

BACKGROUND

On a summer morning in the Southeastern US, a crew cab truck transporting three logging company employees was traveling to the deck to begin their shift. Conditions were clear that day and weather was not a contributing factor.

UNSAFE ACTS AND CONDITIONS

The tracked feller buncher operator was cutting alongside the haul road fully aware that additional crew members would be arriving soon to start their workday.

ACCIDENT

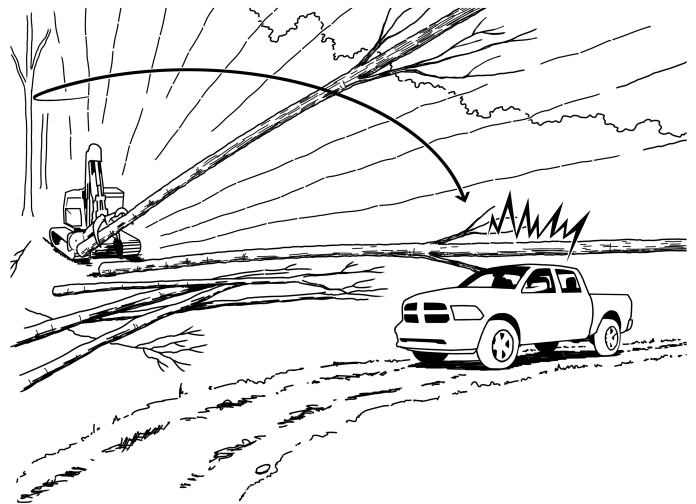
The employees in the company crew cab had traveled approximately four miles through the woods on the haul road enroute to the deck. The crew cab stopped along the haul road before arriving at the deck to drop off the skidder driver close to his machine. The truck continued traveling to the deck where the loader and second skidder were located. Other crew members had arrived onsite approximately 45 minutes earlier and had already started their workday. The tracked feller buncher operator began cutting along the side of the haul road near the deck. The feller buncher began cutting a 20-inch (dbh) gum tree measuring approximately 80 feet in height. As the tree was being severed from the stump, the operator lost control of the tree and it started to fall back toward the machine. Instinctively, the operator used the cutter arm to push the tree away from the cab and toward the haul road. At the exact moment the operator was pushing the tree away from the feller buncher, the crew cab truck was arriving at the deck. The felled tree struck the crew cab and came to rest on top of the truck. The feller buncher operator alerted the other crew members and they assisted with removing the top of the tree from the cab.

INJURY

The crew extracted both employees from the crew cab truck and transported them to the intersection of the haul road and state highway to meet EMS personnel. The injured workers were transported to the local hospital where both were treated and released later in the day. One was diagnosed with a cervical fracture and referred to a neurosurgeon for further evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION

- Always be aware of other crew members' location, especially while conducting felling operations
- Properly assess the weight and balance of trees prior to felling to minimize accident risk



This Safety Alert analyzes an injury in accordance with the chain of events represented by the five dominoes above. Pioneer industry safety experts H.W. Heinrich and Alfred Lateiner developed this accident analysis system to provide a graphic sense of how injuries can be avoided. Their methodology has been accepted by safety professionals worldwide.

Safety Meeting Report

Topic(s) Discussed:

Comments / Recommendations:

Date:

Company:

Names of Employees Attending:

Meeting Conducted by:

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.

signature