



# Slip During Debris Removal Injures Feller Buncher Operator

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## BACKGROUND

A feller buncher operator was conducting a first thinning operation on a summer morning in the Southcentral Region. Conditions were wet from a rain shower earlier in the day. The operator was experienced with all pieces of in-woods equipment, having over 30 years of logging experience.

## UNSAFE ACTS AND CONDITIONS

The operator noticed that his view was becoming obstructed by an excessive buildup of limbs and debris at the base of the cutting head. To clear the debris, the operator completely de-energized his equipment and used the front left tire as a platform to gain better access to the cutting head for debris removal. He routinely performed this task 2-3 times per day.

## ACCIDENT

When the operator climbed atop the tire, he lost his footing and slipped as a result of the wet conditions from the morning rain. As he fell, he attempted to catch himself with his left arm, striking his wrist on the upright portion of the cutting head.

## INJURY

The impact resulted in extreme pain in his left wrist. The operator immediately left the job site and sought medical attention. A medical examination concluded that he had sprained the tendons directly below his left wrist. The doctor issued a wrist brace and prescribed rest for several days.

The injured operator has since returned to work.



## RECOMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION

- Always identify potential risks and develop a mitigation strategy to reduce the likelihood of slips, trips, and falls.
- Consider using a garden rake or similar long-handled device to remove accumulated limbs or debris from equipment.



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*