



# Resort To Safety

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Prepared by the Resort & Recreation Division of Wells Fargo Insurance Services

## Welcome to *Resort To Safety*

This is the first issue of our *Resort To Safety* risk management news bulletin, which is intended for risk managers and safety directors. Our goal is to provide you with a broad range of timely information and topics that will include workers comp, liability, and other risk management issues. We believe our mailing list is accurate, but if you are receiving this bulletin by mistake and wish to be removed, or if there is another person at your resort who should be receiving this bulletin, please notify Wally Shank, whose e-mail is at the bottom. We hope that you will find this one-page publication worthwhile and we welcome your input, comments, and suggestions for future issues.

## Tree Felling And Chainsaw Operating Safety

Logging is the most dangerous occupation in the United States according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This “Resort To Safety” Bulletin offers some safety tips for tree felling and chainsaw operating that will likely take place this spring. Each tree felling project should be assessed by management to determine if a professional logging crew should be utilized or if it is a job that can be safely handled in-house.

### Tree Removal Planning

The decision to remove trees starts with your local jurisdiction. Be sure you have the necessary permits and approval. Even on private land, local statutes may require preauthorization for tree removal, and this gets even more critical on public land such as BLM or USFS. Also, know what regulations must be adhered to, such as slash height or removal, stump height or removal, logging road creation and maintenance, erosion control, and loading area establishment and maintenance.

### Chainsaw Safety

Every resort probably owns at least one chainsaw to remove trees or limbs that have fallen due to wind, snow-load, or ice during the winter season, so chainsaw safety should already be a practiced program. Only properly trained employees should operate chainsaws. Chainsaw safety starts with reading the manufacturer’s operators manual.

Chainsaws are made to be operated with the right index finger on the throttle. A left-handed person who attempts to operate the throttle with the left index finger increases risk of injury because this position puts the chain much closer to the body and in some cases the kill switch is very difficult to activate. If a left-handed employee isn’t able to operate the chainsaw using the right hand on the trigger, they should refrain from this activity.

Protective clothing is a must. This includes hard-hat, goggles, gloves, hard-toe shoes with good traction, and chaps. Slick-soled shoes and baggy clothing should not be allowed around chainsaw use area at any time.

Proper refueling of chainsaws is the most critical element of property and asset protection. Always use a funnel or a spouted gas can to prevent fuel from going onto the hot engine parts, and never start a chainsaw where it was refueled due to the danger of sparks.

Before cutting any tree, determine where you want it to fall and make sure that area and the surrounding areas are secure. Many elements will determine where the tree will fall, such as how it is notched, wind direction, shape of the tree, and other trees in the immediate area that could be impacted. Always check for dead limbs that could fall before starting to cut.

### Public Safety

When cutting a large number of trees, transporting the wood product has its own inherent risks to employee and public safety. All logging areas should be signed or fenced to keep the public out and to allow entry only to authorized trained personnel.

Additional online resources:

[www.osha.gov/SLTC/logging/index.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/logging/index.html)

[www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/logging/mainpage.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/logging/mainpage.html)

[www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/logging/userguide/safety\\_health/safety\\_health.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/logging/userguide/safety_health/safety_health.html)

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/ageng/safety/ae1025w.htm>

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