

Snag Hazard Alert

From 2010 to 2013, 10 Oregon workers in the Logging and Forestry industries died after being struck by trees. Hung limbs and snags in trees are a recurring contributing factor to occupational fatalities among tree fallers in Oregon.

Please observe the following safety tips:

- Scan for hung or snagged trees and limbs in your own and others' cutting strips and communicate with each other about these hazards.
- When faced with a hazardous situation, stop work and seek assistance from a supervisor, a cutting partner, or a more experienced worker.
- If a snag or hang-up is identified, after seeking assistance, work with your partner to identify the best method for alleviating the hung limb, tree or snag (OR-OSHA prohibits working under a lodged tree or the cutting of a tree where another tree is lodged in it).
- Employers should ensure that workers are trained and understand how to safely respond to snagged or hung limbs and other hazardous logging conditions.



Fatal Stories

Case 1: A 28-year-old self-employed tree cutter was killed after he was struck by a dislodged treetop and crushed between previously felled logs and underbrush. The victim had cut a small second growth tree, but it had hung up in another tree as it fell. He was attempting to fall another larger tree when the lodged tree broke free and fell on him

Case 2: A 51-year-old logger was killed after he was struck by a falling snag that was caught in the tree he was cutting. He was working on a steep hillside, and his partner was 250-300 yards away. His partner searched for the victim after he had not heard the victim's saw in 40 minutes. He found the victim dead with a tree on top of him. The victim had 25 years of logging experience.

Case 3: A 48-year-old tree faller was killed after a snagged tree fell on top of him. The victim was working as an independent contractor cutting trees. He had just felled a large tree on a hillside, which uprooted a rotten tree on its way down. The rotten

tree hit the victim from behind and pinned him underneath. He was working alone at the time of the incident. The victim died at the scene from crushing injuries.

Case 4: A 41-year-old logger was killed after he was struck in the back by a falling tree. The victim was working as part of a two person logging crew, cutting alder trees on private logging land. In twenty-minute intervals, each worker would turn off their saw to listen for their partner's saw. The victim's partner performed this safety check, but did not hear his partner's saw. He went to check on the victim and found him face down with a 12-inch diameter and 34-foot long treetop across his back. Apparently, when the victim cut down his last tree, it collided with a nearby tree, which caused the top of that nearby tree to break apart and fall over onto the victim. The victim was conscious when his partner found him, but died on his way to the hospital. He died from head and chest trauma.