



INDUSTRY SAFETY ALERT

Heli Hill Crew Worker in the Bite

Date of Incident: April 13, 2020

Incident Type: Lost Time (SIFp Event)

Location: Coastal Woodlands

Job Position: Heli Hooktender



Summary:

A Heli Hooktender sustained fractured right femur, left ankle & wrist, requiring surgery.

- Large 5.5 ft Douglas Fir fell and bucked but was too heavy for Helicopter to lift. The log was ripped in half (chainsaw vertical cut with holding wood remaining on bottom).
- Wooden wedges were hammered in top of cut to help split the log. Notch was put in end of log to allow space for helicopter grapple to grab.
- Helicopter grabbed the log and tried to split it but was unsuccessful.
- Helicopter repositioned log on top of the rest of the large D. Fir. When doing so, the holding wood was now on top. Log had rotated 180 degrees.
- Log was now vulnerable to "spring open" as there was no stumps/debris holding log together.
- Worker assessed the log and risk and decided not to climb on top of log but did lift one foot up and on the butt of the log for stability.
- Worker cut more of the holding wood and placed a wooden wedge in top of log.
- When the worker tapped the wedge with his hand, the two slabs exploded apart unexpectedly. Worker was thrown off balance and pinched between two pieces of the log.

Key Learnings and Recommendations:

- Do not attempt to rip logs when and where splitting portions could impact a worker.
- Felled in place logs are usually more stable, as logging slash helps hold together.
- Place wedges in ends of logs rather than on top.
- When in doubt, have the helicopter move logs as many times as necessary.
- Consider the use of timber jacks (can stand away) to break apart rippers.

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