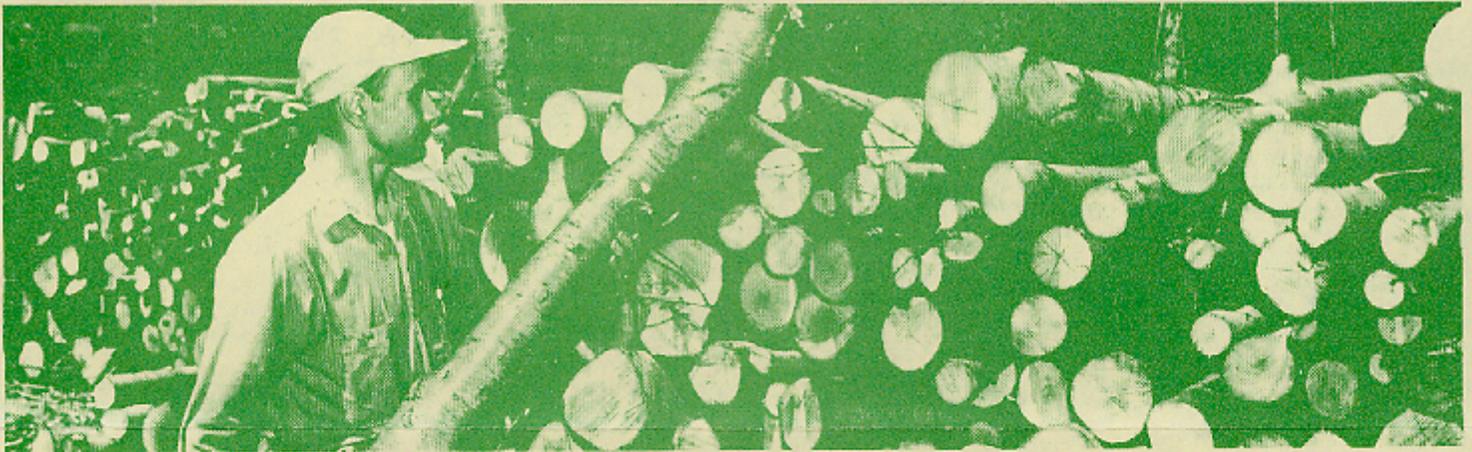


N.J. Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Parks and Forestry
Bureau of Forest Management
CN 404
Trenton, New Jersey 08625



Safe Firewood Harvesting

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection - Division of Parks and Forestry - Bureau of Forest Management



Safety Rules and Guidelines

Always stay alert, working calmly, methodically and with utmost caution. Remember, no amount of equipment or safety devices will stop an accident from happening if the operator is careless.

Take frequent rest breaks to ensure maximum strength and stamina - most accidents occur when the operator is fatigued.

Protective Clothing

Recommended clothing and safety equipment for working in the woods:

Hard Hat and Work Gloves.

Close fitting, but comfortable clothes.

Never allow anything to hang free from clothing, such as scarf or drawstring.

Heavy Boots with good soles, safety toes are suggested.

Safety Glasses or Goggles.

Ear Protection.

Chain Saw

Use a saw equipped with a chain and guide bar of a length suited to the thickness of the tree. The guide bar should be at least as long as half the diameter of the tree.

Leave the chain saw on the ground when starting the engine.

Keep the chain saw sharp and adjusted to the correct tension.

Idle speeds should be adjusted properly for maximum power and so the chain will not rotate when the engine idles.

Safe Firewood Harvesting *Continued*

Felling

Watch the positions and actions of other persons near you. Be sure they are out of range of the saw and the fall of the tree before starting to cut.

Inspect trees carefully for loose or rotten limbs. Vibrations while cutting may cause limbs to fall.

Check each tree for lean. It is difficult to drop a tree in any other direction than the lean.

Be especially alert when there are windy conditions as the wind can push a tree in unexpected directions.

Examine the lower tree trunk for rot which could cause the tree to fall in the wrong direction.

Clear work areas around the tree base of bush and debris for easy access and retreat.

Plan escape path away from the direction of the fall. Watch for the butt end of the tree which may kick back as the tree falls.

Before beginning to cut, make sure the saw is running at top speed.

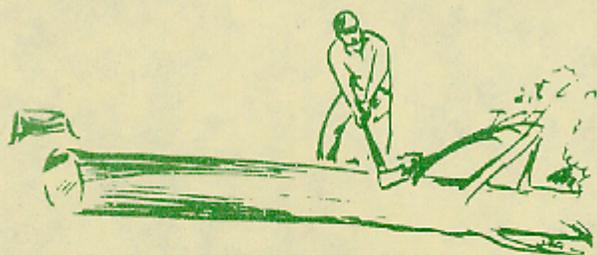
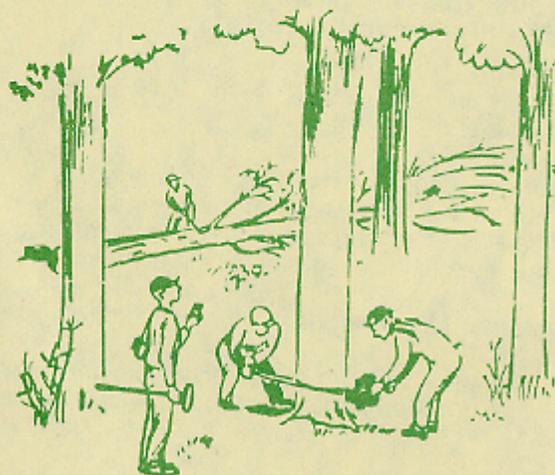
Begin to cut at the base of the guide bar closet to the engine. Avoid sawing with the tip of the guide bar, whenever possible.

The undercut or notch should be at least 1/3 of the way into the tree, but no more than 1/2 way. Make sure the lower cut and upper cut of the notch meet exactly.

The backcut should never cut all the way through the tree. Leave a break off allowance of an inch or two to act as a "hinge." This "hinge" guides the tree during the fall.

Avoid cutting with a chain above your waist height.

If you hang up a tree in another, the safest way to get the tree down is to pull it away with a tractor or winch. DO NOT try to attempt to cut the tree in which the felled tree is lodged and DO NOT try to climb either tree.



Know where others are working and keep a safe distance.

Limbing

When limbing, always keep the tree trunk between you and the saw.

Concentrate on keeping the **tip** of the guide bar away from branches and limbs. The risk of a kick back is greatest during limbing, when the guide bar tip accidentally hits a branch.

Cut branches flush with tree trunk.

When tree branches are bent and wedged tightly against rocks, other logs, or the ground, great stresses result. Special attention should be directed towards these branches under stress, as they can cause binding of the saw, and upon release, can snap back with sufficient speed and power to cause injuries.

Bucking

Make sure the log is firmly in place.

Stand on the uphill side when working in uneven terrain.

If possible, fell the tree across a log or against a stone to obtain a good working height.

If the log is supported on both ends by rocks or other logs, begin with a shallow cut on the top of the log and complete the cut from below. This will prevent the saw from binding

If the log is supported on only one end, and the other end hangs freely off the ground, begin with a shallow cut from below and finish cutting through the log from above.

Sources

Bissell, Lewis - *Hints for the Safe Harvest of Fuelwood*, Univ. of Maine, Cooperative Extension Service Forestry Notes, October 1975.

Husqvarna - *Work Techniques for the Occasional Chain Saw User*.