SAFETY BULLETIN

HSE Initial Notifications - Forestry/ Arboriculture Fatalities
October 2021

- **Issued by HSE's Agricultural Sector to the Arboriculture & Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG); to assist with timely promotion of key health and safety messages.**

- **The details are based on initial notification and media coverage and do not fully reflect the detailed circumstances of the incident. The death has been treated as work related BUT this will be subject to further assessment.**

- **The links to existing H&S guidance are to help recipients promote health and safety and should not be taken to imply any detail about the cause of the incident.**

Overview – Incident 1

Incident summary as notified to HSE or reported in the media

Date of incident:
12/10/2021

Geographic area:
South Wales

General nature of incident:
Treework related (Forestry)

Brief details of incident:
Initial notification is that a chainsaw operator was crushed and killed by a **hung -up tree** during felling work.

Links to relevant published guidance
(HSE and industry publications)

Further guidance can be found on the **HSE Tree work health & safety** web site and the **Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA)** website: **FISA 302 Basic chainsaw felling and manual takedown** (paragraphs 24 to 34) is relevant.

Key messages

Being struck by a tree, or branches, during felling or other tree work is a significant cause of death and major injury in forestry, arboriculture, and other land-based industries. Tree work is hazardous, and the risks need to be managed:

- Anyone involved in tree work, including felling, must be trained and competent for the task being done & tree work must be planned and supervised.

- Do not walk or work under a hung-up tree.

- Ensure that no other persons are within two tree lengths of a hung-up tree. Set up additional exclusion areas down slope if working on steep ground.

- Before attempting to bring the tree down manually, consider if you could get a machine to carry out the task instead.

- Use appropriate felling aids eg: felling lever/pole, hand winch.

- Check trees for signs of decay, broken tops, other hung up trees etc that may affect felling or the work to be done and identify and instigate necessary exclusion safety zones.

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Overview – Incident 2

Incident summary as notified to HSE or reported in the media

Date of incident:
09/10/2021

Geographic area:
Dolgellau – North Wales

General nature of incident:
Tree work

Brief details of incident:
A tree surgeon was killed when working in or around trees. He was found partially trapped under a felled tree.

Links to relevant published guidance
(HSE and industry publications)

Further guidance can be found on the **HSE Tree work health & safety** web site and the **Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA)** website.

Key messages

Being struck by a tree, or branches, during felling or other tree work is a significant cause of death and major injury in forestry, arboriculture, and other land-based industries. Tree work is hazardous, and the risks need to be managed:

- Anyone involved in tree work, including felling, must be trained and competent for the task. Keep other people well away from work areas.
- Tree work must be planned and supervised. Check trees for signs of decay and other factors that may affect felling or the work to be done. Where necessary set up exclusion zones.
- Look out for dead wood, insecure/unstable branches, and broken tops in the tree to be cut, and in adjacent trees.
- Keep the work area and escape routes clear of obstructions.
- Set up effective emergency arrangements - include first aid provision and means to quickly contact emergency services with accurate locations.

Known media report

Man dies after becoming 'trapped under tree' in Gwynedd woodland - North Wales Live (dailypost.co.uk)

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