

Tree trimming/arboricultural industry: Hazard identification checklist

Use the checklist below to identify potential health and safety problems in your workplace. If you answer 'no' to any of the questions you may need to make changes. Further information can be obtained from the practical guidance sheets for your industry.

Look at the tasks performed in your workplace and for each task ask yourself the following questions:

Manual tasks

Are workers doing tasks requiring force, awkward joint positions or repetition that continues for over 30 minutes at a time or more than two hours of a shift?	Yes No	Are steps taken to minimise workers' exposure to prolonged periods of vibration when using hand-held power tools (eg, chainsaws, stump grinders)?	Yes No
Are mechanical devices (such as winches) used to load logs/branches into chippers?	Yes No	Are workers able to vary their posture throughout the task? (i.e. do not have to stand, sit, kneel or squat for extended periods)?	Yes No
Are work practices such as cutting logs into small, easier to handle pieces used?	Yes No	If the task is performed for prolonged periods, can it be performed at an easy pace?	Yes No
Are workers able to perform the task without reaching and with their shoulder, forearm and wrist in a comfortable position (i.e. not stretched bent/twisted)?	Yes No	Are repetitive movements minimised, and/or do workers have frequent breaks or variation from repetitive tasks?	Yes No
Are workers able to perform the task in an upright, forward facing position (i.e. not bent over or twisting/turning their back/neck)?	Yes No	Are the forces/efforts required by a worker to perform the task kept within a minimal possible range (not high, sudden, repetitive or sustained)?	Yes No

Slips, trips and falls

Do workers clean up the work site as they go, in order to reduce the number of things that can cause people to trip and/or fall over?	Yes No
If using tree climbers, is there sufficient climbing equipment and climber knowledge to ensure they do not fall?	Yes No
Are all areas well lit so people can do their jobs safely?	Yes No

Is equipment put away (or collected together) after use?	Yes No
Are all ladders used stable and in good condition and only used for the purpose for which they were designed?? (ladders should be rated for industrial use and have a load rating of at least 120 kg.)	Yes No
Are workers provided with or instructed to wear footwear that is suitable for the work environment?	Yes No

Chemicals

Have you obtained a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for all the chemicals used in your workplace?	Yes No
Have you read each SDS and identified which chemicals are 'hazardous chemicals'?	Yes No
Do you have a register with a list of the hazardous chemical used and a copy of the SDS for each chemical?	Yes No
Is a copy of the SDS for each hazardous chemical available near where it is used?	Yes No
Are hazardous chemicals stored according to the storage requirements detailed in the SDS and containers are tightly closed when not in use?	Yes No

Have you identified ways to prevent people being exposed to hazardous chemicals and put those controls in place?	Yes No
Have you identified any hazardous chemicals for which you have to provide health monitoring?	Yes No
Do ALL hazardous chemical containers have a label showing what they contain?	Yes No
Have you given workers using hazardous chemicals training in how to use those hazardous chemicals safely?	Yes No
Have you developed a procedure for the management of hazardous chemical spills or ruptures eg obtained a spills kit, emergency planning?	Yes No

Noise

Have sources of noise been identified and has the noise being generated been eliminated or at least minimised?	Yes No
Where it is not possible to reduce the noise levels, are employees provided with hearing protection and trained to use it?	Yes No
Do workers have difficulty in communicating with each other during times of excessive noise exposure?	Yes No

Are there signs indicating noisy areas or equipment and that hearing protection is required?	Yes No
Have steps been taken to ensure that 'critical' situations (i.e. commands when cutting a tree, danger etc.) are able to be communicated between workers at all times?	Yes No

Traffic control/public protection

Are controls used to ensure that members of the public can not access high risk areas (e.g. tree cutting, stump grinding, elevated work)?	Yes No
Are signs used to identify tree cutting operations in progress or road closures?	Yes No

Is debris removed from public access areas (eg, footpaths etc)?	Yes No
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Machinery and equipment

Does all equipment have operational safety devices to prevent operators and others accessing hazardous parts?	Yes No
Is your equipment regularly serviced and maintained according to the manufacturer's instructions?	Yes No
Is there an isolation or disengaging procedure in place when cleaning or maintenance is performed?	Yes No
Are all operators of equipment instructed, trained and supervised in how to use it safely?	Yes No

Are exclusion zones at ground level used around elevated work, chain saw use and/or stump grinder operation to keep people away from the high risk area?	Yes No
Do operators of equipment have the appropriate 'ticket' where necessary (e.g. chainsaws, elevated work platforms etc.)?	Yes No
Is there adequate work space around equipment and is it on a stable foundation to prevent it moving during operation?	Yes No
Is equipment only used for its intended purpose?	Yes No

Electrical

<i>Work near overhead power lines:</i>	
Are suitable controls in place to ensure that people, equipment and falling tree parts do not enter the exclusion zone around the power lines?	Yes No
Are workers who work around overhead power lines trained in electrical awareness issues?	Yes No
Are damaged equipment, plugs, leads and/or sockets immediately removed from service?	Yes No

<i>Work not near overhead power lines (eg, in the workshop or office):</i>	
Is electrical equipment inspected and tested by a competent person (e.g. electrician) and/or connected through a safety switch?	Yes No
Is the safety switch regularly inspected and tested?	Yes No

Heat stress/ultra violet (UV) protection

Is enough cool water made available to workers, especially in the summer months?	Yes No	Is work structured, where possible, to avoid the heaviest, most labour intensive tasks in the hottest part of the day?	Yes No
Are cool, shaded rest areas available for workers?	Yes No	Are workers encouraged to wear light-weight, light-coloured and loose fitting clothing in hot areas?	Yes No
Are workers' characteristics taken into account when allocating jobs? (i.e. age, weight, physical fitness, medical conditions, acclimatisation, etc)	Yes No	Is ultra violet radiation managed at the work site (i.e. shade, sunscreen, appropriate clothing, hats etc)?	Yes No
Do workers know how to recognise the signs of heat stress	Yes No	Are workers provided with information and training on work practices when working in hot environments?	Yes No

First aid

Is first aid equipment available at the workplace?	Yes No	Is the first aid kit regularly checked and items replaced if they are no longer usable (or out of date)?	Yes No
Are the contents of the first aid kit/s appropriate for the types of injuries that may occur at the workplace?	Yes No	Do workers have access to people trained in first-aid?	Yes No
Are procedures in place to address any people with allergies to insects, plants, etc.?	Yes No		

Emergency procedures

Is there an emergency response plan and procedure to cover possible emergencies for the business?	Yes No	Are appropriate fire extinguishers available and regularly inspected?	Yes No
Is the evacuation plan and procedure displayed in the workplace?	Yes No	If tree climbers are used, is there sufficient climbing equipment and another trained climber available to rescue a tree climber injured and/or stuck in a tree?	Yes No
Are workers, and anyone else who is at the workplace for extended periods, (e.g. contractors) trained in the plan and procedure?	Yes No	Is there a procedure for responding to and recording incidents/injuries?	Yes No
Is there an effective means of communication available for remote or isolated workers? (e.g. mobile phone, satellite phone, UHF radio)	Yes No		

Site assessment

Have you fully assessed the integrity of the tree to be worked upon, prior to workers commencing work?	Yes No
Have you assessed the site to ensure safety of people, and protection of buildings/equipment/services?	Yes No

Have you determined the MOST appropriate method of work for this tree and environment, given all the variables?	Yes No
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