# CSI Country Wide Case Study Safety Strategy Discussion

# **Construction Safety Investigator**

#### **Instructions**

The objective of this tool is to provide field supervisors with information to proactively engage workers and discuss safety related concerns that they may encounter. Safety discussions should not be limited to the subject above and should pertain to the activities that workers will be involved in that may have the potential for safety related exposures.

#### Case Day:

June 2009

### **Accident Type:**

Hand and Power Tool Accident - Chainsaw

# Relevant laws, rules and codes may include:

29CFR 1926.20(a)(1), 1926.21(b)(2), Manufacturer's recommendations and safe operating procedures

#### Case:

A worker was killed when he was struck in the neck by the kickback of the chainsaw he was using.

# **Accident Detail:**

Two workers were assigned to clear trees on a small section of a property as part of a site clearing operation for a new warehouse facility. On the morning of the accident, the workers arrived at the site and parked their truck and chipping machine near the tree where they were to begin work.

At the start of the job, the worker (deceased) used a harness and climbed the tree he was to take down first. Using a chainsaw, he began cutting branches down while his coworker stayed below to feed them into the chipper.

While cutting the branches up in the tree, it is assumed that the chainsaw may have hit another branch, which caused it to kick back and go out of control, hitting him in the neck and severing a major artery.

## **Reconstructive Safety Evaluation:**

- What are some of the possible causes of the accident being discussed?
- What actions could have been taken that might have prevented this accident from occurring?



#### **Accident Scene Conclusion:**

The investigation revealed that the worker was operating the chainsaw correctly, had the relevant training to climb trees and was properly trained in using the chainsaw. Investigators determined the accident was not due to an equipment malfunction or the way in which the worker was using it.

## **Preventive Safety Measures Include:**

- All operations are preplanned using a Job Safety Task Analysis (JSTA) to ensure potential safety hazards associated with an
  operation are identified and appropriate steps are taken to eliminate or control them.
- Workers should be trained in the hazards of the work they are to perform, the personal protective equipment and safe work procedures necessary to perform their assigned tasks.
- To prevent kickback, always follow the manufacturers safety procedures such as the following:
  - The saw should be held firmly with both hands, keeping the arm straight and stable.
  - Only use saws equipped with chain brake, anti-kickback chain, or other anti-kickback device.
  - The work area is free from obstructions that can get caught in the chain.
  - Always cut using the lower part of the saw blade (not with the tip or nose).
  - Keep the saw and chain well maintained and sharp.
  - When cutting always enter and leave the cut at a high speed.
  - Never use the saw to cut above chest height, the saw is too close to your face and head.
  - Do not use the saw to cut through brush or shrubbery.

Attendance Roster					

Reference: This case is fictitious, and any resemblance to any persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental. However, the type of accident described in this case summary happens all too often on construction sites.

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