

# **Sí Se: Salud y Seguridad en el Trabajo**

## **Health and Safety Education for Forest Workers**

**Staying safe at work and your rights on the job**



A joint project of the Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters (AFWH) and  
The Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP) at the University of California at Berkeley

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The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), and  
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## About this program

This pilot program has been developed to help forest workers find ways to protect themselves from getting hurt or sick because of their work, including making their overall working conditions safer. Employers have the primary responsibility for providing a safe and healthy place to work, including providing the protective equipment needed, providing training for workers, and establishing policies for how to do the work safely, such as appropriate pace, having workers not work too close together, fire prevention policies, etc.

In this program, you will find an overview of the hazards that forest workers face on the job, basic information on your rights and how you can use them, as well as tips for other things you can do to improve your work conditions. The workshops in this program focus on some of the key hazards that forest workers have told us are most important: working with chainsaws, working in very hot or very cold weather, understanding your job health and safety rights, and understanding what to do when you get hurt, so injuries don't get worse. We hope to be able to add more information about other topics in the future. The information is tailored for workers in Oregon, but most of it is relevant for forest workers throughout the U.S.

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# INTRODUCTION

*One day, several of us were clearing brush on land where we could hardly walk through it. We had to get the job done that day. Our tools are old and cheap and don't work very well. So we were working as fast as we could, and didn't take any breaks. Then Julio cut his leg with the chainsaw when it slipped. The chaps he was wearing were worn out and didn't stop the cut. We helped him as much as we could and then just kept going, even Julio. If we stop working to report the injury, we won't get paid.*

-- Forest worker

## Forest work is hard work

**Forest workers face many hazards in their job.** Equipment like chainsaws can cause very serious injuries. Workers can slip in the mud, trip over logs, or be hit by falling branches. Lifting and using chainsaws and fuel containers over and over can lead to back aches and strains on other parts of the body. There are also other hazards in forest work that can make you sick or stress your body. These include working in very hot and very cold weather; noise from chainsaws; insect stings or bites; and getting sick from drinking unclean water.

**All of these hazards can be made worse by the poor working conditions** that are commonly faced by forest workers. Forest workers often have to work long hours, at a fast pace, without the opportunity to take breaks. There are often not enough people to do the job which means workers end up working harder without help.

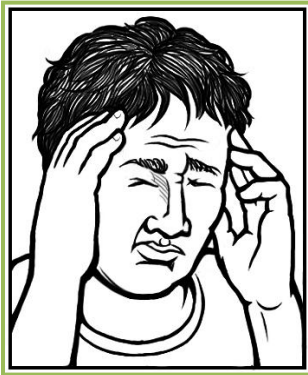
**Forest work is hard work. Consequently, a lot of forest workers are injured on the job.**





Common Hazards in Forest Work	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangerous tools and equipment such as chainsaws</li> <li>• Lifting heavy equipment, logs or debris</li> <li>• Slip, trip and fall hazards</li> <li>• Falling trees and branches</li> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Hot and cold weather</li> <li>• Wild animals (rattle snakes, bears, cougars)</li> <li>• Insect bites and stings</li> <li>• Poison oak and poison ivy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pesticides</li> <li>• Fire danger</li> <li>• Working too close together</li> <li>• Unsafe work conditions (speed, long hours, no breaks, not enough people, forced overtime)</li> <li>• Traffic accidents</li> <li>• Lack of access to clean water and toilets</li> <li>• Working when injured</li> </ul>

**How does working fast and long hours affect the body?** Many forest workers work long hours without sufficient breaks during the day. They may also be required to work more quickly than is safe. How do these unsafe work conditions affect the body?



Our bodies and minds suffer when we do not have enough time to rest, eat well, sleep and spend time with our friends and families. Working too fast or for too many hours at a time leads to exhaustion and more accidents on the job. Constant pressure at work can make us feel tense and nervous at home and at work. We call this feeling “stress” and it can lead to a variety of physical and mental health problems.

Forest workers often describe other poor working conditions as well. These include supervisors who shout insults and physically threaten workers in order to force them to work overtime; not having the right equipment to do the job; and not being able to drink water and take bathroom breaks.



Addressing these problems as well as other health and safety hazards is an essential step toward reducing the high rate of injuries and stress among forest workers. In this booklet and program, you will learn about ways to reduce the hazards faced by forest workers, what rights workers have to health and safety on the job, and resources and strategies for taking action to protect the health and safety of forest workers.

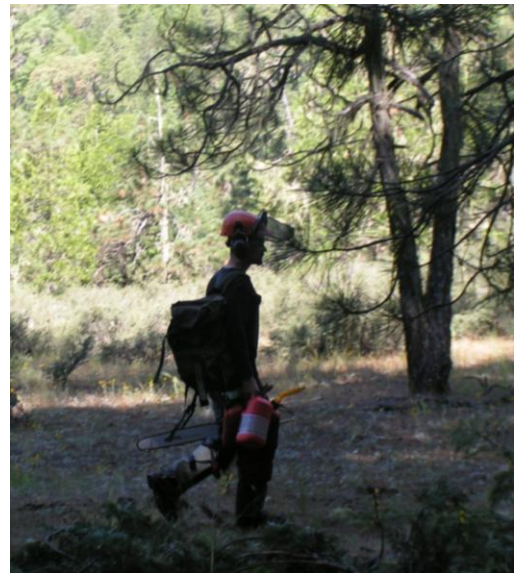
# WORKERS HAVE RIGHTS ON THE JOB

## What are my health and safety rights on the job?

**OSHA -- the Occupational Safety and Health Administration** -- is the federal government agency established to protect workers from health and safety hazards. Oregon also has a state OSHA program. Both federal and Oregon OSHA require employers to provide a workplace that is free from hazards and meets health and safety standards.

### In Oregon, the law also says that your employer must provide:

- **Training** to ensure you are able to safely operate machines, tools and equipment you need to do your job.
- **Information about any hazards** you might be exposed to, what is being done to protect you and how you can protect yourself.
- **Protective equipment** that is necessary to do the job safely. In forest work, this usually includes hard hats, eye and face protection, gloves, chaps, safety shoes, and hearing protection.
- **A system for workers to report hazards without fear** of being fired or punished in any way.



### You also have the right to:

- Discuss health and safety problems with your co-workers
- Report hazards to Oregon OSHA
- Refuse to work if the job is immediately dangerous to your life or health
- Report hazards or injuries without fear of reprisal
- File a health and safety complaint with Oregon OSHA
- Protection against discrimination for using your health and safety rights
- File a claim for workers' compensation if you get sick or injured because of your job.

You have a legal right to a safe job. **It doesn't matter what your immigration status is**, you still have legal rights. For information on how to exercise your right to a safe workplace, see page 8 of this booklet. Information about workers' compensation benefits is on page 25.

## What are my safety responsibilities as a worker?

- Follow all safety rules that apply to your job, including using safety equipment and protective clothing when needed.
- Report any safety or health hazards to your supervisor or your safety committee.
- Know what to do in an emergency.
- Report any health and safety hazards to your supervisor.
- Ask questions if you don't understand.
- Cooperate with Oregon OSHA inspectors if they visit your workplace.

## What other important labor rights do you have?

### You have the right to:

- Be paid at least minimum wage, which is \$8.50/hour in Oregon.
- Be paid for all hours worked.
- Receive no less than a 30 minute break (unpaid) for meals for every work period lasting 6 or more hours.
- Receive **paid** breaks of at least 10 minutes during each 4 hour work period.
- Get paid overtime if you work more than 40 hours per week. You must be paid one and a half times the regular pay rate.
- Work without harassment or discrimination (because of your race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age—40 or older)
- Join or organize a union.
- In Oregon, all of these rights are enforced by **BOLI**—the Bureau of Labor and Industries.



# How can workers exercise their right to a safe workplace?

Many forest workers describe unsafe working conditions. They describe being hurt but not getting medical care. Many report being fearful about speaking up when there is a problem. They know workers who have lost their jobs or their visas for doing so. While these things can happen, other workers have been able to help change some of their conditions at work. You need to think about your situation, and what you and your co-workers may be able to do if you stick together. The following tips can help you make a plan.

## Tips for problem-solving at work:

### 1. Make a plan. Decide what you are trying to achieve.

- What is the problem you are trying to fix?
- What is the employer required by law to do? What do you think the employer should do?

### 2. What other help is available?

- Talk to your co-workers.
- Are there any examples of other contractors using the solution you want to propose?
- Do you need to get any more advice or information? (AFWH? OSHA?)

### 3. What are the obstacles to implementing this solution?

- Cost and productivity are usually the biggest concerns for the boss. Is there a way to show that your solution will mean fewer injuries, or better, more efficient work by the workers? Will it somehow save money in the long run?
- Co-workers may not want to join you in talking to the boss because they fear losing their jobs. Each person needs to make their own decision.

### 4. Talk to the supervisor or boss.

- Who is the best person to talk to? The supervisor? Another manager? A co-worker who is respected by the boss?
- Do not go alone. Taking other co-workers with you will show the boss that it is not just you. There will also be witnesses if the boss discriminates against you.





- Respectfully explain your concern and offer suggestions for addressing the concern. Explain how the solution will benefit the employer. (Such as fewer injuries, more productive and efficient workers...)
- Write down what happened—the date you spoke to the boss, who was there, what you asked for, and what the boss said.

**5. If the problem doesn't get solved, contact OSHA, AFWH, or one of the other agencies listed at the end of the booklet for help.**

- You can contact OSHA in person, by letter, fax, telephone, or on their website. Say that you want to file a complaint.
- Share your notes about what you did.

**6. If your boss "retaliates" against you in some way, you can file a complaint with the Civil Rights Division of the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI).**

- It is against the law for your employer to punish you or "discriminate against you" for being concerned about safety. Discrimination may include:
  - Being fired
  - Being assigned less work, or undesirable shifts
  - Blacklisting (telling other employers not to hire you)
  - Harassment

*Fernando had just started working for a different contractor. Like on every job, the forest workers had to work hard and fast all day, clearing brush. But here, they never took any breaks, which was different than his last job. After a few days, Fernando talked to some of his co-workers, and explained that he used to get breaks on his old job—and that he thought that breaks were required. He told them he felt like he got more done when he got short breaks, because he was less exhausted, and didn't get hurt as often. When Fernando's co-workers realized that other contractors were providing breaks to their workers, they decided to talk to the mayordomo. At first he acted angry, but when he realized they only wanted a little time, and that they might be more productive if they had short breaks, he agreed.*

You have a legal right to a safe job. It doesn't matter what your immigration status is, you still have legal rights.

**Can you walk off the job to protest safety or health hazards?**

Workers do have the right to refuse to do work that may cause death or serious injury, but you cannot just walk off the job.

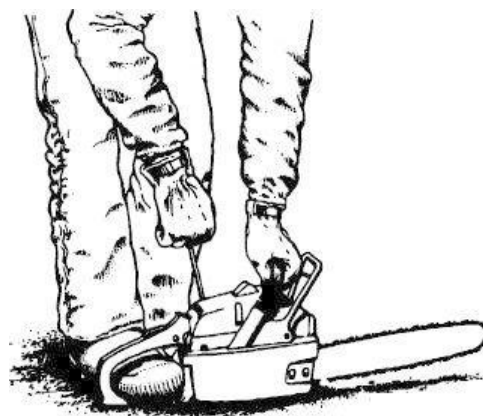
**You need to follow these steps:**

- Ask your employer to correct the hazard.
- Ask your employer for other work.
- Report the hazard to Oregon OSHA.

# WORKING SAFELY WITH CHAINSAWS

## Before starting the saw

- **Check** the controls, the chain tension, the clutch cover, and all the bolts and handles on the chainsaw to make sure they are functioning properly.
- **Sharpen chain teeth.**
- **When adding fuel** to the chainsaw, make sure you are far away (at least 10 feet) from any source of ignition.



## Protective equipment

- Ear plugs and ear muffs to protect hearing
- Gloves
- Safety glasses/face guard
- Chaps
- Safety shoes

## While running the saw

- Keep firm grip and footing.
- Don't cut directly over head or between legs.
- Look up before cutting. Are there loose limbs in the tree that may fall?
- Be prepared for kickback. Don't cut with the tip of the saw; keep track of where the tip is.
- Shut off saw or apply chain break when carrying more than 50 feet, or over hazardous terrain.
- Don't carry the saw on your shoulder. If you fall, you don't want the blade close to your neck.
- Work at a safe distance from other workers (twice the height of the trees being felled).
- Communicate with and watch out for co-workers.
- Take breaks. Very tired workers make mistakes and get hurt.
- Inexperienced workers must be supervised by a qualified worker when felling trees.



**Protect Your Hearing!** Working with chainsaws can cause long term hearing loss if you don't use hearing protection, even if you do not notice it right away. Working around that level of noise for long periods can also make you tired. Wearing ear muffs helps reduce accidents and protects your hearing.

[Adapted from **OSHA Fact Sheet Working Safely with Chain Saws**, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, [http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data\\_Hurricane\\_Facts/chainsaws.pdf](http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/chainsaws.pdf)]

# PREVENTING BACK AND MUSCLE INJURIES



Our bodies normally recover from the wear and tear of work after a period of rest. But if the stresses continue day after day without time to recover, the damage can lead to injuries to your muscles, tendons or nerves. In forest work, some of the most risky activities include:

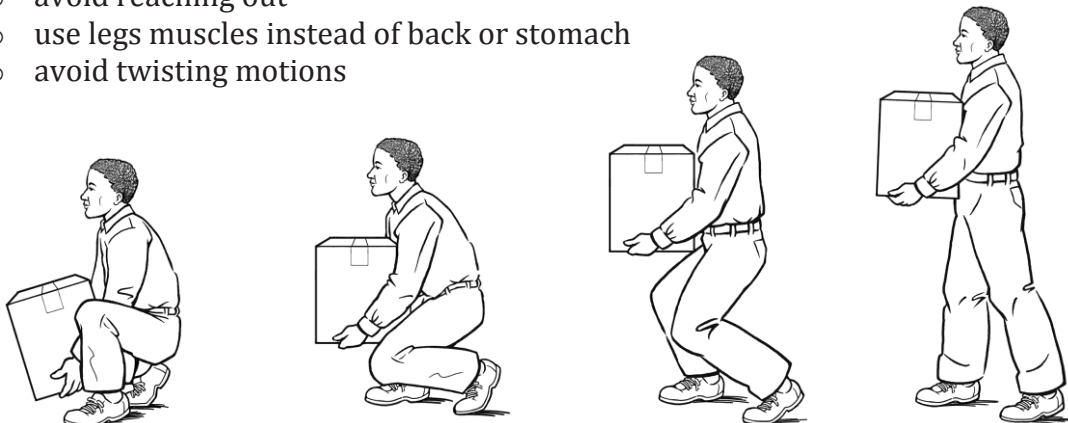
- Frequent lifting or heavy lifting
- Carrying fuel, chainsaws, other equipment
- Vibration from the chainsaw

Forest work is very physical work, and many of these activities are difficult to change, but here are some things you can do:

- Make sure you are in **good physical shape**.
- **Take your full breaks.** Rest is critical for your body to recover.
- **Stretch** before doing anything very strenuous.
- **Avoid awkward, twisting postures.**
- When you use the chainsaw, use a proper stance—**don't reach and stretch**.
- **Use safe lifting techniques.**

## Tips for safe lifting

- Do not move or lift objects, logs or debris that is too heavy or bulky. Ask for help from a co-worker.
- Make sure you have a firm grip on the object before lifting it.
- Make sure your hands and body are in the clear.
- Watch out for slivers, nails and sharp ends when handling objects.
- Make sure you have a clear view when you are carrying materials.
- When lifting:
  - keep your back as upright as possible
  - avoid reaching out
  - use legs muscles instead of back or stomach
  - avoid twisting motions



# WORKING IN HOT WEATHER

Sometimes, when you work in hot weather, your body can become too hot. Just like we can't let a car engine overheat, we can't let our bodies overheat.

**What are some of the first signs you may notice if your body is getting too hot?** If you feel these early symptoms, it is time to cool off, rest, and drink water to recover.

- Sweating
- Feeling tired, weak or dizzy
- Headache
- Heat rash – small red bumps on the skin, usually on the arms, legs, back or stomach



**If you feel the following symptoms, get help right away! Heat can kill!**

**Heat exhaustion:** heavy sweating, cramps, rapid pulse, headache, nausea, vomiting.

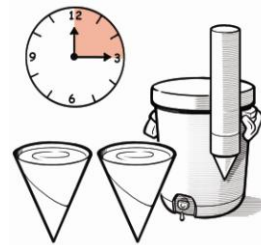


**Heat stroke:** dry, red, hot skin OR heavy sweating; high body temperature; disorientation, fainting, confusion.



**To stay safe and healthy:**

- Drink water even if you aren't thirsty—every 15 minutes.
- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing.
- Rest in the shade.
- Watch out for each other.
- Avoid drinks like sodas, coffee, energy drinks or alcoholic drinks. They dehydrate you and make it more dangerous to work in the heat.



**WATER. REST. SHADE.**  
**The work can't get done without them.**

[Adapted from **Water. Rest. Shade. Training Guide.** Cal/OSHA. [www.99calor.org](http://www.99calor.org)]



# WORKING IN COLD WEATHER

Working in very cold and wet weather can be a dangerous situation, especially if you don't realize that your body temperature is becoming too cold.

## How can working in the cold harm you?

- You can get **hypothermia** (your body temperature drops too low.) This can make you confused, and you can lose consciousness.
- If your feet are wet and cold for a long time, you can develop **"trench foot."** Your foot may become numb or swollen, and even bleed under the skin.
- If your skin is repeatedly exposed to cold temperatures, you can develop **itchy red skin, called "chilblains"**.

## Protecting yourself against the cold.

- Wear layers of clothing.
- Wear gloves and hats.
- Wear waterproof boots.
- Take breaks.
- Be sure to remove layers of clothing as you get warmer.
- If you get sweaty, be sure to put warm layers of clothing back on when you stop working or when you take a break.
- Watch out for each other.

### What is hypothermia?

Once your body gets "too cold" it has used up its stored energy and can no longer produce heat.

**Early symptoms:** shivering, fatigue, loss of coordination, confusion and disorientation.

**What to do:** Move the person to a warm place. Take off their wet clothing. Warm the center of their body with skin to skin contact, under a loose layer of blankets or clothing. If conscious, give them warm drinks, BUT NOT ALCOHOL. Get help.

### BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU LIGHT FIRES!

*It had been raining all day and the crew was wet and cold. They decided to light a fire while they ate lunch. Antonio was having a hard time getting it started—there was a little flame, but it wasn't enough to warm anyone! So he poured some of his fuel straight onto the flame—the fire ran up the stream of fuel, and blew up the canister in Antonio's hands. They had to rush him to the hospital.*



[Adapted from **NIOSH Fast Facts: Protecting Yourself from Cold Stress**, Pub. # 2010-115, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/outdoor/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/outdoor/)]

# PREVENTING SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

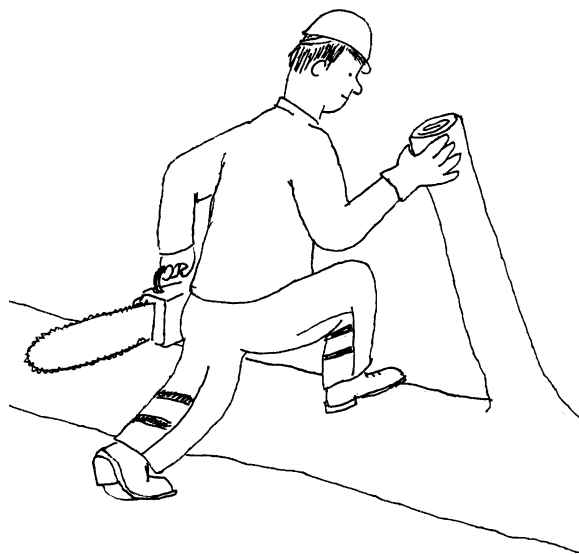


*Pascual ran to catch up with the rest of the crew. He had wanted to finish thinning around the wildlife thicket he was creating when the rest of the crew quit work for the day and started heading back to the crummy. The terrain was flat, but there were many downed trees making walking difficult. Pascual stepped up onto a log, and as he swung his other leg across to step down on the other side, the bark under his foot tore loose. He pitched forward and fell with his full weight on the next log in front of him, cracking his ribs. He was out of work for 3 weeks.*

Doing forest work means walking over uneven terrain, climbing onto to slash or equipment and having to manage with difficult weather and footing. It is impossible to avoid these conditions, but it is important to do everything you can to prevent slipping and falling. A slip, trip or fall has the potential to put you out of work for days, or worse, end a career.

## What you can do:

- **Avoid becoming overly tired**, distracted, hungry or hurried. Your judgment, balance, coordination and attention are not as good then.
- **Think about what you are going to do, before you do it.**
- **Wear footwear with good traction**, especially in slippery winter conditions.
- **Use 3 point contact when getting in/out and on/off anything** (such as vehicles, boulders, walking over blowdown).
- **Stretch** after long periods of inactivity before undertaking a strenuous task.
- **Be aware of your body limitations**, especially if you are at a higher risk of injury.
- **Report dangerous conditions to your supervisor.**



# POISON OAK and POISON IVY

Poison oak and poison ivy plants have an oil in them that can get on your skin when you touch leaves, or into your lungs if the plant is being burned. If you are allergic to it, you can get a very bad skin reaction, an itchy red rash with bumps or blisters.

## Avoiding contact with poison oak or poison ivy

- **Know what it looks like.** Avoid touching it if possible.
- **Wear long sleeves, pants, and gloves** if you will be working around it.
- **Wash your clothes every day** if they have come in contact with the plant. The oils can get onto your clothes, and then onto you or family members who touch the clothes.
- **Use gloves to handle tools** that have come in contact with poison oak or poison ivy.
- **Do not burn plants or brush piles** that may have poison oak or poison ivy in them.



poison oak



poison ivy

**If poison oak or poison ivy leaves touch your skin, wash the area thoroughly with soap and water at the end of the day, or as soon as possible. You can also clean with “tecnu”, a product that can help remove the rash-causing oil, even without water.**



## If you develop a rash:

- Apply calamine lotion, hydrocortisone cream or wet compresses to reduce itching.
- If the rash is severe, or is on the face or genitals, go see a doctor.
- Call 911 or go to a hospital emergency room if the person is having a severe allergic reaction, such as difficulty breathing.

[Adapted from *NIOSH Fast Facts: Protecting Yourself from Poisonous Plants*, Pub. # 2010-118, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/outdoor](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/outdoor)]



# WILD ANIMALS (rattlesnakes, bears, cougars)

Bears, cougars and rattlesnakes rarely attack people. If they do, it is usually because they are surprised or feel the person is a threat. Here are some tips for preventing attacks by these animals and what to do if you are attacked.

## Rattlesnakes

- **Learn what a rattlesnake looks and sounds like.** They often will rattle a warning, but not always.
- **Wear sturdy boots and heavy leather gloves.**
- **Watch where you walk** and reach. Rattlesnakes like to hide around brush, logs and rocks. They are most active on warm days and summer evenings.
- **Step ON logs or rocks**, rather than over, into the spot a snake may be hiding.
- If you see a rattlesnake, **back away slowly**. Do not make sudden moves.
- If someone is bitten, help them remain calm. Get them to the hospital as quickly as possible. Bites are rarely fatal, but must be treated.
- **DO NOT** make cuts in the snake bite or use your mouth to suck out the venom.



## Bears and Cougars



- **Make noise** while you are working.
- If you see a bear or cougar, **DO NOT RUN**. Walk backwards slowly, away from the animal. The animal probably will do the same.
- If the animal approaches, try to look as large as possible (move to higher ground, wave arms) and **make noise to scare it away**.
- If a bear charges, **DO NOT RUN**. Wave your arms and speak in a loud voice. Almost all charges are “bluff charges.”
- If the bear or cougar attacks you, **fight back with sticks and rocks**.
- **FOR BEARS ONLY:** If fighting back does not work, curl up and lie still. The bear will often go away.



# INSECT BITES AND STINGS

## Ticks and Mosquitoes

Ticks and mosquitoes can carry disease.

- **Apply mosquito repellents** and keep your skin covered by wearing long sleeve shirts. Tuck pant legs into socks or boots.
- **Wear light-colored clothing** (so ticks can be easily spotted).
- **Check skin and clothing for ticks daily.** Check hair, underarms, and groin. Ticks brought home on your clothing can attach themselves to your children.
- **Wash and dry work clothes using the “hot” settings** to kill any ticks.
- If you develop a fever, aches and pains, or a rash within a few weeks after being bitten by a tick, see a doctor.



## Wasps (including yellow jackets), Hornets and Bees

- **Avoid perfumed soaps**, shampoos and deodorants.
- **Remain calm and still if a stinging insect is flying around.** (Swatting may cause it to sting.)
- If attacked by several stinging insects, run to get away.
- Workers with a history of severe allergic reactions to insect bites or stings should carry an epinephrine autoinjector and wear medical ID jewelry that says they have this allergy.



## Spiders

Most spiders are not harmful, and bites are not common. The most dangerous spider in Oregon is the **black widow spider**. You should see a doctor right away if you are bitten by a black widow.

### To avoid spider bites:

- Inspect or shake out any clothing, shoes, towels, or equipment before use.
- Wear long sleeve shirts and long pants, gloves, and boots when handling piles of materials in the woods.



[Adapted from *NIOSH Fast Facts: Protecting Yourself from Stinging Insects*, Pub. # 2010-117 and *Protecting Yourself from Ticks and Mosquitoes*, Pub. # 2010-119, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/outdoor](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/outdoor)

# DRINKING WATER FROM LAKES OR STREAMS

**It is not safe to drink water from lakes, creeks or streams**, even if it looks pure and clean. These days, most outdoor water is contaminated with bacteria or other organisms that we can't see, that can make you sick. Animals, like cattle and deer, and people can carry diseases in their intestines, and streams can become contaminated from their feces.

## How to stay safe

- **Do not drink untreated water from springs, streams, rivers, lakes, ponds or shallow wells**, as it might be contaminated with animal feces.
- **Treat water from these sources with water purification tablets, or filter with special water filters made for that purpose.**



The most common diseases that people may get from drinking untreated water in the U.S. are:

- ***E-coli infection.*** This can cause severe stomach cramps, diarrhea (often bloody), and vomiting. Most people get better within 5-7 days. Some infections are very mild, but others are severe.
- ***Giardia.*** This can cause diarrhea and stomach cramps. Some infections go away on their own, but usually it will not go away unless you take antibiotics.
- ***Campylobacteriosis.*** This usually causes diarrhea, cramping, abdominal pain, and fever. There may also be nausea and vomiting. It usually lasts about one week and goes away on its own.

Whenever you have diarrhea, be sure to drink plenty of fluids because diarrhea can cause dehydration. If you think you have any of the diseases described here, or another serious disease, see a doctor.

**Remember: Employers are required by law to provide clean water for you to drink.**

# DRIVING ACCIDENTS

**The leading cause of death among forest workers is driving accidents.** Driving to and from the work site could be the most dangerous part of your work day.

Driving requires focus and energy. Drivers, especially at the end of a day, can often be extremely fatigued. Fatigue can impair your ability to respond effectively in emergency situations. Even if you are not the driver, you can help create a safer driving environment, and help keep the driver focused.

## Tips for safe driving

- **Buckle-up**—always wear a seatbelt, and make sure passengers do too.
- **Stay focused** and awake.
- **If you are too tired** to drive, find another driver.
- **Do not drive if you have been drinking alcohol** or are high on drugs. Coffee will not sober you up; it will make you a wide-awake drunk.
- **Don't use cell phones** while driving.
- **Be aware of road conditions.** Slow down on slick roads and in construction zones.
- **Make sure your vehicle is in good condition** (tire treads, lights, signals).



### If your car skids....

Do not brake. Instead, take your foot off the accelerator and turn your car in the direction that you want the front wheels to go. Use gentle, steady motions when turning the steering wheel. Turning too much or too fast can worsen the situation.

## Tips for passengers

- **Buckle-up**—always wear a seatbelt.
- **Don't distract the driver** with loud music or excessive conversation.
- **Be a "co-pilot":** help change radio channels. Talk to the driver enough to help them stay awake.

# WORKING WITH PESTICIDES

**Pesticides are chemicals that kill animal and plant pests.**

- **insecticides** kill insects
- **herbicides** kill plants
- **rodenticides** kill rodents
- **fungicides** kill fungi



## How can pesticides hurt your health?

Pesticides can cause either **immediate health problems**, or **long term (“chronic”) health problems**, or both. Long term problems, such as cancer or reproductive health problems, may not show up for years. It is important to understand that different types of pesticides cause different problems, depending on what the chemicals are in the pesticide, and how you are exposed.

**Forest workers are most likely to use herbicides or rodenticides** (such as poisoned gopher bait). While the poison in the gopher bait is very poisonous for people if they eat it, gopher bait may be less of a concern for workers than spraying herbicides, because it is harder to be exposed to the poison.

You always need to know what you are working with, how it might harm you, and how you should be protected. Your employer is required to provide you with this information.

**Do not work with pesticides if you have not been trained!**

## Symptoms of pesticide poisoning may include:

- **Herbicides** (such as Oust or Roundup): Eye irritation, burning eyes, blurred vision, skin rashes, burning or itchy skin, nausea, sore throat, asthma and difficulty breathing, headache, lethargy, nose bleeds, and dizziness.
- **Rodenticides** (such as strychnine-treated gopher bait): nosebleeds, bleeding gums, blood in the urine, and convulsions.





# Safety tips to protect yourself

## 1. Read the Label

Know what you are working with, and follow instructions for protecting yourself. The following words are used on the label:

- **“Danger”** means the pesticide is very hazardous (to your skin, or as a poison). If it is extremely poisonous, it will also have the word “Poison” on the label, and will display a skull and cross bones symbol.
- **“Warning”** means the pesticide is moderately toxic (poisonous).
- **“Caution”** means the pesticide is less toxic than the others, but you must still be careful not to get it on your skin or in your eyes.



## 2. Wear Personal Protective Equipment



- Use the protective equipment listed on the label, such as gloves or eye goggles.
- Always wear a hard hat with plastic liner and clothing that is made of tightly woven cloth including a long-sleeved shirt and long pants.
- Wear waterproof boots. If leather boots are worn, they should be waterproofed with a good sealant.

## 3. Handle Pesticides Safely

- Before beginning application-**check the equipment** for leaks and to see that it is working properly. At the end of the workday, clean and check all equipment again.
- **Never put pesticide equipment into your mouth.** Keep nozzles, hoses, and anything touched by a pesticide away from your mouth. Do not prime siphons with your mouth.

- Before, during, and after pesticides are applied, **clean wash water should be available for the crew.** Soap, towels, eyewash, gloves, and goggles or face shields must be ready, as required by the label. There should be a change of clothing available (throw-away coveralls like Tyvex are good) for a quick change in case of contamination.



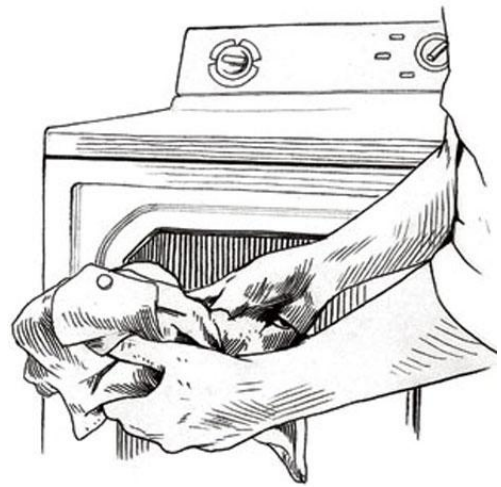
- **If you have cuts or skinned places,** check with your supervisor before applying pesticides. Small cuts and scrapes may be protected by gloves or a waterproof bandage.
- **Be careful when opening pesticide containers,** especially hot ones. Air pressure may have built up inside the container causing the pesticide to spray out when the cap is loosened.
- **Mix, load and rinse pesticide equipment away from streams,** ponds, wells, and roadside ditches.
- **Mix only the amount of pesticide you need to do the job.**
- When working with or near pesticides being sprayed, **stay upwind from the nozzle,** so that the pesticide will be blown away from you.

### Store and transport pesticides safely

Pesticides are poisons. Employers are responsible for understanding the requirements for storing, transporting, and disposing of pesticides safely, and for making sure they are followed. Report any leaks or concerns to the supervisor.



- **Wash your hands, forearms, and face before you eat, drink, smoke, or rub your tired eyes.**
- **Change your clothing every day.** As soon as you get home, take a shower and change clothes. Keep children away from the clothes you have been working in. Wash your work clothes every day-separately, not in with your regular wash.



### What to do if there is an accident

- Notify supervisor
- Treat injury first, if a worker is injured.
- If you or a coworker spill some pesticide on yourself, immediately remove contaminated clothing and wash skin thoroughly with soap and water.
- Carry two eyewash bottles. Flush eyes immediately for at least 15 minutes if you get pesticide in them.
- Take a copy of label and Material Safety Data Sheet to doctor. This is information about chemicals that your supervisor should have.
- Make sure someone who is trained to handle a spill is managing the situation.





# WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE HURT ON THE JOB

1. Tell your supervisor right away.
2. Get first aid or medical treatment.  
Call 911 or radio for help if needed.
3. File for workers' compensation if you need medical treatment or lost time at work.

## Getting first aid

Your employer is responsible for ensuring that you get first aid, and if necessary, get taken for medical treatment.

- Oregon OSHA requires every forest worksite to have a first aid kit.
- Oregon OSHA also requires all workers employed in forest activities to be trained in first aid and CPR. New employees must receive this training within 6 months of being hired.
- Every worksite must have at least one working 2-way radio.

### BE SURE TO GET MEDICAL CARE SO YOUR INJURY DOESN'T GET WORSE!

*Crispín's saw hit something hard and kicked back into his leg, cutting him badly across the shin. The blood ran freely and filled his boot. After the mayordomo helped stop the bleeding, he told Crispín to keep working. It was painful, but Crispín worked as hard as he could. He kept on working for weeks, but the pain started getting worse. The gash was oozing pus, and the skin around it was hot and bright red. He knew he should go to a doctor, but he didn't have the money to pay for it.*

*After two months the pain was so bad Crispín limped when he walked. Finally, he called a worker advocacy organization, and they told him to go to the emergency room right away. The emergency room has to treat everybody who shows up. It's required by law. The doctor in the emergency room cleaned the wound and gave Crispín antibiotics. Within a week he was feeling much better.*

## Medical care

- The employer is required by law to have a plan for getting workers to emergency medical care if necessary.
- You can choose where to get medical care. Your employer cannot choose your health care provider for you.
- Other places to get medical care.
  - Community Health Center 541-773-3863
  - La Clinica 541-535-6239
  - Siskiyou Community Health Center 541-471-3455
  - Emergency Rooms: Required by law to treat you
    - Providence Medford Medical Center in Medford, OR
    - Rogue Valley Medical Center in Medford, OR
    - Three Rivers Community Hospital in Grants Pass, OR





# Your right to workers' compensation:

If you get hurt on the job, your employer is required by law to provide workers' compensation benefits:

- Medical care for your injury, whether or not you miss time from work
- Payments if you lose wages for more than three days or if you are hospitalized overnight.
- Other benefits if you become permanently disabled, such as ongoing payments, or retraining for different work.

## Filing for workers' compensation

1. Request a claim form (***Form 801: Report of Job Injury or Illness***) from your employer if he or she does not give you one.
2. Fill out the claim form and give it to your employer. Keep a copy.
3. Tell your health care provider that you were injured at work. They will fill out and provide you with ***Form 827: Worker's and Health Care Provider's Report for Workers' Compensation Claims*** which you will fill out and return to your employer. Keep a copy.



### Remember:

**You have a right to benefits no matter who was at fault for your job injury.**

**You don't have to be a legal resident of the U.S. to receive benefits.**

**It's illegal for your employer to punish or fire you:**

- for having a job injury; *or*
- for requesting benefits when hurt on the job.

# RESOURCES FOR MORE HELP

The following government agencies and organizations can provide information and assistance if you need help.

## Advocacy Organizations

**Alliance of Forest Workers & Harvesters** offers assistance with workplace issues and educational resources and training in workers' rights and on-the-job health and safety. 541-734-9117 or toll free 866-850-1110, [www.alliancefwh.com](http://www.alliancefwh.com)

**Labor Occupational Health Program (LOHP)** offers training resources and publications such as "The right to Understand", a manual designed to introduce health and safety trainers to the needs of workers with limited literacy skills and to provide tools and tips for material development. 510-642-5507, [www.lohp.org](http://www.lohp.org)

**Northwest Workers Justice Project** provides legal support and education to workers and their organizations, focusing on low-wage workers' organizing rights, rights of immigrant workers, and the rights of part-time, temporary, and day laborers. 503-525-8454; info@nwjp.org; [www.nwjp.org](http://www.nwjp.org)

## Spanish Language Resources

**OHSU/Hood River Community Health Outreach Project, La Clinica del Carino** offers general health information for workers and their families through pamphlets developed by project participants. [www.ohsu.edu/xd/education/library/research-assistance/hood-river-patient-pamphlets.cfm](http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/education/library/research-assistance/hood-river-patient-pamphlets.cfm)

**National Center for Farmworker Health** offers easy to understand patient educational materials for general health issues including heat stress. 800-531-5120, [www.ncfh.org](http://www.ncfh.org)

**MEDLINE plus** offers bi-lingual health information from the National Library of Medicine. [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

## National Alliance for Hispanic Health

National Hispanic Family Health Helpline 866-783-2645; La Línea Nacional Prenatal Hispana 800-504-7081, [www.hispanichealth.org](http://www.hispanichealth.org)

**Migrant Clinicians Network** offers a federal directory of migrant clinics, safety and health, and environmental and occupational health resources. 530-345-4806, [www.migrantclinician.org](http://www.migrantclinician.org)

**Health finder – US Department of Health and Human Services** *hosts links to government agencies, nonprofit organization, and universities to help the public find health and human services information.*

[www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

## State Government Agencies

**Oregon OSHA** *conducts workplace inspections on referral and complaints of unsafe working conditions, and investigates workplace fatalities and serious injuries.*

800-922-2689; [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org)

**Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI)** *protects the rights of workers and citizens to equal, non-discriminatory treatment in the workplace, housing and public accommodations, and enforces compliance with state laws relating to wages, hours, terms and conditions of employment.*  
whd.screener@state.or.us; 971-673-0761; [www.oregon.gov/BOLI](http://www.oregon.gov/BOLI)

**Office of the Ombudsman, Oregon Worker's Compensation Division** *helps injured workers dealing with the workers' compensation system.*

800-927-1271; [www.oregon.gov/DCBS/OIW/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DCBS/OIW/index.shtml)

**Oregon Workers' Compensation Division** *can tell you about workers' compensation rights and responsibilities.*

800-452-0288; [http://www.wcd.oregon.gov/communications/inj\\_job.html](http://www.wcd.oregon.gov/communications/inj_job.html)

**Washington Department of Labor and Industries** *helps employers meet safety and health standards and inspects workplaces when alerted to hazards.*

800-423-7233; [www.lni.wa.gov/Spanish](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Spanish)

## Federal Government Agencies

**National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)** *safety and health facts sheets*

800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636); [www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/spanish/niosh/index.html)

**U.S. Dept of Labor, OSHA** *sets and enforces workplace safety and health standards and provides training, outreach, education and assistance.* <http://osha.gov/workers.html>

National toll free number – 800-321-6742

Oregon OSHA, Salem office – 800-922-2689

Washington OSHA, Olympia office - 800-442-0447

**U.S. Department of Labor, Wage & Hour Division** *is responsible for enforcing some of the most comprehensive federal labor laws on topics, including the minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping, child labor and special employment, family and medical leave, migrant workers, lie*

*detector tests, worker protections in certain temporary worker programs, and the prevailing wages for government service and construction contracts.*

(toll free) 866-487-9243 [4USWAGE]; [www.dol.gov/whd](http://www.dol.gov/whd)

### **U.S. Dept. of Labor Regional Offices:**

- Oregon and Wahkiakum and Klickitat counties in Washington: 503-326-3057 [Portland office]
- Spanish usually available in Portland, or try the Eugene field office at 541-465-6615.
- Washington outside of Wahkiakum and Klickitat counties: 206-398-8039 [Seattle Office]
- California near Sacramento: 916-978-6123 Spanish available
- California near San Francisco: 415-744-5590 Spanish available

**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** *is responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. It is also illegal to discriminate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit.* [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

San Francisco district office: 800-669-4000 (serves northern California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Idaho and Montana).

**U.S. Forest Service** *provides a hotline for workers to notify agency officials about problems in the workplace when working on national forest lands.*

800-531-0095

## **Health Clinics**

**Community Health Center** *provides health care services to low-income, working uninsured, and other vulnerable children and adults in Jackson County.*

541-773-3863 (Medford, Ashland and White City, OR)

**La Clinica** *provides comprehensive medical, dental, and behavioral health services to the diverse populations in Jackson County, especially to those who face barriers to health care.*

541-535-6239 (5 locations, Medford area)

**Siskiyou Community Health Center** *offers primary care medical and dental services in locations throughout Josephine county on a sliding fee scale that offers affordable quality care for patients with no insurance.*

Grants Pass, 541-471-3455; Cave Junction, 541-592-4111



## **Emergency Rooms**

### **Jackson County**

Providence Medford Medical Center  
1111 Crater Lake Avenue  
Medford, OR 97504  
541-732-5000

Rogue Valley Medical Center  
2825 East Barnett Road  
Medford, OR 97504  
541-789-7000

### **Josephine County**

Three Rivers Community Hospital  
500 SW Ramsey Ave.  
Grants Pass, OR 97527  
541-472-7000

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p. 23 Dave Moorhead, Warnell School of Forest Resources, University of Georgia