Logger Killed By Swinging Tree



A 47-year-old logger was working to set the chokers in a cable logging operation. He was working with a partner on a turn of logs under a high lead cable system. The pair was working on opposite sides of the skyline – the cable that ran to a central tower and pulled the timber to a central location for loading. Once the turn was set, the logger signaled the yarder engineer to activate the cable and begin pulling the logs. A small diameter, tree-length log became hung up on a nearby stump, and snapped free of the chain, hitting the logger in the midsection. He was hospitalized with broken ribs and severe internal damage. On the seventh day, he died from his injuries.

According to Oregon OSHA regulations, all workers must stand in the clear, out of the line of potential impact of logs as they move. Safe locations should include placing workers behind, rather than before, the logs being moved. A competent person needs to be placed in charge of crew safety on logging operations, to set the work practice standards for others. Oregon OSHA has set safety standards for logging operations that include these elements: accident evaluation, employee involvement, hazard identification and control, training, and annual program evaluation.

Source: Oregon Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Case Report 04OR052