

TREE TRIMMING OPERATIONS, 16VAC25-73

16VAC25-73-70. Portable power hand tools.

A. General.

1. The purpose of this section is to provide guidelines for arborists and other workers pertaining to the safe use and care of portable power hand tools. Damaged portable power tools shall be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded.

2. Manufacturers' operating and safety instructions shall be followed (see 16VAC25-60-120).

3. Before starting or otherwise using any portable power tools, a communication system shall be established in accordance with the requirements of 16VAC25-73-90.B.1.

B. Portable electric power tools.

1. The items contained in subsection A of this section shall always be included in the review of this section. Damaged portable electric power tools shall be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded.

2. Corded electric power tools shall not be used in trees or aerial devices near energized electrical conductors where there is a possibility of power tools or supply cords contacting the conductor.

3. All corded portable electric power tools shall be:

- a. Equipped with three-wire cords having the ground wire permanently connected to the tool frame and a means for grounding the other end;
- b. Double insulated and permanently labeled as "double insulated"; or
- c. Connected to power supplies by means of an isolating transformer or other isolated power supply.

4. Extension cords shall be maintained in safe condition. Exposed metal sockets shall not be used. Worn or frayed extension cords shall be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded.

5. Arborists and other workers shall:

- a. Prevent cords from becoming entangled, damaged, or cut by blades/bits;
- b. Not lay extension cords in water; and
- c. Support electric power tools and supply cords by a tool lanyard or separate line, when used aloft.

C. Chain saws.

1. The items contained in subsection A of this section shall always be included in the review of this section. Damaged chain saws shall be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded.

2. Chain saws shall not be operated unless the manufacturer's safety devices are in proper working order. Chain-saw safety devices shall not be removed or modified.

3. When an arborist or other worker is working in a tree other than from an aerial device, chain saws weighing more than 15 pounds (6.8 kg) service weight shall be made safe against falling (i.e., supported by a separate line or tool lanyard).

TREE TRIMMING OPERATIONS, 16VAC25-73

16VAC25-73-70. , Portable power hand tools, CONTINUED.

4. Secure footing shall be maintained when starting the chain saw.

5. When starting a chain saw, the operator shall hold the saw firmly in place on the ground or otherwise support the saw in a manner that minimizes movement of the saw when pulling the starter handle. The chain saw shall be started with the chain brake engaged, on saws so equipped. Drop-starting a chain saw is prohibited.

6. Chain-saw engines shall be started and operated only when other arborists and workers are clear of the swing radius of the chain saw.

7. When using a chain saw, the operator shall hold the saw firmly with both hands, keeping the thumb and fingers wrapped around the handle.

8. Arborists shall use a second point of attachment (e.g., lanyard or doublecrotched climbing line) when operating a chain saw in a tree, unless the employer demonstrates that a greater hazard is posed by using a second point of attachment while operating a chain saw in that particular situation. Using both ends of a two-in-one lanyard shall not be considered two points of attachment when using a chain saw.

9. Chain-saw mufflers and spark arresters (if the latter are provided) shall be maintained in good condition.

10. The chain brake shall be engaged, or the engine shut off, before setting a chain saw down.

11. When a chain saw is being carried more than two steps, the chain brake shall be engaged or the engine shut off. The chain saw shall be carried in a manner that will prevent operator contact with the cutting chain and muffler.

12. The chain-saw operator shall be certain of footing before starting to cut. The chain saw shall not be used in a position or at a distance that could cause the operator to become off-balance, have insecure footing, or relinquish a firm grip on the saw.

D. Powered pole tools and backpack power units.

1. The items contained in subsection A of this section shall always be included in the review of this section. Damaged powered pole tools and backpack power units shall be removed from service and tagged until repaired or discarded.

2. Only workers operating the equipment shall be within 10 feet (3.05 m) of the cutting head of a brush saw during operations.

3. Power units shall be equipped with a readily accessible, quick shutoff switch.

4. Operators shall observe the position of all other workers in the vicinity while the equipment is running.

5. Engines shall be stopped for cleaning, refueling, adjustments, and repairs to the saw or engine, unless manufacturers' procedures require otherwise.

6. Powered pole tools with poles made of metal or other conductive material shall not be used in operations where electrical hazards exist.