



LEAF OUT – VISIBILITY REDUCED!

By: Brian Wagner

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A logger's vision and visibility are key factors to his safety in the woods. Visibility in the logging woods is generally good from November to the end of March. The month of April and into May brings a natural phenomena and it is called leaf out. The deciduous forest blooms to new life with a fresh growth of new leaves. What was once a bright and open environment in the late fall and winter, with good visibility, has been transformed to a lush green environment with filtered light. As the forest rejuvenates itself, risk is increased due to reduced visibility caused by the new canopy of leaves. This new canopy hides overhead hazards, or death from above. Overhead hazards are the leading cause for catastrophic injury and death in the forest industry. Please take the time to brief your crew on overhead hazards and the reduced visibility caused by leaf out.

- Be visible; wear high visibility safety colors to make your presence known.
- Use approved personal protective equipment (PPE) for head protection.
- Look and scan at least 50 feet ahead on your ground path of travel.
- Look and scan at least 100 feet ahead for all overhead hazards.
- Don't place yourself under any object that can fall or move due to gravity or the loss of hydraulic pressure.
- Maintain at least two tree lengths from all felling operations.
- Maintain communication with anyone in the work area. Verify their location with frequent eye contact.
- Never walk into a work area with running or moving equipment until the equipment is stopped, engine cut-off and implements grounded.
- Timber-cutters shall use proper felling techniques which include proper face notches, with no by-pass, and adequate hinge-wood to control the tree's fall to the ground.
- Timber-cutters should be using the "5-part" felling plan. This plan reduces risk during the manual felling process.

New life grows before our eyes in the spring logging woods. The reduced visibility caused by this new life could be responsible for taking a life. Look Up! Be alert, and enjoy the spring logging woods safely.

2015 Safety Meeting Record

Date: _____ Company: _____

Names and signatures of ALL attendees to be attached.

Conducted by:(signature) _____