

# Hazard Alert Wood Chippers

A piece of wood got stuck, and he tried to clear it out,” said a witness. “But he got pulled in. He yelled, ‘Help me! Help me!’ But the other worker couldn’t turn the machine off in time.”



Injury  
Statistics  
2003-2010

## Nonfatal Injuries

- ▶ Many more workers have been seriously injured with cases involving days away from work including amputations

## Fatalities

- ▶ 39 workers have died nationwide including three in New Jersey.

Wood chippers are powerful machines. The chipper blades move at an extremely high speed. Follow these simple work practices. They can save your life!

## Training

- ➔ Attend refresher training for safe work procedures. Learn chipper safety devices and controls (“kill switch,” safety control bar, “last-chance cables,” etc.)
- ➔ Read all warning labels on each machine. Different models will have different features.

## Pre-Operation

- ➔ Wear close-fitting clothes, gloves without cuffs, trousers without cuffs, skid-resistant footwear. Keep clothing tucked in.
- ➔ Wear a hard hat, eye protection, and hearing protection.
- ➔ Check the area around the wood chipper for tripping hazards.
- ➔ Make sure materials to be chipped are free from stones, metal and other foreign objects (even if the chipper is equipped with a curtain).
- ➔ Close and latch the service hood covering the chipper knives before starting the machine.



**NOTE:** These recommendations are not intended to cover all aspects of safe work practices. **See back for more resources.**

## Operation

- ➔ Use the “buddy system”: while one worker is feeding materials into the in-feed hopper, another worker should remain stationed at the feed wheel control bar.
- ➔ Feed the brush and limbs into the in-feed hopper butt end first.
- ➔ Put short materials on top of longer materials while feeding the chipper.
- ➔ Always feed small pieces first to open the feed wheels. Follow with large pieces.
- ➔ Never use your foot to push anything into the hopper. Use a push stick to force short or thorny brush into the chipper.
- ➔ Don’t load small raked-up materials like twigs and leaves into the chipper (may contain stones and other debris).

Focus on  
the job.  
Always use  
common  
sense.

## Machine Safety

- ➔ Never stand or sit on any part of the chipper while in operation.
- ➔ Never reach into the feed table area; use a push stick.

RESOURCES



Chris Christie Governor  
Kim Guadagno Lt. Governor

Public Health Services Branch  
Division of Epidemiology, Environmental and Occupational Health  
Consumer, Environmental and Occupational Health Service  
(609) 826-4984  
[www.nj.gov/health/surv/face.shtml](http://www.nj.gov/health/surv/face.shtml)



Mary E. O'Dowd, M.P.H.  
Commissioner

# Resources

## TRAINING RESOURCES

- The Committee for the Advancement of Arboriculture (CAA)  
Visit the CAA website for a listing of courses offered and registration information.  
<http://caanj.org>
- Wood Chippers and Shredders Safety, Tailgate Safety Training for Landscaping and Supervisors and Horticultural Services. Ohio State University Extension. [http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/192/pdf/0192\\_2\\_85.pdf](http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/192/pdf/0192_2_85.pdf)
- YouTube Videos:
  - ▶ Preventing wood chipper fatalities. California Department of Public Health, FACE Project.  
English version: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NKZM9IIEk>  
Spanish version: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9nLGoSEUYw&list=PL43A44D61109073BC>
  - ▶ Worker pulled through wood chipper. WorkSafeBC. Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia, Richmond, B.C., Canada. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji\\_-m\\_y1q10](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ji_-m_y1q10)

## STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

- American National Standards Institute (ANSI)  
ANSI Z133-2012. Safety Requirements for Arboricultural Operations  
[www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards:
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.132, General Requirements. Subpart I - Personal Protective Equipment  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=standards&p\\_id=9777](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=standards&p_id=9777)  
Safety and Health Topics page: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/personalprotectiveequipment/>
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.133, Eye and Face Protection  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=STANDARDS&p\\_id=9778](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9778)  
Safety and Health Topics page: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/eyefaceprotection/>
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.135, Head Protection  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=STANDARDS&p\\_id=9785](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9785)
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.138, Hand Protection  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=STANDARDS&p\\_id=9788](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9788)
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.147, The Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout)  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_id=9804&p\\_table=STANDARDS](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_id=9804&p_table=STANDARDS)  
Safety and Health Topics page: <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/controlhazardousenergy/standards.html>
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.212, General Requirements for all Machines  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=standards&p\\_id=9836](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=standards&p_id=9836)
  - ▶ 29 CFR 1910.266, Logging Operations  
Text of standard: [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=STANDARDS&p\\_id=9862](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=9862)

## SAFETY RESOURCES

- Workplace Fatality Investigation Reports (see Tree Trimming). New Jersey Department of Health, FACE Project.  
[http://nj.gov/health/surv/face/njface\\_reports.shtml](http://nj.gov/health/surv/face/njface_reports.shtml)
- Injury Associated with Working Near or Operating Wood Chippers, Hazard ID #8, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/99-145/>
- Safety and Health Information Bulletin: Hazards of Wood Chippers. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) .  
<https://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib041608.html>
- 5 Essential Wood Chipper Safety Tips. New Jersey Landscape Contractors Association.  
<http://www.njlca.org/pages/Safety/Wood%20Chipper%20Essential%20Safety%20Tips.pdf>
- Safety Alert: Wood Chippers. Massachusetts Department of Labor Standards.  
<http://www.mass.gov/lwd/docs/dos/mwshp/wood-chipper-alert.pdf>
- Operating Wood Chippers, Safety \$Sense. PLANET, Professional Landcare Network.  
<http://www.landcarenetwork.org/riskmgmt/ssense/Jan12.pdf>
- Occupational Fatality Report: Wood Chipper Safety. Maine Department of Labor.  
[http://www.maine.gov/labor/labor\\_stats/publications/face/0308.pdf](http://www.maine.gov/labor/labor_stats/publications/face/0308.pdf)

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- The Committee for the Advancement of Arboriculture (CAA)  
370 E Veterans Highway, Jackson NJ 08527  
732-833-0500  
<http://caanj.org>
- Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA): <http://tcia.org/>
- The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA):
  - ▶ ISA National Headquarters  
PO Box 3129  
Champaign IL 61826  
217-355-9411  
[www.isa-arbor.com](http://www.isa-arbor.com)
  - ▶ ISA New Jersey Chapter  
206 Colorado Trail  
Presidential Lakes  
Browns Mills NJ 08015  
732-444-7972  
<http://www.njarboristsisa.com>

