



Safe use of chainsaws when working in proximity to others

A serious incident occurred recently on a private tree cutting site, not directly involving any DNO staff or contractors, where cut injuries to the leg, groin, arm and hand were sustained. The injured party was not the chainsaw operator, but was assisting on site. The chainsaw operator became caught in some briars. His colleague approached from behind to un-tangle him as the operator swung around to do the same thing. The injuries required in excess of 60 stitches.



1. Always maintain a safe distance from anyone operating a chainsaw – at least 5m is the approved safe distance between workers, and, between workers and machinery (outside the risk zone of the equipment)
2. Always engage the chain brake before moving work position
3. Never approach anyone operating a chainsaw without ensuring they know where you are – Good on-site communication is essential
4. When operating a chainsaw never turn the guide bar in a direction you have not fully assessed
5. As a chainsaw operator you are always likely to be approached by persons not involved in your work (landowners or the public). Do not assume everyone will know to stay clear of you while you are operating a chainsaw