



## **Chipping and Grinding**

*Clearing undergrowth, trimming and falling trees, and coping with the debris, are dangerous exercises, particularly when it involves the use of a "chipper." Read On!*

### **Chipping Hazards**

- **Chippers are mechanical devices** with rotating knife blades and an opening to feed brush and branches. The machine chips the material and blows it into a metal or canvas enclosed truck. Whenever a chipper is running, the work area should be protected by red flags or barricades.
- **Whenever the equipment** is left alone, all starting controls should be locked out. Chipper unit wheels should be properly chocked to prevent the unit from rolling.
- **If gloves are worn**, the worker should be able to remove them easily to prevent branches from catching them and pulling the wearer into the chipper.
- **All electrical wires** should be considered live. Workers should observe the recommended space as minimum clear space adjacent to live parts, and they should not trim within that area. Only qualified workers should handle fallen or broken wires.
- **Dangerous areas** should be roped off or barricaded, the public utility company notified, and a worker stationed to keep the public away.
- **All workers should be instructed** in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and have frequent drills to develop a definite skill. Tree trimming personnel should be familiar with the safety instructions for rescue from live wires.

### **Fire Hazards**

- **If brush is to be burned** near the job area, it should be piled in a place away from wires, cables, fences, poles, or buildings. The fire should be extinguished or guarded before a crew leaves for any reason.
- **To avoid fire hazards**, equipment operators should follow the following guidelines:
  - A chipper should never be parked in high weeds or grass because the exhaust pipe could ignite and cause a fire.
  - Chips should never be left in a truck over a weekend because they can dry out and become a fire hazard.
  - Chips should be cleaned from the motor, especially around the exhaust manifold.
  - Chips should never be dumped into street gutters or on private property.

### **People Hazards**

- **Before tree trimming**, grubbing, or general site-clearing operations begin, pedestrians and drivers should be warned with red flags and danger signs set up on nearby sidewalks and streets.
- **Tools and equipment** should be kept off sidewalks and streets. Ropes should be coiled to prevent tripping.
- **Poisonous plants** will affect most people on contact. In areas where poison ivy, sumac, and poison oak are growing, workers should become familiar with each plant and should take special care to avoid contact with them. They should also avoid smoke from such burning plants.
- **Some workers are allergic** to the fine dust of fuzzy substances emitted from the underside of the sycamore leaf. Such workers should wear dust respirators during the summer months.
- **During an electrical storm**, workers should be ordered down from trees immediately and should seek shelter.
- **A well stocked first-aid kit** should be maintained for each work crew, and workers should be instructed to report all injuries promptly for treatment, regardless of how minor they may appear.

*Practically every part of the body is subject to injury when using a chipper. Wear protective clothing, safety goggles, hard hats, and ear plugs. Keep ALERT!*