



What is Anaphylaxis? Anaphylaxis (according to Wikipedia) is a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death. It typically causes a number of symptoms including an itchy rash, throat swelling, and low blood pressure. The most common causes include foods, and medications, however, in forest operations the main culprit is insect bites and stings – most notably from WASPS!

Bees and wasps are the most instantly recognizable biting/stinging insects. Their black & yellow striping signals ‘keep away’!

If stung, most immediate reactions are mild, causing annoying itching, redness, pain and swelling that disappear within a few days. A few people develop a more severe allergic reaction – anaphylaxis – and require immediate treatment!

Having been stung in the past without a serious reaction does not mean you will not have anaphylaxis in the future. Therefore, having an **EpiPen™** on hand is a sensible practicable step!



Recommendations and Tips!



- Do not swat at wasps. If they land on you, gently brush them off, then walk away.
- Wasps often travel in groups and are far more aggressive by the end of summer, as they search for food before the colder weather sets in. Leaving food or scraps out, especially sweet food and drinks is not advised.
- Purchase EpiPen™ at a pharmacy. It will cost \$140 to have one in your first aid kit.
- ACC have advised that they will **reimburse this cost** when the EpiPen is used on a patient as treatment for an anaphylactic reaction.



Machine Fires! Have you checked?

Checks and maintenance!

The risks associated with a machine fire are enormous – they can cause serious harm as well as major forest fire with costs running into the millions of dollars!

When a machine catches on fire, it can be very difficult to extinguish especially if not caught immediately. Losing a specialised machine can prove very costly – and drive up the cost of insurance.

A spate of recent fires has reinforced the importance of checks and maintenance.



FIPS 7530, 31/11/15 – Property Damage Incident

A machine operator was about to lay out fresh stems for processing when he noticed the hydraulics had stopped working. Turning the machine off, the operator then got out to look around and noticed smoke coming from under the bonnet. Responders arrived and turned off the isolation switch and extinguished the fire. They discovered that the battery lead (running from the starter motor) had been rubbing against the frame, which caused the fire. They also discovered that this is a ‘known issue’ for the type of machine!

Learning from this... Machine Operators, have you checked?

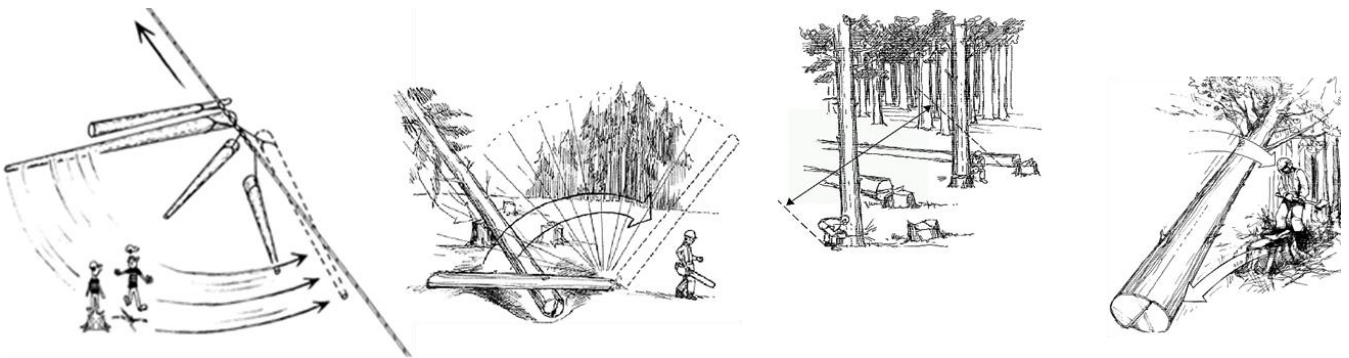
- [] the fire extinguishers – ensuring they are fully charged and properly secured?
- [] machine servicing – has occurred according to the schedule?
- [] for oil leaks - removing waste-oil along with debris build-up?
- [] for evidence of rubbing and/or shorting along the electrical wiring, loom and leads?
- [] that the ‘fire-response plan’ works – a fire requires an **immediate response!**
- [] to see how quickly everyone can respond to a fire – run a practice drill and find out!
- [] that the ‘isolation switch’ has been turned off at the end of each shift?
- [] with your machine supplier for ‘known issues’ on the type of machine you operate?



Breaking-out and tree felling!

The **ACoP Safety and Health in Forest Operations** – (s.12, page 81) states that the “...the contractor/employer shall have a documented process to determine and identify the safe retreat position for each line or days’ work...” (12.2.23) and ...including the head breaker-out... “shall ensure the process is understood, agreed and carried out...”

The rules for tree felling (s11, p. 68 – 74) are as strict and while not specifically stated, we generally accept there will be equivalent ‘documented processes’ that are ‘understood, agreed and carried out’ by the people completing manual tree felling!



Processes in Place to Protect People!

The figures above, clearly demonstrate that breaking-out and tree felling continue to be among the **most hazardous of all forest operations**, including felling in silviculture!

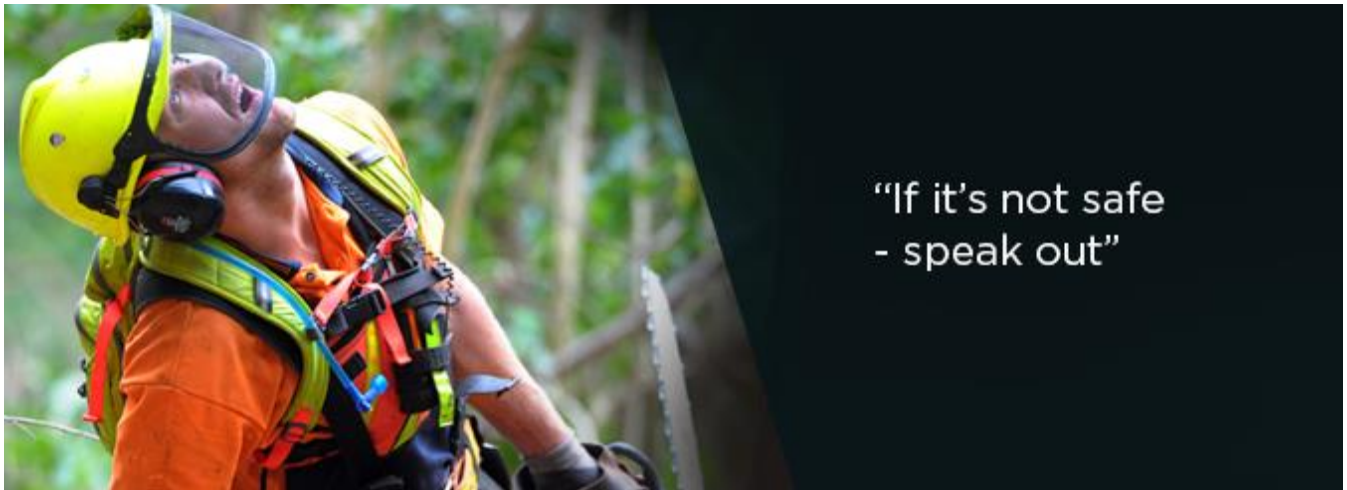
Re-commencing operations in 2016, employers (contractors) and workers, particularly those in positions of responsibility, must be acutely aware of their supervisory responsibilities and remain ever vigilant to ‘carry-out’ the ‘agreed’ processes!

Warning Shot Fired! On the **26th of August 2015**, a ‘gut-hooked’ stem upended, swung toward and struck a trainee breaker-out. Both he and his head breaker-out were not in the Safe Retreat Position! Following its incident investigation, WorkSafe NZ:

- Has found that the “documentation” of the contractor’s “health and safety system” was a “credit” to them and **will take no further action against the contractor.**
- Has **recommended the prosecution of the head breaker-out** (under s. 19 of the HSE Act) who will subsequently appear in court early this year.



A good practice [guideline](#) for worker engagement, participation and representation at work.



WORKSAFE
NEW ZEALAND | MAHI HAUMARU
AOTEAROA

Why Focus on Worker participation?

Workers have the detailed knowledge and experience of how work is done. This means that workers can help their employer, a person in charge of a business or undertaking (PCBU), to make better decisions. With knowledge and experience, workers can also help the PCBU to prioritise the health and safety matters that need to be addressed in the workplace.

The **Health and Safety at Work (HSW) Act** emphasises (in part 3) that everyone has a role to play in making sure workplaces are healthy and safe. It shows that there are two key duties for a PCBU; namely:

1. **Engagement** with workers; and
2. Worker **participation practices** (see Appendix D on p. 81 of the draft [guideline](#)).

You can read more about these ‘**twin duties**’ in the ‘summary document’ that includes the one-page graphic entitled “Worker Engagement and Participation at a Glance”, issued with this safety bulletin.

During the early part of 2016 PF Olsen Ltd will consider the suggested ways to provide our wider workforce with the “opportunities to influence and shape their working conditions and systems”.

In the meantime, and having read the summary document, employers and workers alike may want to give consideration to representatives, safety committees and participations practices.