



WASHINGTON STATE LOGGER SAFETY INITIATIVE

Keeping Washington loggers safe.

September 5, 2014

Safety Alert: Chain Shot

In mechanized timber harvesting and processing, “chain shot” is a serious and deadly hazard. Chain shot is the high velocity separation and ejection of a piece or pieces of cutting chain from the end of a broken saw chain that is used in mechanized timber harvesting/processing. The ejected chain pieces have been documented at reaching speeds exceeding 750 miles per hour.

Chain shot exposes both machine operators and bystanders to a risk of serious injury or death. Chain shot typically occurs near the drive end of the cutting system but can also come from the bar tip area.

Most all newer mechanical harvester cutting heads are equipped with a chain shot guard and a chain catcher. However, older processors and harvesters may not be fully guarded. Employers should contact the equipment manufacturer to see what safety devices are available for their machines.

[Please review DOSH’s investigative story about a fatal chain shot incident in 2010](#) and the [DOSH Chain Shot Hazard Alert](#).