



WASHINGTON STATE LOGGER SAFETY INITIATIVE

Keeping Washington loggers safe.

June 27, 2014

Safety Alert: High pressure oil leak hazard

An equipment operator was seriously injured recently while working to fix a hydraulic leak.

The equipment operator was unable to accurately locate the source of a hydraulic leak. He felt along the hoses with his hand to find the leak and still couldn't find it.

He told a co-worker to use the ignition switch to engage the engine starter to apply some pressure to the hydraulic system. Oil was injected into the man's hand through a fine hole in the hydraulic hose that his hand was over.

An injection injury like this almost always results in tissue damage and far too often an amputation.

The hydraulic system pressure on today's logging equipment is instantaneous at around 3000 PSI. Extra caution is always required around hydraulic lines.

Things to remember

- Consult your equipment dealer and the operator's manual for proper inspection and repair procedures.
- Ensure an effective Energy Control Program is in place.
- Visually inspect the area but stay at least 3 feet away from the problem area and use safety glasses.
- Do not use your hands to locate the leak. Use a remote sensor, such as a card or wood.
- Also: Seek medical attention immediately if oil has penetrated the skin.