

**TDM.04.01 Operation of Chainsaws and Training Policy****Intent**

To provide safety guidance to volunteers while using chainsaws in the removal of trees in the vicinity of the Bruce Trail, its side trails or on BTC managed land. The policy is not intended to provide instruction on how to accomplish the work. Competence to perform the work is acquired through training, peer mentoring and experience.

**Policy**

1. This policy applies to volunteers of the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC).
2. All volunteers using or assisting with the use of chainsaws will be required to read this policy and will be required to sign a form acknowledging acceptance of this policy.
3. All users of chainsaws shall operate the equipment in a safe manner as per the manufacturer's users' manual and in accordance with the certified training programs offered by BTC.
4. All operators of chainsaws shall use appropriate safety equipment and protective clothing as defined in the procedure below.
5. Crew sizes should be as follows:
  - o simple felling: three (one operator, two guards)
  - o advanced felling: four (one operator, one spotter, two guards)
  - o simple bucking: minimum two, maximum three (one operator, one or two guards)
  - o complex bucking: three (one operator, two guards)
  - o simple limbing: two (one operator, one guard)
  - o complex limbing: 3 (one operator, two guards)
6. No member of the work party shall enter the bucking zone or move logs while the operator is cutting.
7. All chainsaw operators must successfully complete recognized training prior to any felling or bucking on the Bruce Trail, its side trails or BTC managed land, as defined in procedure below.
8. All members of a chainsaw crew shall wear CSA approved hard hats (Type 2) for the duration of the time in the work area.
9. Upon arriving at the site of the proposed chainsaw work, the crew inspects the area to identify any dead standing trees (chicots), leaners, hanging limbs or any other feature which might be dangerous to members of the crew or public.
10. A tree shall be felled only:
  - o After all workers, other than the logger felling the tree, are cleared from the danger area
  - o After, to the best of the sawyer's ability, all snags have been cut and cleared away
  - o After, to the best of the sawyer's ability, all chicots in the vicinity of the tree being felled have been lowered safely to the ground
  - o After studying the tree and the complexity of safely taking the tree down, the sawyer decides they have the ability and skill level necessary to proceed.
11. If the sawyer decides the tree is unsafe to remove or beyond their ability and skill level, the operation is stopped, and the removal is reassessed. This reassessment will take into consideration other possible measures to mitigate the hazard posed by the tree, including hiring a professional tree care company or arborist to remove the tree, or implementing a trail reroute that would ensure the safety of trail users.

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**TDM.04.01 Operation of Chainsaws and Training Policy****Definitions**

**Felling** – Using a chainsaw to cut down a tree, or group of trees that is entangled, standing or leaning, hung-up or obstructed, until the tree(s) is lying on the ground, at which time it becomes a candidate for bucking.

- Simple Felling: One or more smaller diameter trees (less than 30 cm diameter) that pose little risk of becoming hung-up
- Complex Felling: One or more larger diameter trees (greater than 30cm diameter) that are hung-up or pose a significant risk of becoming hung-up, have significant amounts of dead material in the form of branches or trunk material, leaning with a significant potential to “Barber chair<sup>1</sup>”, or pose a danger to damage objects on the ground such as fences, gates, boardwalks, bridges or other structures on BTC trails or other neighbouring property.

**Bucking** – Using a chainsaw to cut up trees or logs that are lying on the ground and free of obstacles.

- Simple bucking: small diameter trees (less than 30 cm diameter) fully on flat ground
- Complex bucking: clearing of a single, larger diameter tree, or two or more entangled trees, or any tree on steep or challenging ground terrain
- Demolition bucking: cutting of construction materials

**Limbing** – cutting and removing branches or limbs from a standing tree. Simple limbing involves branches of less than 10cm diameter; complex limbing involves branches greater than 10 cm diameter, or those which are entangled or likely to affect other limbs or trees in the vicinity

**Felling zone** - The circle within which the tree being felled could fall or cause another tree to fall. At a minimum, the circle diameter on the ground is 1.5 times the height of the tree being felled.

**Bucking zone** – The “do not enter” circle around the operator while bucking, the size of which is three metres or more as determined by the sawyer or spotter

**Bull gang** – members of the work crew other than the operator, spotter and guards

**Type 2 Helmet** - provides impact and penetration protection to the top and sides of the head.

**Procedures – Organization of Work Parties Involving Chainsaws**

Upon arrival at the trailhead or roadside access point where the proposed work is located, members of the crew should take note of the road name and the emergency fire number of the property nearest to the access point.

Chainsaw Crews must have one working cell phone for emergencies. In the event that no cellular signal is available at the work site, the minimum crew size will be 3+ persons whenever possible.

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<sup>1</sup> A barber chair occurs when a tree being felled delaminates vertically before the hinge is cut thin enough to bend.

**TDM.04.01 Operation of Chainsaws and Training Policy****Leader**

Every chainsaw work party will have a designated leader

1. Assigns roles to members of the work party
2. Provides a safety talk at the start of each work party identifying hazards of the work and surrounding area
3. Approves changes in role designations as the work progresses
4. Assigns a mentor to new volunteers
5. Leader qualifications:
  - Experienced in the removal of hazard trees
  - Familiar with the qualifications and abilities of work party members
6. The leader must have readily available the following safety equipment:
  - First aid kit
  - Mobile phone (charged and operational)
  - CSA approved hard hats for crew members

**Operator**

1. Cuts trees with a chainsaw.
2. Operator qualifications:
  - Experienced in the removal of hazard trees.
  - Has a current Certificate from a BTC approved chainsaw course.
3. The operator must wear the following safety equipment when operating a chainsaw:
  - CSA approved Type 2 hard hat with impact protection
  - Safety glasses, a face shield is not enough eye protection
  - Hearing protection
  - Chainsaw boots
  - Chainsaw chaps (complete wrap around) or chainsaw pants (full coverage)
  - Chainsaw gloves (non-dominant hand to have cut proof padding)
  - Long pants
  - Long sleeved shirt
4. Operator procedure:
  - Before the first use of the chainsaw the operator will confirm that the chain brake is functional, and the chain catcher is in place
  - Only the operator is allowed in the felling zone or the bucking zone

**Guard**

1. Prevents any member of the public and the work party from entering the felling zone or the bucking zone
2. Observes the area surrounding the worksite and alerts the operator to any hazard
3. The guard shall wear the following safety equipment
  - Vest with reflective stripes
  - CSA approved Type 2 hard hat
4. Guard procedure:

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- During felling, guards must be posted at entry points to the work area to prevent access to the felling zone. The guards must be outside the felling zone.
- During bucking, a guard must be posted outside the bucking zone to prevent access to the bucking zone
- Guards do no other work while the operator is felling or bucking

**Spotter**

1. During advanced felling, prevents anyone, including members of the work party, from entering the felling zone and alerts the operator to hazards.
2. Qualification:
  - Experienced in the removal of hazard trees.
3. The spotter shall wear the following safety equipment:
  - CSA approved Type 2 hard hat with impact protection
  - Vest with reflective stripes
4. Spotter procedure:
  - The spotter can be posted anywhere outside the felling zone in sight of the chainsaw operator
  - The spotter watches for any hazard to the operator while felling and alerts the operator
  - The spotter watches for anyone entering the felling zone and directs them to leave. The spotter signals the operator to stop work if it is safe to do so.
  - The spotter does no other work while the operator is felling

**Bull Gang**

1. Shifts hung-up trees so that they fall to the ground or so that felling can proceed, and clears felled trees, logs and branches off the trail.
2. Safety Equipment:
  - Clothing appropriate for the work
  - CSA approved Type 2 hard hat
  - Recommended: leather gloves and safety boots.
3. Bull gang procedure:
  - Takes direction from the leader, operator or spotter when dealing with hung up trees

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