

Operate Chain Saws Properly During Storm Cleanup

(NAPSA)—In the aftermath of severe weather, homeowners and professionals alike reach for labor-saving tools—and often that includes a chain saw.

“When cleaning up after a storm, a chain saw is often in the hands of an inexperienced operator due to necessity,” said Andy Stanush, product manager for Husqvarna. “Especially in those extreme conditions, it’s crucial for anyone operating a saw to carefully review the owner’s manual and follow all recommended guidelines.”

Post-storm cleanup presents some of the most dangerous working conditions for a saw operator. Stanush recommends that should you have any concerns about handling a particular situation, rely on a professional arborist or tree-care expert instead of putting yourself or others at risk.

If you decide to operate a chain saw, Stanush offers six important precautions to follow regardless of the conditions:

1. Select the right saw. Use a mid-sized saw for cutting wood on the ground, such as one with a bar of 16 to 20 inches. For smaller limbs, a lightweight, high-speed saw is recommended. Look for design features like good balance, low vibration and high power-to-weight ratio.

2. Wear protective apparel. By far the most overlooked aspect of chain saw operation is appropriate apparel. A properly outfitted operator wears protective chaps or pants, eye and ear protection, protective footwear, work gloves and a helmet.

3. Inspect the saw before use. Ensure both the inertia and manual activation of the chain brake are in proper working condition. Inspect the chain catch for damage and have it repaired as necessary. Also, test the throttle lockout feature, inspect the bar and chain and repair or replace as necessary. While wearing gloves,



work the chain back and forth on the bar to test for proper tensioning and correct installation.

4. Start safe. A chain saw is safest to start on the ground with the chain brake engaged. Be sure nothing is obstructing the guide bar/chain. To make sure the saw sits securely on the ground, place your right foot in the rear handle.

5. Carefully plan your cutting job. Potential factors include tree lean, electric lines, wind, adjacent roads, bystanders and dead limbs. “Struck-by” injuries from falling limbs are one of the most common accidents for a saw operator. Work at a safe distance but never work alone.

6. Protect yourself against kickback. Never cut with the upper half of the tip of the bar. Kickback occurs when the tip of the bar comes in contact with an object or gets pinched during operation, causing the bar to “kick” up and back towards the operator and result in a loss of control and possible injury.

Last but not least, Stanush encourages people never to operate a chain saw when fatigued or under the influence of alcohol or medication.

For more information about proper chain saw operation, you can download a free instructional manual, “How to Work With a Chain Saw,” at www.usa.husqvarna.com. To locate a nearby dealer, call (800) HUSKY 62.