



# CHAINSAW SAFETY

Toolbox Talks for the members of Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities

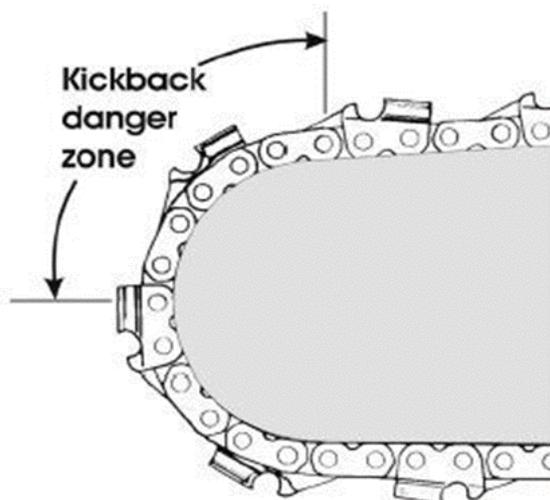
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**Operating a chain saw is an inherently hazardous job assignment. Potential injuries can be minimized by using proper personal protective equipment and safe operating procedures.**

Before starting a chainsaw there are a few things to keep in mind. Make sure to check all controls including the front hand bar and throttle, chain tension, all bolts and handles to ensure that they are functioning properly and that they are adjusted according to the manufacturer's instructions. Be sure the chain is sharp and well lubricated. It is important to check that the bar oil reservoir has plenty of oil to maintain proper chain lubrication. Before you attempt to pull start the saw, be sure the chain's brake is engaged. NEVER drop start a chainsaw, always start the saw on the ground or some other flat firm surface.

Only use approved storage containers for transportation and storage of chainsaw fuel. Dispense fuel at least 10 feet away from any potential ignition sources. Smoking should never be allowed while refueling of chainsaws. It is prohibited to refuel a chainsaw while it is running.

Clear away any dirt, debris, small tree limbs and rocks from the saw's path before beginning to make a cut. Look for nails, spikes or other metal in the tree before attempting to cut. If the chain makes contact with any of these items it will not only greatly damage the chain, but it also increases the chance to have a kickback or for some other potential injury to occur. The saw's brake should always be engaged while it is not being used to cut.



- Never attempt to start a saw cut in the "kickback danger zone". Bar nose kickback is one of the more common causes of serious chainsaw injuries. Bar tip guards can be installed on the end of the bar to prevent the chain from making contact, which can lead to a kickback.