

**How-To  
CLINICS**

# HURRICANE READINESS



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Protect your family.**

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## Chainsaw Safety

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A chainsaw is one of those tools that can be described thusly: When you need one, nothing else will really do. We'll help you find the right one for your needs as well as show you how to use one correctly.

You won't find a tool with more power per inch than a chainsaw. With that power comes a need for extra attention to safety. All of the new and efficient safety features do not replace training in correct saw use, proper cutting technique, caution and common sense.

### **Safety and the Saw**

All tools should be used with caution. Chainsaws are no exception. They are powerful tools. A saw blade at full throttle moves at fifty miles per hour and commands extra attention to safety. Among the common safety features on homeowner saws are:

- **Chain brake** - stops the chain immediately if kickback occurs.
- **Low-kickback chain** - reduces the energy when kickback occurs.
- **Bar tip guard/tip stabilizer** - keeps the tip of the saw from touching the wood.
- **Chain oiler** - provides lubricant to the bar and chain to prevent overheating and binding.
- **Hand guard** - protects your hands from kickback.
- **Throttle lockout trigger** - keeps the motor idling but doesn't engage the chain.
- **Stop switch** - allows the operator to shut off the saw without letting go of the saw.
- **Spark arrester** - prevents exhaust from being a fire hazard.

All homeowner-sized saws are required to have chain brakes and anti kickback safety features. Some of the other features listed above are available only on gas-powered saws.

### **Safety and the Sawyer**

Before you even think about cranking the saw and starting to cut, protect yourself. **ALWAYS** wear protective clothing, including:

- **Leg protection** such as chaps, leggings or cut resistant pants.
- **Hard hat** if there's any material overhead.
- **Gloves or mittens** with an enhanced gripping surface.
- **Eye protection** with side shields.
- **Hearing protection** such as earplugs or earmuffs.
- **Boots or shoes** with steel toes and nonskid soles.

**ALWAYS** be sure to start the chainsaw while it is flat on the ground, **DO NOT** start the chainsaw while holding it in the air.

### **Making the Cut**

**Felling** is the act of cutting (or dropping) a tree. Look and look again at what you're going to be cutting - especially where it will fall. Always determine the angle the tree will fall and make the correct cuts. Falling trees tend to kick straight back. Plan a clear avenue to escape the falling tree, moving away from the trunk at an angle, not straight back. Clear debris that may cause you to trip.

**Limbing** and **bucking** is what you do to the tree you just dropped. Just because the tree is down don't let down your guard. Taking off the limbs (limbing) and cutting the tree into manageable pieces (bucking) still require caution. Always work on the uphill side when cutting. See how the tree is balanced and which way it will move if a supporting branch is cut. Take special care to avoid binding and kickback that can occur when the weight shifts.

**Binding** and **kickback** are dangerous situations you face when cutting. In either case the operator loses control of the saw.

**Binding** is caused when the material being cut clamps down and stalls the cutting chain inside of the kerf (or cut).

**Kickback** occurs when the saw tip touches another object or the blade is pinched. The saw is thrown back towards the user. A saw cutting at full throttle can kick back in one-tenth of one second - faster than a person can react.

## Dos and Don'ts

Above all, read the owner's manual carefully before operating a chainsaw. The following list is not all-inclusive, merely a reminder to keep safety first in your mind at all times.

### Do

- Keep the cutting area clear of spectators and pets. Be sure that young children are kept clear of the area.
- Work with a partner if possible.
- Note any overhead hazards, including hanging tree limbs and utility lines.
- Keep the chain clean, sharp and lubricated.
- Be careful with fuel and be sure to store the fuel properly after use.
- Stay on the ground, don't cut from a ladder.
- Stand to the side when cutting.
- Cut at full throttle; bring the saw up to speed before starting cuts.
- Keep both hands on the saw handles.
- Let the saw come to a complete stop before reaching for the chain or blade.
- Buy the correct size and type of replacement chain and install it carefully according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- When running an electric saw, use a cord rated for outdoor use.
- Cut wood only. Dirt and rocks are not meant to touch the chain.
- Be careful with small branches - unweighted limbs may spring back when cut.
- Adjust the depth gauge setting every time you sharpen the chain.
- Maintain proper chain saw tension. A loose chain can come off the guide bar and strike the operator.

### Don't

- **DON'T** touch a hot muffler.
- **DON'T** cut above chest height.
- **DON'T** use the bar for leverage, it's there to guide and support the cutting chain.
- **DON'T** bury the tip in the wood.
- **DON'T** push the saw. Let the saw do the work. If you find that you have to push, stop and sharpen the chain.
- **DON'T** refuel a hot saw.
- **DON'T** drop start the saw.
- **DON'T** operate a saw when using alcohol, drugs or when you're fatigued.

### Materials/Products:

Recommended Items	Item Number
Poulan Pro Gas Chain Saw	98738
2 Gallon Gas Can	667
Protective Apparel	192767
Helmet with Ear Covers	192764
Bar & Chain Oil	193431
2 Cycle Oil	193429