



## **IN-WOODS TIRE CHANGING**

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Severe, sometimes fatal, injuries have resulted from improper techniques in jacking and blocking during tire changes, and during dismounting of tire assemblies on skidders and feller-bunchers. Many of these incidents and injuries can be prevented when proper procedures are followed. These procedures pertain to wheel assembly handling only. Tire repair should be left to off-road tire dealers, who have the expertise, tools, and time to do the job.

The following guidelines address safe removal of the tire and wheel assembly from off-road equipment.

- Wear proper protective gear: safety glasses, hard hat, and safety boots.
- When possible, the machine should rest on level ground.
- Place transmission in “park” position or engage parking brake.
- Chock unaffected tires to prevent the machine from rolling.
- The use of the grapple or front attachment on the machine may suffice as a jack, *but do not depend on it*. Always block up the axle on the side at which the tire is being changed, so as to prevent the machine from falling.
- Once the machine has been properly blocked and moving element have been grounded or otherwise secured, turn the engine off and release all hydraulic pressure and any other stored energy before loosening lug nuts.
- Use the right tools. The lug wrench should be long enough so that a cheater-pipe is not needed. If the wrench is bent, discard it. Do not heat to straighten it, as that tempers the metal, making the wrench subject to breakage.
- Before the lug nuts have been removed, take care that no one is in a position to be struck by a falling tire. Secure the tire. Do not remove the tire assembly manually.
- Once tire professionals have repaired the tire, reverse the previous steps to reinstall.
- When reinstalling the tire assembly, recheck that the machine is properly blocked, since settling of the machine may cause it to slip from its blocks.
- Once the lug nuts have been hand-tightened, tighten the opposite lug nuts to the manufacturer’s specifications.
- If airing an off-road tire is necessary, use a clip-on chuck and stand well back and to the side from the tire. Do not overinflate. Follow the manufacturer’s directions for proper inflation pressure.

*Prepared by the Southwide Safety Committee of the Forest Resources Association Inc.*