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**HIGH-SPEED DISC SAWHEAD SAFETY**

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In the past few years, the development of the High Speed Disc Saw has had a tremendous positive effect on the increased productivity in the timber harvesting industry. Proper training, safe operation and felling techniques, and maintenance of the disc saw must be implemented and continually monitored to insure the safety of the entire logging crew. Particular emphasis must be applied to the safety of any chain saw operators that are trimming limbs from felled trees away from the landing.

**Read and Understand the Operator's Manual for the Sawhead and Carrier Being Used.**

**Pre-start inspection of the disc sawhead:**

1. Wear your personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Check saw teeth and holders (if equipped) for loose hardware, sharpness, or damage. Replace damaged items before operating.
3. Check hydraulic hoses and lines, and replace if damaged.
4. Check accumulator arm, grab arms, and hydraulics for damage.
5. Check discharge chute for damage or blockage.

**Operation and safety guidelines:**

1. Only a trained, qualified employee shall operate the sawhead felling unit.
2. Keep track of any ground workers at all times, and be aware of structures, vehicles, and other equipment.
3. **Do not** operate disc saw within 300 feet of other workers or machinery. Flying debris, falling trees, limbs, and tops can cause severe injury or death.
4. **Never** direct chip discharge toward other workers or machines.
5. After shutdown, stop the disc from rotating by sawing into a stump.
6. "Stump" a rotating disc to stop it.
7. Leave cab only after the sawhead disc has stopped.
8. Maintain manufacturer's minimum recommended RPM for cutting tree.

**Maintenance:**

1. Always ground the sawhead or position it on blocks when performing maintenance. Use hydraulic cylinder stops if available.
2. Always use eye and hand protection when repairing or sharpening saw teeth.
3. Do not use your hands to turn the disc for maintenance. Use a tool or stick.
4. Use the manufacturer's maintenance schedule and guidelines for maintaining the proper torque on tooth hardware.
5. Check discharge chute and repair or replace if damaged.

Contractors, disc cutter operators, and those who work with them may wish to purchase a 17-minute safety instructional video, *The Cutting Edge of Safety*. The video and accompanying Discussion Leader's Guide are available from the Forest Resources Association (refer to publication stock number 01-A-4; cost is \$35 to FRA members, \$70 to all others).

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