

# ALASKA FACE Facts

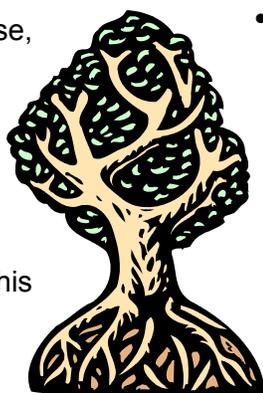
Department of Health and Social Services  
Division of Public Health-Section of CHEMS  
Occupational Injury Prevention Program

## Owner of Logging Company Crushed by Rootwad of Windfall Tree During Bucking Operation

A 32-year-old male tree faller/bucker (the victim) was killed while bucking an uprooted hemlock windfall (a tree blown down by the wind) approximately 115 feet long and 26 inches in diameter at the base. The windfall's root system (rootwad) was about 3 feet deep, and had a diameter of about 15 feet. The windfall was located on a mountain where the average slope was between 60 and 70%. The victim first cut 30 feet off the tree top and then tried to cut the rootwad off near the tree base, but was unable to do so because the chain saw bar bound up in each of 4 cuts made approximately 80% of the way through the tree. The victim then moved downslope of the tree and began driving a wedge into his last cut using a sledge hammer. Within seconds the rootwad broke loose from the

tree and rolled and slid about 25 feet downslope, completely engulfing and fatally crushing the victim. NIOSH researchers concluded that, to prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- **ensure that fallers and buckers properly evaluate felled trees and the area around the trees, so that potential hazards can be avoided during bucking**
- **ensure that all logging workers receive adequate training in safe work procedures**
- **designate a competent person to conduct inspections to ensure that workers follow established safe falling and bucking procedures.**



To view previous FACE reports please visit the Occupational Injury Prevention Program website:  
[http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chems/occupation\\_injury](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chems/occupation_injury)

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