



Alaska Face Facts

Occupational Injury Prevention Program

Section of Epidemiology

Division of Public Health

Department of Health and Social Services

September 2000

Logger killed when struck by rebounding tree

SUMMARY

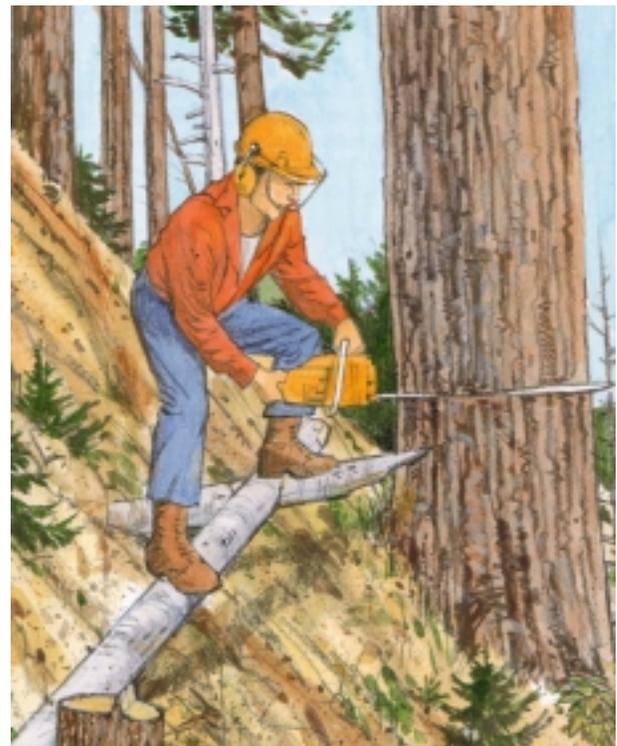
A logger (the victim) was killed while cutting a tree that rebounded after it became lodged in the fork of two trees. The victim was one of three cutters assigned to a work site on a steep forested hillside. There were no witnesses to the incident, but the evidence indicated that the victim was felling trees as he ascended the slope.

His intended lay for the tree was across the slope of the hillside. The tree fell slightly uphill and became lodged in the fork of two trees. As the weight of the cut tree was held by the fork, the top of the cut tree broke off. The release of counterweight caused the lower portion of the tree to rebound up the slope and to strike the cutter.

After the victim's coworkers met at an agreed upon meeting spot, they hiked back to his last sighted location. The victim was found next to his chainsaw, without pulse or respiration. The victim's coworkers hiked back to their truck and reported the incident by radio. Alaska State Troopers were notified and the body was recovered. The victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

Based on the findings of this investigation, to prevent similar occurrences, employers should:

- **Ensure that all cutters are capable of casing trees for internal rot so that they can modify their cutting procedures, if necessary;**
- **Ensure that all cutters working on steep terrain fell trees according to safe methods in accordance with 29 CFR 1919.266.**



**FACE reports can be viewed on the
Occupational Injury Prevention Program
website**

<http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/programs/injury>

or

Call or fax your request to:

907-269-8000 (phone) 907-562-7802 (fax)