



Effective Date: 11/01/2014

Revised Date:

BOSQUE THINNING CREW OPERATIONS

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish organizational structure within Valencia County Emergency Services (VCES), focusing on the effort to minimize the threat of catastrophic wildfire. Ensuring safe, thorough and effective work practices for all those involved. This policy will describe the responsibilities for all Bosque thinning crew employees.

Policy:

All VCES thinning crew shall practice safe and effective operations according to NWCG and current OSHA regulations.

I. Required Qualifications

- a. All Crew leads must;
 - i. Obtain New Mexico Department of Agriculture Applicators License for:
 - 1. 1B, Agriculture Weeds
 - 2. 2, Forest pest and weeds
 - 3. 6B, Right-Of-Way and Industrial Weeds
- b. All Crew members must;
 - i. Maintain Red Card currency.
 - ii. Annual Arduous Pack test.
 - iii. Annual RT-130 Safety refresher.
 - iv. Completion of S212 for all Fallers/chainsaw operators.
 - v. Proper training on Chipper Machine and familiarization of the Chipper-Shredder safety manual.

II. Daily Operation Requirements;

- a. Crew Leads must maintain time, and production records on a daily basis.
- b. Crew Leads must supervise workers during chipper machine operations.
- c. Ensure all equipment is maintained, cleaned and refueled daily, utilizing proper PPE.



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- i. Eye protection
 - ii. Leather gloves
 - iii. Hearing Protection
 - d. PPE for mixing fuel
 - i. Eye protection
 - ii. Nitrile gloves
- III. Chipper Machine Safety
 - a. Hazards arise when workers get too close to, or make contact with the chipper while in the run/on position. Contact with the chippers operating components (blades, discs, or knives) may result in amputation or death. Workers may also be injured by material thrown from the machine. Possible hazards are as follows;
 - i. Workers pulled into the chipper
 - ii. Hearing loss
 - iii. Face, eye, head, torso or extremity injuries.
- IV. Safe work practices – Proper work practices are essential for daily operations. Crew Leads shall reinforce safe work practices on a regular basis, such as during safety briefings or "toolbox talks". The following are recommended safe chipper work practices to reduce "caught-in" and "struck-by" hazards:
 - a. Follow chain of command at all times.
 - b. **FREELANCING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**
 - c. Wear required PPE during all operations.
 - d. Workers must be properly trained prior to participation in any operations.
 - e. Designate one or more employees as a safety watch to be stationed near emergency shut-off devices while other employees feed material into the chipper.
 - f. Stand to the side of the infeed chute when feeding material into the chipper. This reduces the "caught-in" hazard and allows quick access to emergency stop devices.



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- g. Keep hands and feet out of the immediate infeed chute area while the chipper is running.
- h. Push material into feed rollers with a wooden tool or a long branch.
- i. Feed branches into the chipper butt-end first.
- j. Place shorter branches on top of longer branches being fed into the chipper.
- k. Place small debris into trash cans instead of feeding it into the chipper.
- l. Never stand, sit or climb onto any part of the chipper while it is running.
- m. Shut down the chipper and remove the ignition key when it is unattended.
- n. Before starting a chipper, ensure that the chipper's disc hood is completely closed and latched, and that there are no foreign objects in the infeed area.
- o. Ensure that the discharge chute is positioned to prevent chips from hitting employees.
- p. Do not stand in front of the feed table when the chipper is running.
- q. Check material to be fed to ensure that it is free of metal and other foreign objects.
- r. Use proper locking pins to immobilize the disc cutting wheel when attempting to clear a clogged chipper chute or changing chipper blades.
- s. Never reach into a chipper while it is in operation.
- t. DO NOT wear loose-fitting clothing around the chipper.
- u. Follow manufacturer's guidelines and safety instructions.
- v. Chalking the tires of all equipment i.e trailers, chipper trailers, etc.
- w. Use lockout system when 'unjamming' the chipper machine ensuring the equipment is de-energized.
- x. Maintain a safe distance (two or three log lengths) between chipper operations.
- y. Protect yourself from contacting operating chipper components by guarding the infeed and discharge ports. Preventing the opening of the access covers/doors until the drum completely stops.

V. Chain Saw Safety

- a. Before Starting
 - i. Check controls, chain tension, and all bolts and handles to ensure that they are functioning properly and that they are adjusted according to the manufacturer's recommendations.



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- ii. Make sure that the chain is always sharp and the lubrication reservoir is full.
- iii. Start the saw on the ground or on another firm support. Drop starting is never allowed.
- iv. Start the saw at least 10 feet from the fueling area, with the chain's brake engaged.

b. Fueling

- i. **No smoking during fueling or while in the fueling area.**
- ii. Use a funnel or a flexible hose when pouring fuel into the saw.
- iii. Never attempt to fuel a running or HOT saw.

c. Saw Operations

- i. Wear required PPE during all operations.
- ii. Clear away dirt, debris, small tree limbs and rocks from the saw's chain path. Look for nails, spikes or other metal in the tree before cutting.
- iii. Shut off the saw or engage its chain brake when carrying the saw on rough or uneven terrain.
- iv. Keep your hands on the saw's handles, and maintain secure footing while operating the saw.
- v. Be careful that the trunk or tree limbs will not bind against the saw.
- vi. Watch for branches under tension, they may spring out when cut.
- vii. Be cautious of saw kick-back. To avoid kick-back, do not saw with the tip. If equipped, keep tip guard in place.