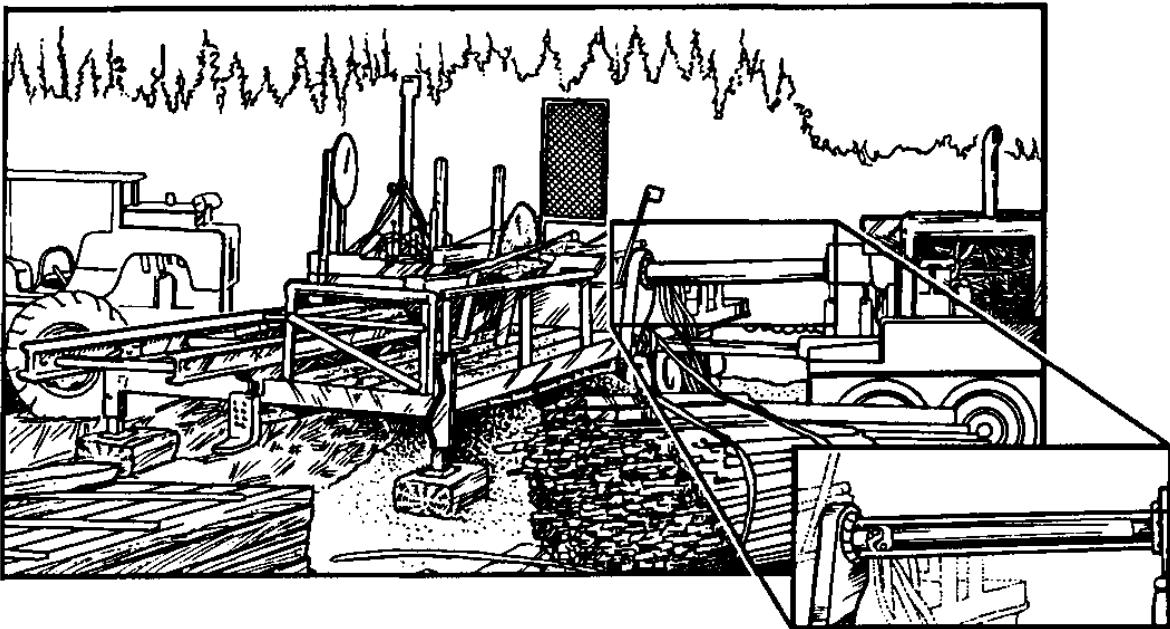


Work **Safe!** Bulletin

SAWMILL SAFETY: TO SAVE YOUR LIFE

Bulletin No.: 146
September 1992



A portable sawmill worker in the Belair Forest area was fatally injured. He was struck on the side of the head by an unguarded, runaway drive shaft. The Workplace Safety and Health Branch's investigation showed the following factors contributed to the worker's death:

- a log loader machine operating in the immediate area accidentally backed into the portable sawmill causing it to shift off of its support blocks, which in turn allowed the unguarded, rotating drive shaft which connected the sawmill to the power generator unit to break free and strike the victim
- poor visibility of the log loader machine operator when backing up
- no protective guard covering the rotating drive shaft to prevent it from disengaging and flying away from the sawmill/power generator.

Under section 4(1),(2) of the Workplace Safety and Health Act, every employer is required to provide and maintain a workplace, and equipment that is safe, as well as provide appropriate training and supervision for all of his workers.

Manitoba Regulation 108/88R, section 15 requires every employer to guard securely, as far as is practicable, all dangerous parts of machinery, shafting, mill-gearing, wheels, belting, vessels, and all other dangerous structures.

General Safety Factors for the Safe Operation of a Portable Sawmill

- ❑ Possible vibration of the sawmill components causing shifting
- ❑ Proper blocking and levelling of all sawmill components to prevent movement
- ❑ Personal Protective Equipment (P.P.E.), hard hats, safety boots, eye protection, hearing protection, hand protection, etc.
- ❑ Ensure all electrical connections, cables, and cords, are kept in good repair
- ❑ Ensure that lighting is adequate for work at night
- ❑ Ensure that the saw blade is adequately guarded to prevent accidental contact by workers while in operation
- ❑ Have the power generator "kill switch" in an easily accessible location
- ❑ Have a proper, fully charged fire extinguisher immediately available at the job site
- ❑ Have an adequate, fully stocked first aid kit on hand at all times
- ❑ Provide an adequate system of communication such as a telephone or equivalent in the event of an emergency
- ❑ Ensure that an appropriate form of transportation is available for emergency use
- ❑ To avoid any congestion problems, ensure that time is taken on a regular basis to clean up the job site (housekeeping)
- ❑ Ensure that all workers have been trained in the general requirements of the job as well as their specific work requirements
- ❑ Implement W.H.M.I.S. requirements if there are any "controlled products" stored, used or handled on the job site, (labelling, material safety data sheets, worker training and education)
- ❑ Ensure a regular maintenance program for all sawmill components is in place
- ❑ Install back up alarms on all mobile machinery and equipment used on the site.

**Remember: Don't take chances.
Check all work procedures
BEFORE the job starts.**