

Fencing FACTSHEET

FENCE CONSTRUCTION SAFETY

This Factsheet outlines both Workers' Compensation Board and general fence construction safety concerns.

CONSTRUCTION SAFETY: Workers' Compensation Board (WCB)

There are numerous safety concerns in fence construction. Many are related to either the rugged terrain or the equipment used, such as post drivers and chain saws. Specific concerns are outlined in "*Regulations for Occupational Health and Safety in Agriculture*" issued by the Workers' Compensation Board of B.C. dated April 30, 1993, listed below.

Fencing Equipment

Post-hole Digger

137. Post-hole diggers shall have
- (a) the tractor or machine brakes set before digging,
 - (b) shear bolts as specified by the manufacturer, and
 - (c) a hold-to-run control (deadman switch) when operated as a hand-held unit.

Post Drivers

138. Workers operating post drivers shall
- (a) lower the hammer and stop the engine when adjustment or maintenance is required,
 - (b) where necessary, steady the post with a steady fork or guide, and
 - (c) lower or block the hammer when the machine is not in use.

Chain Saws - Standards for Saws

141. A chain saw purchased for use after December 31, 1993
- (a) shall meet the requirements of Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard CAN3-Z62.1-M85, "Chain Saws" or other standard acceptable to the Board, and
 - (b) be fitted with a cutting chain that meets the requirements of Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z-62.3 M1990, "Chain Saw Kickback" or other standard acceptable to the Board.

Chain Saws - Operation

74. A worker, when regularly operating a chain saw in circumstances where a hazard of leg injury exists, shall wear leg protection devices meeting the requirements of
- (a) CAN/BNQ 1923-450-M91, "Leg Protective Device for Chain Saw Users", or
 - (b) WCB Standard "Leg Protection for Chain Saw Users" (WCB PPE 14.1), or
 - (c) American Pulpwood Association Standard, "Leg Protection for Chain Saw Users, June 1992", or
 - (d) other standard acceptable to the Board.

**General
Protection for
Workers**

Other general items of safety concern are also covered in the WCB publication, specifically Part 7, "Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment". Some of those concerns are covered below (the number refers to the WCB regulation number) with a summary comment; refer to the publication for the complete regulation.

Moving Machinery

68. The concern of moving parts of equipment and loose clothing is noted (such as PTO drive shafts for post drivers).

Safety Footwear

71. Footwear should be appropriate (such as leather boots).

Hand Protection

79. Conditions when it is required.

Eye Protection

81. Conditions when it is required.
82. CSA standard.

Hearing Protection

93. Conditions when it is required.
94. (2) CSA standard.

**Equipment Guarding
and Agricultural**

Section 8 of the WCB publication contains regulations regarding equipment guards and agricultural tractor safety concerns. Two are listed below; refer to the publication

Tractors

for the complete regulations.

Power Take-off

101 (1) Each power take-off shaft, including rear, mid or side mounted (PTO) guarding shafts, shall be guarded by:

- (a) a master shield, or
- (b) where the attachment of PTO driven equipment requires removal of the master shield, a guard of equivalent protection.

(2) PTO driven equipment shall be guarded to prevent contact with the rotating members of the power drive system.

**Rollover Protective
Structures (ROPS)**

106. Requirements of rollover protection for agricultural tractor.
107–115. Standards and details.

**CONSTRUCTION
SAFETY:
General Concerns**

Other safety concerns are the 'common sense' items listed below:

- Wear tightly woven, tough clothing that will not catch on the ends of wire.
- Wear heavy duty, snug fitting gloves when handling treated posts.
- Wear long pants and high ankle work boots with heavy soles and steel toes.
- Wear safety goggles or eye shields when cutting or tensioning wire and driving nails or staples.

- Wear a hard hat and ear plugs or earmuffs when operating a power post driver.
 - Never carry nails or staples in pants pockets; use a nail apron or tool bag.
 - Use proper shields on power equipment.
 - Keep children and livestock away from all fencing operations
 - When handling or working on chemically treated wood protect exposed skin (gloves, face shields, etc.).
 - Pick up all cut ends of wire, dropped staples and nails, etc. so they will not cause injury to other people or livestock.
 - Stop all fencing operations during electrical storms.
 - Install proper ground wires to wire fences as soon as they are erected.
 - Wire is an excellent conductor; be careful around overhead power wires.
 - Care must be taken when handling and cutting all fence wire, especially high tensile wire. While low tensile or ‘soft’ wire is relatively ‘limp’ when cut, high tensile wire is extremely ‘springy’ and may injure the unsuspecting worker. Both ends of the cut wire must be restrained or at least the worker must be aware of where the loose cut end may go. To avoid the wire curling up or rolling back to its’ supply drum, stick the wire end into the ground 3 or 4 inches to restrain it.
 - High quality cutting pliers are required to allow high tensile wire to be cut with a ‘normal’ effort. Standard cutters will require too much effort to cut this wire.
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Resource Management Branch

www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt

Linking to our

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