



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM
Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division

July 2, 2004

Revised: January 26, 2012

TO: All OR-OSHA

FROM: Marilyn Schuster
Policy Manager

SUBJECT: Leg Protection for Fire Fighters Using Chain Saws

Question: Are chaps or leg protection required to be worn by fire fighters using chain saws?

Background: OAR 437-002-0182 is the vertical standard that addresses foot and leg protection for fire fighting activities. Oregon OSHA practice and administrative law prohibits moving from a specific standard which addresses a topic to a more general standard. In this case, OAR 437-002-0182(15) addresses "Foot and Leg Protection". Division 2/I, OAR 437-002-0134(11)(b) addresses rules for leg protection for chain saw use. The fire fighters' standard was written with the need for quick action, coupled with a high degree of training. It would be expected that all fire fighters using a chain saw would receive standardized training (supported by a written training package and documentation), and would be competent in their ability to safely use a chain saw.

Action: When using a chain saw for structural ventilation or another activity directly related to fire fighting, or when training for such an activity, the use of chaps or leg protectors by fire fighters is not required when:

- 1) The fire fighter is trained and proficient in the safe use of a chain saw; and
- 2) Turn-out trousers are worn.

All other (non-fire fighting) uses of a chain saw (such as cleaning up a fire scene or performing yard work around the station) require chaps or leg protectors to be worn.