

ONTARIO FORESTRY SAFE WORKPLACE ASSOCIATION

# Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding



**OF SWA**  
Ontario Forestry Safe Workplace Association

# *Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding*

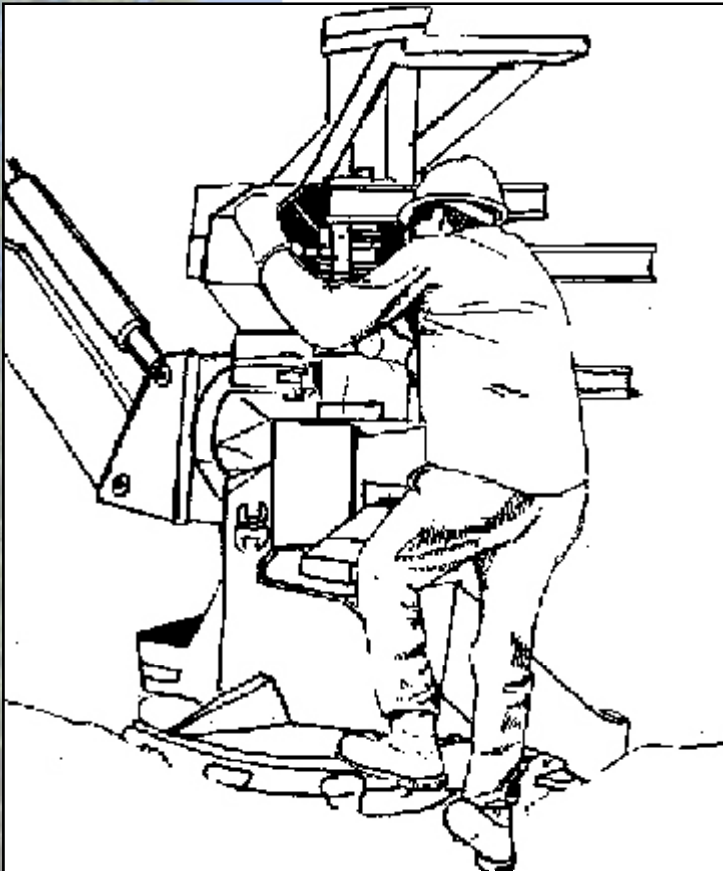
## **Background**

1. The Ontario Forestry Safe Workplace Association has identified critical injuries and other incidents relating to improper lockout and guarding associated with feller buncher sawheads.
2. Employers and equipment operators have identified concerns with the size, weight and necessary frequency of use of guarding devices.
3. The Ontario Ministry of Labour has recently identified the issue of compliance with these safety procedures as an area of concern within the forest industry.

## Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding

### Industry Alert!

### Critical Injury: Continuous Rotation Blade



A feller buncher operator noticed that one of the two “grab arms” on the felling head of his machine was not operating properly. He lowered the felling head to the ground and turned off the switch to the hydraulic pump powering the continuous-rotation blade. He then left his cab and climbed up onto the felling head to examine the hydraulic cylinder attached to the malfunctioning grab arm. While he was doing so, he inadvertently let his right foot come into contact with the blade, which was still spinning at high speed even though it had been shut down several minutes earlier. He lost a third of his foot, including all the toes.



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### **Provincial Forestry Guideline**

Two safe operating procedures have been developed in the form of a provincial forestry guideline which outlines the use of the lock pin and/or saw guard during feller buncher sawhead maintenance and lockout.

This guideline has been accepted by the Forestry Sector Interagency Group as an accepted best practice which industry feels would be appropriate to ensure worker safety



## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

**Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance, repairs or cleaning with feller buncher saw blade not running.**

- *Employers must ensure that a written safe operating procedure is available, workers are trained in this procedure and ongoing monitoring and enforcement of the procedure are maintained.*
  - Ensure that the danger zone rule with other workers and equipment is enforced.
  - Park equipment on level ground, lower all attachments and secure the machine.
  - Establish and maintain good communications with other workers.



## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

**Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance, repairs or cleaning with feller buncher saw blade not running.**

- De-energize the equipment and ensure that all attachments are at a zero-energy state (follow the established lockout procedures outlined in the safe operating procedure for this machine).
- Wear all required personal protective equipment when exiting the cab.
- Conduct a visual check to ensure that the disc saw blade has stopped moving prior to approaching the sawhead. *Even a slow-moving saw can cause serious injury.*



## **Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding**

### **Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance, repairs or cleaning with feller buncher saw blade not running.**

- Install the saw locking pin to prevent the free rotation of the disc saw blade. The pin is installed through the hole in the outside of the frame of the sawhead and must be fully inserted to block the saw from turning. *(It is recommended that the disc saw blade guard not be required when the saw is not running, the machine is locked out and the pin has been secured in place.)* It is understood that in certain situations, such as when changing teeth on the disc saw blade, the pin must be removed during the maintenance process to rotate the blade, after which it will be reinserted.



## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

**Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance, repairs or cleaning with feller buncher saw blade not running.**

- Upon completion of the necessary maintenance, cleaning or repair activities, the saw locking pin can be removed, lockout is reversed based on the established safe operating procedures and the worker returns to the cab of the machine and follows the regular machine start-up procedures.



## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

### **Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance or repairs with feller buncher disc saw blade running.**

- ***Employers must ensure that a written safe operating procedure is available, workers are trained in this procedure and ongoing monitoring and enforcement of the procedure are maintained.***
  - Ensure that the danger zone rule with other workers and equipment is enforced.
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## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

### **Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance or repairs with feller buncher disc saw blade running.**

- De-energize the equipment and ensure that all attachments are at a zero- energy state (follow the established lockout procedures outlined in the safe operating procedure for this machine).
- Wear all required personal protective equipment when exiting the cab.
- Conduct a visual check to ensure that the disc saw blade has stopped moving prior to approaching the sawhead. *Even a slow-moving saw can cause serious injury.*

## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

### **Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance or repairs with feller buncher disc saw blade running.**

- Install the saw guard and secure the guard in place with the necessary bolts. Ensure that the immediate area is free of debris that may be drawn into and thrown by the disc saw blade.
- Return to the cab and follow the established machine start-up procedure. Follow the safe operating procedure for conducting running tests of the disc saw blade based on established procedures.
- When tests are completed, de-energize the equipment and ensure that all attachments are at a zero-energy state (follow the established lockout procedures outlined in the safe operating procedure for this machine).



## ***Feller Buncher Sawhead Guarding***

### **Provincial Forestry guideline for conducting maintenance or repairs with feller buncher disc saw blade running.**

- Wear all required personal protective equipment when exiting the cab.
- Conduct a visual check to ensure that the disc saw blade has stopped moving prior to approaching the sawhead. Even a slow-moving saw can cause serious injury.
- Upon completion of the necessary maintenance or repair activities, the saw guard can be removed, lockout is reversed based on established safe operating procedures and the worker returns to the cab of the machine and follows the established machine start-up procedures.

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### **Implementation of Guideline:**

- OFSWA took the lead in carrying the proposed provincial forestry guideline for safe guarding and lockout of a feller buncher sawhead while conducting maintenance, repairs or cleaning to the Forestry Sector Interagency Group and Provincial Forestry Tripartite Committee.
- OFSWA coordinated an industry response to any questions or concerns the Ministry of Labour or committee members identified in reviewing the proposed provincial forestry guideline.

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### **Implementation of Guideline:**

- The accepted provincial forestry guideline for safe guarding and lockout of a feller buncher sawhead while conducting maintenance, repairs or cleaning will be jointly communicated to the forest industry and equipment manufacturers and suppliers by the Ministry of Labour and OFSWA.
- OFSWA will assist industry in providing ongoing communication of the new code provincial forestry guideline and will assist industry in developing the necessary site-specific safe operating procedures for implementation.