

North Country National Scenic Trail  
“TAILGATE SAFETY SERIES”



**CHAINSAW SAFETY**

Chainsaw safety is every saw operator’s job. It is also the job of everyone assisting the sawyer.

- Always wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when handling or working around chainsaws—this applies to both the sawyer and those working in the vicinity of the sawyer
  - Eye Protection (approved goggles, safety glasses, or mesh face shields)
  - Chainsaw Chaps (proper size and length) *\*Required for sawyer only*
  - Gloves
  - Long Sleeve Shirt (no loose sleeves)
  - Protective Boots (no loose boot laces)
  - Hard Hat
  - Hearing Protection (ear plugs or shooter’s muffs)
  - First Aid Kit (on site)
  
- Take the time to inspect the chainsaw before operating the saw
  - Check the chain and bar (sharpness of chain, bar seated correctly)
  - Check for missing or loose screws and bolts all around the saw
  - Check the casing of the saw for cracked or missing plastic
  
- Make sure you’re aware of your surroundings while operating the saw
  - Look for people working in your area—establish a zone where others may not enter
  - Look for snags or other hazards (power lines, dead tops, etc.) before cutting
  - Always work with a trained swamper or spotter for safety communication
  - Be attentive to your footing—terrain that is slippery, rocky, steep, or cluttered with branches is dangerous

- Always make sure you are comfortable doing the task at hand
  - Proper training for personnel running saws and assisting the sawyer
  - Identify an escape route before falling any tree
  - Do not attempt to fall a tree that is beyond your ability or comfort zone—notify your supervisor if you need assistance—mitigate the safety hazard if leaving the tree uncut until later (flag off area, post trailhead notices, etc.)

References:

Six Minutes for Safety, [http://www.nifc.gov/sixminutes/dsp\\_sixminutes.php](http://www.nifc.gov/sixminutes/dsp_sixminutes.php)