



Tailgate Safety Training for Landscaping and Horticultural Services

Agricultural Safety Program, 590 Woody Hayes Drive, Columbus, OH 43210

Tree Pruning, Trimming, and Felling Safety

Objective: Identify the risks in tree pruning, trimming, and felling and how to avoid them.

How to Use This Module

Pruning, trimming, and felling trees all involve serious hazards. For this module:

- Read the information below on hazards and safety practices in pruning, trimming, and felling trees.
- Discuss the risks in tree pruning, trimming, and felling with your supervisor and other workers.
- Review the important points.
- Take the True/False test to check your learning.

Background

Pruning, trimming, and felling trees are risky because:

- Workers can fall.
- Workers can come into contact with overhead power lines.
- Workers are using loud and dangerous tools like chain saws.
- Falling limbs or trees can strike workers or by-standers on the ground.

Many hazards involved in pruning, trimming, and felling are covered in detail in other Tailgate Safety Training modules.

Hazard	Tailgate Safety Training Module
Falling	<i>Preventing Falls From Trees Tree Pruning and Ladder Safety Bucket Trucks and Aerial Lifts</i>
Electrocution	<i>Overhead Electrical Hazards</i>
Being cut by chain saws or trimmers	<i>Chain Saw Safety</i>
Loud, continued noise from equipment like chain saws	<i>Protecting Against Noise</i>
Being struck by falling branches or trees	<i>Struck-By Accidents Protecting the Head</i>

Tree climbing using rope systems can be more risky than working from a bucket truck or aerial lift due to:

- Unstable work position.
- Weakness of ropes to damage from equipment such as chainsaws.
- Physical fatigue from using ropes.

General Safety Tips for Tree Pruning, Trimming, and Felling

- **Check for overhead power lines!**
- Inform co-workers and neighbors in the vicinity.
- If a ladder is used, tie it to the tree and use a ladder to have access above the branch.
- Use a fall-arrest harness attached to a secure part of the tree.
- Use warning signs around the work site to prevent public access.
- Use control lines on trees, to direct their fall in the intended direction.
- When felling, keep a distance of at least twice the length of the tree between the tree and people.
- Have a co-worker assist in controlling movement of falling branches.
- Stay at least 10 feet away from power lines.
- Use an observer to watch out for power lines.
- Safety observer should wear protective clothing.
- All workers and observers should wear hard hat, goggles, hearing protection, fluorescent vest, cut-resistant trousers, and safety boots.

Review These Important Points

- Use warning signs and barricades around the work site to prevent public access.
- Wear hard hat, goggles, hearing protection, fluorescent vest, cut-resistant trousers, and safety boots.
- Have a co-worker assist in controlling movement of falling branches.
- Use an observer to watch out for power lines.

About These Modules

The author team for the training modules in the landscape and horticultural tailgate training series includes Dee Jepsen, Program Director, Agricultural Safety and Health, Ohio State University Extension; Michael Wonacott, Research Specialist, Vocational Education; Peter Ling, Greenhouse Specialist; and Thomas Bean, Agricultural Safety Specialist. Modules were developed with funding from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, Grant Number 46E3-HT09.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Agriculture or the U.S. Department of Labor.

Answer Key: 1 = T, 2 = T, 3 = T, 4 = F, 5 = F.

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Name _____

True or False?

1. Hazards in tree pruning, trimming, and felling are electrocution, falling, noise, and being struck. T F
2. For your safety, use a fall-arrest harness attached to a secure part of the tree. T F
3. Use control lines on trees to direct their fall in the intended direction. T F
4. When felling, keep a distance of at least half of the length of the tree between the tree and people. T F
5. Safety observers do not need to wear protective clothing. T F