Logging Operations - Tree Harvesting

Logging consists of cutting trees, removing the limbs and branches, and cutting or splitting the trees into manageable logs. Trees and logs are then moved to central locations by one of several methods (e.g., skidding or forwarding).

Safe loading and unloading

Position the transport vehicle so that there is sufficient working clearance between the vehicle and the deck. Only the loading or unloading machine operator and other essential personnel may be in the loading or unloading work area during this operation.

No transport vehicle operator may remain in the cab during loading and unloading if the logs are carried or moved over the truck cab, unless the employer demonstrates that it is necessary for the operator to do so. If the transport vehicle operator must remain in the cab, the operator must be protected (e.g., the cab must be reinforced).

Place each log on the transport vehicle in an orderly manner and secure it tightly. Position the load to prevent slippage or loss during handling and transport.

Each stake and chock being used to trip loads must be constructed so that the tripping mechanism is activated on the side opposite the release of the load.

Leave each tie down in place over the peak log to secure all logs until the unloading lines (or equivalent protection) have been put in place. A stake may be used as equivalent protection if it is strong enough to withstand the forces of shifting or moving logs and if the logs are not loaded higher than the stake.

Release each tie down only from the side on which the unloading machine operates, except as follows:

• When the tie down is released by a remote control device.
• When the employee making the release is protected by racks, stanchions, or other protection that is capable of withstanding the force of the logs.

Employee training

OSHA regulations contain specific training requirements for logging operations. At 29 CFR 1910.266(i)(3), the rule says that, at a minimum, training must consist of the following elements:

• Safe performance of assigned work tasks.
• Safe use, operation and maintenance of tools, machines and vehicles the employee uses or operates, including emphasis on understanding and following the manufacturer’s operating and maintenance instructions, warnings and precautions.
• Recognition of safety and health hazards associated with the employee’s specific work tasks, including the use of measures and work practices to prevent or control those hazards.

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These talks are a valuable part of your membership to the NDSC. Only members have access to them. If you have questions or need specific consultation about your safety plan, contact our Safety Consultants at 701-751-6100.
• Recognition, prevention and control of other safety and health hazards in the logging industry.
• Procedures, practices, and requirements of your work site.
• The requirements of 1910.266.

Training tips
Review the types of machinery your workers will be using and the availability and location of the operating and maintenance instructions for that equipment.

Where to go for more information