

Logging Operations: Tree Harvesting

Scenario – Answer Key

During tree harvesting, trees must not be felled so they create a hazard for an employee. Keep felled trees from striking a rope, cable, power line, or machine.

It happened like this

Ricardo was planning the felling of the tree. The first thing he did was clear a retreat path. Next, Ricardo made an undercut in the trunk to guide the direction of the tree fall and to prevent splitting or kickback. His final move was to make a backcut. Two things happened when the tree fell. First, an accumulation of snow and ice on the tree branches fell, just missing Ricardo, who wasn't wearing his hardhat. Second, the backcut wasn't done properly and the tree didn't fall in the intended direction. This caused Ricardo to abandon the retreat path he had taken. His new retreat path caused him to have to move through heavy brush, resulting in deep scratches across his arms.

Let's talk about this, okay?

What are the issues?

- Hazardous tree condition because of snow and ice.
- Improper PPE use.
- Improper backcut of the trunk.

What did Ricardo do right?

- Planned and cleared retreat path.
- Made an undercut in tree.
- Made a backcut.

What did Ricardo do wrong?

- Didn't check the tree for accumulated snow and ice.
- Wasn't wearing his hardhat.
- Didn't make a proper backcut, resulting in not having sufficient hinge wood to guide the tree's fall in the intended direction.
- Had to abandon path and retreat through the heavy brush which caused injury to his bare arms.



What happens next?

What do you think should happen next?

- Ricardo should be disciplined.
- Additional training should be provided on the safety requirements for manual felling and proper use of PPE.

Training tips

Safety practices, means, methods and operations, and personal protective equipment are necessary in order to avoid or decrease logging hazards. Listed below are some ways to decrease injuries related to logging:

- Wearing personal protective equipment such as hardhats, gloves, leather chaps, and eye protection.
- Having work areas assigned so that trees cannot fall into an adjacent occupied work area.
- Using hand signals or audible contact whenever noise, distance, restricted visibility, or other factors prevent clear understanding of normal voice communications between employees.
- Handling, storing, using, and transporting flammable and combustible liquids along with explosives and blasting agents in accordance with the requirements of Part 1910, subpart H.
- Shutting off machines, vehicles, and portable powered tools during fueling.
- Avoiding overhead electrical or power lines.
- Monitoring weather conditions and dressing accordingly.
- Carrying fire extinguishers.
- Using seat belts.

