

## Safety Equipment - the Gift that keeps on giving

Do you know someone who uses a chainsaw? They could be cutting firewood for home heating, trimming trees around their properties, or managing their forest lands for any number of reasons. If you do, then you might wish to consider giving them personal chainsaw safety equipment and clothing for Christmas this year.

A chainsaw is a very useful tool for felling and trimming trees and shrubs but it is also a very powerful tool. If used incorrectly or without the proper precautions it can cause serious injuries or even death. Often people use a chainsaw with little or no training. Many do not even wear basic safety clothing even though this equipment is relatively inexpensive and available at hardware store and safety equipment retailers in most parts of the province.

The first thing to look at buying a proper safety helmet or hard hat. Many people have been hit on the head by falling branches and debris while felling a tree, so a good helmet will help to prevent or minimize head injuries. Wearing a brightly coloured helmet also helps to improve your visibility and reduces the chances that a tree will be felled in your direction by people who are working nearby.

Helmets also serve as a platform where you can mount safety screens and ear protectors. Safety screens enable you to see where you are working while preventing wood chips, sawdust and tree branches from hitting your eyes. Ear protectors serve two purposes; first they act as a buffer from the noise of the chainsaw, and secondly, they also help to keep the helmet secured to the sides of your head.

Another practical and affordable product is chainsaw cutter pants or chaps. Made of Kelvar or other tough cut but light weight protective materials, these pants are designed to snag and stop chainsaw teeth before they can cut into the operator's leg. They also come in bright colours to increase visibility enabling the chainsaw operator to clearly see where their knees and legs are in relationship to the spinning chain.

Many forest worker also use chainsaw cutter safety boots. The boots are waterproof, have nonslip treads and are made of brightly coloured plastic for enhanced visibility. They are impregnated with layers of Kelvar to help slow down the chainsaw teeth if they strike the foot area. Good work gloves are also a must for most tree cutters to prevent cuts and scrapes when handling tree parts and branches.

Chainsaw safety equipment makes excellent gifts that provide benefits year round.