

Remember

Chainsaws may seem simple to use, but using a chainsaw and clearing trees and branches are operations that require training and proper safety precautions. Before using a chainsaw, homeowners should carefully consider the need to improve their skills with a practical, hands-on training experience. Homeowners can learn both chainsaw safety and proper cutting techniques through training. These safe work practices can help homeowners to prevent injury during a storm clean-up.

Your Life Could Depend On It!



For More Information and Additional Resources

Logging Safety: A Field Guide

www.health.ny.gov/publications/3132.pdf

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Provides information about preventing chain saw injuries during tree removal after a disaster. www.cdc.gov/disasters/chainsaws.html

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Provides best practices for working safely with chainsaws.

www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_Hurricane_Facts/chainsaws.pdf

The Game of Logging

Offers hands-on training and participation to anyone interested in learning the safety techniques for cutting.

<http://www.gameoflogging.com/>

New York Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation (FACE)

The New York FACE program is supported by a grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Additional information can be obtained by contacting: Bureau of Occupational Health & Injury Prevention, 518-402-7900.

Full FACE reports can be found at: www.health.ny.gov/WorkSafe



Department
of Health



Chainsaw Safety for Homeowners



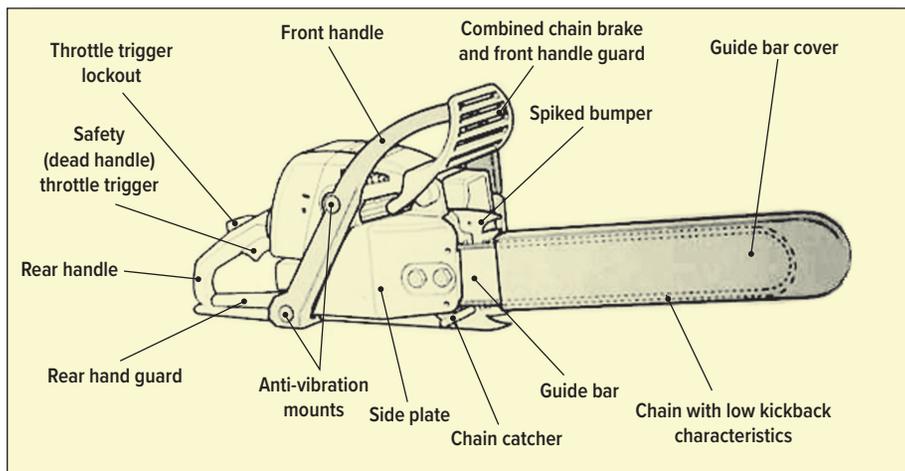
Winter ice and snow storms can leave many New Yorkers with damaged and downed trees. Post-storm cleanup and property maintenance are dangerous jobs all year round.

Many homeowners lack the experience and proper equipment to perform this type of work safely. These homeowners should consider hiring a professional tree service company to do this work.

For the homeowners who decide to perform the cleanup by themselves, safety should be the number one consideration, particularly when it comes to the use of a chainsaw. While the chainsaw is one of the most efficient and productive portable power tools, it is also the most DANGEROUS! Homeowner chainsaw users may not be aware of the safety rules that professional loggers follow for proper operation and maintenance of a chainsaw.

Pruning and removing limbs from storm damaged trees is not the same thing as cutting firewood from a tree already on the ground. Branches and trees that are twisted and bent are usually under strain that is undetectable to the untrained eye. The quick release of that stored energy by cutting with a chainsaw can result in unpredictable results.

Chainsaw Safety Features



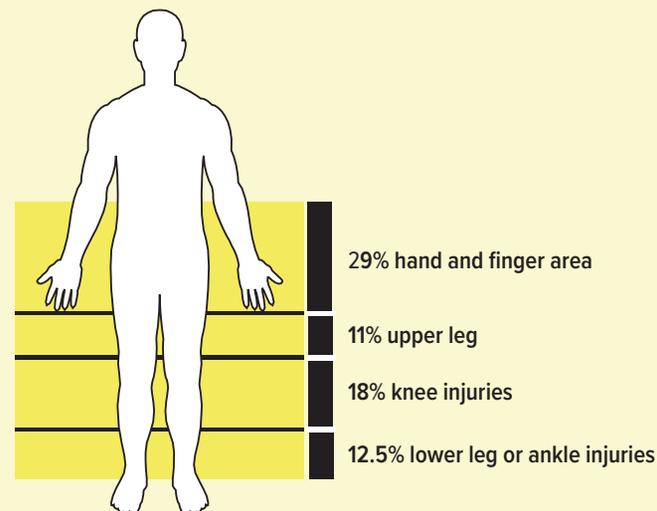
To Prevent Fatal Chainsaw Injuries

- **Read and study the operator's manual** to ensure that your chainsaw is adjusted and used according to the manufacturer's specifications.
 - Follow the instructions, especially the section on preventing kickback.
 - Inspect your chainsaw before using it. A sharp and well maintained chainsaw increases productivity, decreases fatigue, and helps prevent injuries and accidents.
 - Know the safety features of your chainsaw and always check before each use to be sure they are working properly.
- **Fuel your chainsaw in an open area** at least 10 feet from an ignition source. Start your chainsaw at least 10 feet from the fuel container.
- **Start your chainsaw on level ground** or an area where you are otherwise firmly supported. If the chainsaw has a chain brake, make sure it is on when starting the chainsaw.
- **Keep both hands on the chainsaw** and your footing secure at all times.
- **Clear the area of loose debris** and obstacles that get in the way of cutting and retreating from falling or moving branches.

- **Avoid cutting overhead.**
- **Stay clear of electrical power lines.**
- **Shut off your chainsaw or release the throttle prior to retreating.**
- **Shut off your chainsaw or engage the chain brake** if the terrain is hazardous or if you are moving more than 50 feet.
- **Use proper personal protective equipment (PPE)** when operating a chainsaw. Don't just buy a chainsaw, purchase the PPE along with it.
 - PPE includes: hard hat, eye-face protection, hearing protection, gloves, leg protection and foot protection.
 - This safety equipment (available from most home centers, safety supply houses, or chainsaw dealers) won't prevent accidents, but may keep an accident from becoming a serious injury.
 - Most injuries occur on the left leg and foot and the left arm and hand. Be sure to protect these areas well.



Body Parts Injured Related to Chainsaw Use



Source: *Epidemiology of Chain Saw Related Injuries, US 2009-2013.*
(www.hindawi.com/journals/aem/2015/459697/)