



Power Pole Saw Operations for the Professional Tree Worker

The right pole saw can be an extremely valuable tool in the hands of a properly trained, professional tree worker. A power pole saw can save a great deal of time, increase safety and productivity!

Any power saw operation should go together with personal protective equipment 'PPE' like hand and glove. In fact, gloves are only part of the PPE that go together with power pole saw operation:

- Head Protection – approved head protection should be worn whenever overhead hazards exist!
- Eye Protection – that complies with ANSI Z87.1 will go a long way to protect eyes from wood chips and other falling debris.
- Hand Protection – is recommended when operating a pole saw. Non-slip gloves will provide a better grip; reduce fatigue and protection for your hands.
- Hearing Protection – is the operator's first line of defense against hearing loss when operating any power saw.
- Foot Protection – boots or a sturdy shoe that provides good traction, ankle support, and protection from falling debris is strongly recommended. Steel-toed boots will provide extra protection.

The power pole saw operator must become familiar with the type, model and basic operation of the saw pole. Never underestimate the value of reading the owner's manual before operating a power saw! Check the owner's manual for required and preventative maintenance as well as proper starting, harness and shaft adjustment procedures.

- Visually inspect the pole saw prior to operation and be sure there are no missing or loose nuts or bolts.
- Inspect the air filter and clean as necessary.
- Inspect the guide bar for wear, clean, repair or replace as necessary.
- Inspect the drive sprocket for wear and replace as necessary.
- Inspect and be sure your chain is sharp with the proper tension before using any power saw!
- Remember to fill the bar oil reservoir when fueling the saw.

Never stand directly under the cutting system, the limb or the wood you are cutting when operating a power pole saw!

Identify and set up a safe cutting and falling zone so that falling limbs and/or wood will not strike you or anyone else during the operation. Always check for power lines and/or potentially energized conductors and maintain at least a ten foot limit of approach!

Do a thorough job risk and operation assessment and start with **H.O.P.E.** Identify and address any and all potential: **Hazards** and **Obstacles**. **Plan** your work and be sure that you have all the **Equipment** you need to safely and efficiently work your plan.

When removing limbs, use the 3-step cutting method:

Step 1: The first cut should be at least 18" from the branch collar with an undercut approximately 1/3 of the way up through the branch, being very careful not to pinch the saw

Step 2: At full speed, cut directly on top of the first cut, sawing from the top down until the branch drops. Remember to stand clear and expect the unexpected.

Step 3: Make the final cut just outside the branch collar. (Be careful not to tear the bark if you are making a pruning cut. This may require an additional cut to shorten and lighten the stub before making the final collar cut.)