



Abstract of a Mishap

Accident Type: *Hand tool Injury*
Injury: *Laceration of Big Toe*
Type of Work: *Deforestation*
Equipment: *Chainsaw*

DESCRIPTION OF THE MISHAP:

A worker was using a gas operated chainsaw to cut brush in the Live Impact Area (LIA), Former Vieques Naval Training Range, Vieques, Puerto Rico. The injured worker was one of forty workers whose task is the removal of vegetation. The injured worker was wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) – chaps, helmet, ear protection, safety glasses, face shield, leather gloves, and leather safety boots. As the worker was cutting brush, the chainsaw kicked back while cutting a loose branch, causing the saw to cut through the worker’s left boot. The worker sustained an injury, as the chainsaw lacerated his left big toe, requiring stitches at a local Vieques emergency room.

DIRECT CAUSE:

- ◆ The incident was caused by the injured worker losing control of the equipment and the saw cutting through his work boot.

INDIRECT CAUSE:

- ◆ The injured worker was not wearing steel-toed safety boots as part of his PPE.

ROOT CAUSE:

- ◆ Inattentiveness and fatigue on the part of the injured worker and lack of proper technique in cutting various types of undergrowth.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- ◆ Effective safety performance can only take place when proper attention is made to all safety measures.
- ◆ Workers must be trained in the proper techniques required to cut vegetation in various situations.
- ◆ Workers must be given sufficient breaks to recover from fatigue.
- ◆ Additional PPE, including steel-toed safety boots and metatarsal protectors, must be worn by vegetation removal workers to protect the feet and ankles from possible laceration injuries.

Your Safety Contact for Questions (757) 322-8424