



THE MOUNTAIN MEMO

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CHAIN SAW MOUNTAIN MUSIC

Cutting firewood with a chain saw is much easier than using manual saws or hatchets. However, chain saw users must take extra safety precautions to avoid injury.

When used carelessly, a chain saw can maim or even kill its operator.

With the chain moving close to 40 miles per hour, it's easy to understand how accidents occur, even to experienced users.

Unfortunately, many people think that accidents can't happen to them. In their haste to get the job done, they just aren't as cautious as they should be.

The first step in preventing injury is to dress yourself for the job. Always wear snug fitting clothing, heavy footwear and non-slip gloves. Use personal protection equipment to safeguard your head, your eyes and your ears.

If you use a chain saw only occasionally, review the operating instructions each time before you start. If you have questions don't take a chance and try to figure out the answer yourself. Ask the dealer or rental agent for help, or consult an experienced operator.

Clear the area where you will be working. Before you make the first cut, plan which direction you want the tree or limb to fall.

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LAYERING FOR WARMTH

You leave the warmth of your tractor cab to replace a bolt on the snow blower. Once the lane is cleared, you spend twenty minutes carrying in firewood. Then, you head for the barn for some late morning chores.

If you're wearing just a thin shirt and a heavy jacket, it's tough to stay comfortable while working in these different environments. The layered system of winter dressing is a better way to go.

Start with a T-shirt, add a sweater, and then a parka to keep your torso warm. You can remove a layer if you get too warm, or add another if you start to feel chilled.

Layering various work garments is both versatile and efficient. Air trapped in the fibers of each garment and between the clothes themselves provide plenty of warmth. With a little practice, you can easily determine which combination suits your working day.

Farm safety specialists with the West Virginia University Extension Service provide these additional pointers for cold-weather dressing:

* Protect the extremities. Head, hands and feet should be warm and protected when you are working in the cold. Half of the bodies heat loss can radiate from an uncovered head.

Layer cont. on pg 3



WOOD STOVE IS IT FOR YOU?

Still debating whether or not to jump on the wood fuel bandwagon for home heating?

You need to consider several factors before making the move. Unfortunately, many families don't realize that until after they have bought and installed the heater.

Keep in mind that not every home is suited to heating with wood. And, not every homeowner is willing to put up with the inconveniences of a wood burner, even if economies of fuel are possible.

If you decide to buy a wood heater, these tips from the West Virginia University Extension Service may help you find the right one.

Find out the lowest, the average and the highest heat output as expressed in British Thermal Units (Btu) per hour. It would be helpful to know the average length of time between fuel loads at each heating level. Ask about the energy efficiency at each heat level as well.

Get a ballpark figure on how much creosote may be deposited at each heating level. Creosote is the biggest problem in burning wood and, unless properly handled, could create unsafe conditions.

Any stove you buy should be airtight. The wood capacity of the stove is also important, as this helps determine the length of time between loads.

Check the maximum length of wood the stove can hold. Some stoves will take logs 30 to 40 inches long, while others can only hold logs up to 16 inches long.

The stove should be constructed of thick steel or cast iron. Both give off heat at the same rate. The warranty and availability of wood stove parts are other considerations.

Consider the case of ash removal. Some stoves have ash pans and others allow the logs to lie on a bed of ashes. Stoves that have ash pans usually call for more frequent cleaning than the other types.

Stoves also have different types of firebox liners. Some use a firebrick material; others use cast iron plates. Both are acceptable when used in wood burning stoves. However, coal should not be used with cast iron liners. Coal should be used only in stoves that are specifically designed for burning coal.

Another feature to check is the temperature of the doorknob or handle during the heating process. Some are made of materials that do not heat up; others may require the use of gloves or insulated materials. Circulating stoves usually offer greater safety than radiant stoves.

Consider the location of the flue pipe. Some stoves have the flue pipe opening in back, others in the top; some stoves have alternate flue pipe openings at several different places.

Know what you want the stove to do. Some people want a stove not only to heat space but also for cooking and heating water. Some stoves are designed for this flexibility, and others are not.

It's also important that stove parts be accessible for inspection and cleaning. All stoves should be inspected periodically and cleaned when there is a build-up of soot and creosote.

Finally check with the insurance company that you carry your homeowner's insurance with to find out their requirements. This could be very important in the future should you have a claim to file because of a problem with your stove.



from pg 1

Always start a chain saw when you are standing on the ground, and never let anyone else pull the starter while you hold the saw.

Use both hands to operate the saw. Keep a firm grip on it and never walk around with the engine running. When you're ready to move to a new location, turn the saw off; when you're walking position the guide bar and saw chain behind you and the muffler away from your body.

Chain saws are designed for operations at high speeds or full throttle. If you use one at low speeds, the chain can catch in the wood and throw the saw.

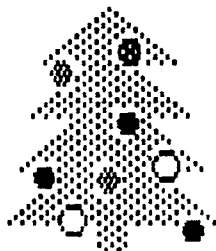
"Kickback" is the cause of many chain saw injuries. This occurs when the chain at the top of the guide bar hits a solid object during operation, causing the saw to jump backwards.

To reduce the chances of kickback, always operate the saw below shoulder height. Maintain a balanced stance, keeping your left elbow as straight as possible. Hold the handlebar between your thumb and fingers, with your thumb under the handlebar.

When cutting firewood, don't cut corners on safety. Keep your wood cutting days accident-free.

LOST AND FOUND

Found at the front gate over the Veterans Day holiday, a packet of keys and a red colored glasses case. Call 301-490-4819 and identify the keys.



from pg 1 Layer

* Wear loose-fitting clothing when practical. Tight clothing can reduce blood flow to the extremities, making your hands and feet very susceptible to cold. The compression of dead air spaces in tight-fitting garments substantially reduces their insulating ability.

Loose-fitting clothes permit unrestricted movement for most outdoor work and winter activities. However, you should not wear floppy or cumbersome garments when working around power equipment.

* Clothing must be able to "breathe." Garments should retain heat, but not water. Clothing must allow some body heat to escape into the atmosphere. If not, your clothes will quickly become wet and lose much of their capacity to retain heat.

Use care when making your clothes water-repellent with chemical water-proofing materials. You may cause the garment to trap excessive body moisture and lose its effectiveness.

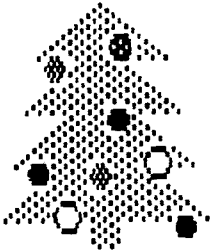
* Keep clothing dry. It's important to wear protective rainwear when wet snow or rain is falling. Change into dry clothing if the garments you are wearing get wet.

* Keep clothes clean. Dirt, body oils and salt fill air spaces as clothing becomes soiled, reducing its insulating quality. Garments should be *laundered regularly.

* Be color-conscious. The color of your garments affects their ability to keep you warm. When appropriate, wear dark clothing to absorb the sun's heat.

Taken from the Corner Cupboard of the Morgan Messenger

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