

## Quick Card Chipper Winches



Tree workers use chipper-mounted winches to drag tree limbs that are too large to safely or comfortably lift to the back of the brush chipper's in-feed chute. The winch line, including metal chokers or chains, may accidentally be drawn into the chipper's rotating knives, causing forceful discharge of pieces of metal and potentially injuring those nearby. The winch line may break or become detached while under load, and the forceful recoil can strike and injure those in the immediate vicinity. Workers' arms, hands, legs or fingers can be caught between the winch line and the load or other obstructions in the load's path.

### Potential Hazards/Risks:

- Pinch points
- Struck-bys
- Crushing/Amputations

### Safe Work Practices:

- Follow manufacturer's guidelines for safe winch use during chipping operations. Generally, the winch should be fully retracted (see photo) before brush is chipped.

- Always wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) during winching/chipping operations.
- Inspect the winch cable, cable hooks and attachment points daily for damage or defect. Take equipment determined to be unsafe for use out of service immediately.
- Be aware of the hazards of winch line breakage. Ensure that everyone remains clear of the recoil area in the event of load or cable breakage.
- Be aware of the winch cable's location at all times during extension. Ensure that it does not become a hazard to personnel or machinery.
- Pinch point hazards may develop during winching operations. Everyone involved in the winching operation constantly needs to be aware of such hazards and stand clear of these areas.
- Pull loads in a manner to avoid angles that may result in tipping or other unintended movement of the chipper and/or the towing vehicle.
- Ensure that the chipper and/or tow vehicle is secured to avoid unintended movement.
- Establish and maintain an effective means of communication with all workers involved in the chipping/winching operation.

*Through OSHA's Alliance Program, this Quick Card was developed as a product of the OSHA and Tree Care Industry Association, Inc. Alliance for informational purposes only. It does not necessarily reflect the official views of OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. (06/2008)*