



## **Safety Tips Sheet No. 4: *Reducing the Risk of an Amputation***

*This is the fourth in a series of Safety Tips Sheets developed by the Professional Landcare Network concerning the four major hazards identified through our OSHA-PLANET Alliance. This Safety Tips Sheet is available in both English and Spanish.*

### **Amputations in the horticultural industry**

- Amputations of fingers, toes, and even hands and feet, unfortunately, occur to workers in our industry.
- The loss of a finger, toe, hand, or foot is extremely painful. It can result in permanent disability — or death.
- The many ways in which amputations occur include getting a foot caught in the rapidly moving blades of a mower, being pulled into a wood chipper, or by not wearing leg chaps and taking other proper safety precautions when using a chain saw.

### **Reducing your risk of an amputation**

- *Never* put your hand or foot under the deck of a mower unless the engine is turned off and all moving parts have come to a complete stop. Secure the machine so that no one else can start it.
- Do not try to unclog a mower or other equipment unless the engine has been turned off and all moving parts have come to a complete stop. Do not leave powered equipment unattended.
- Keep a safe distance away from rotating brush-cutting blades, tiller blades, trencher blades, saws, and moving or sharp parts of other equipment.
- Inspect equipment before each use. Be sure that all safety guards and other safety devices are in place and undamaged.
- Wear the appropriate clothing and personal protective equipment, including sturdy boots or shoes (steel-toed when required), long-sleeved shirts, long pants, gloves, etc. Wear leg chaps when using chain saws.
- Do not wear loose-fitting clothing. Tie back long hair and remove jewelry, dangling jacket strings, and anything else that could become entangled.

### **Additional safety tips**

- *Never* remove, disable, or bypass a safety device.
- Immediately report any missing or broken safety devices to your supervisor.
- Do not hurry or take shortcuts.
- Be sure you have been properly trained on the equipment you are using.