



Tree Falling Observer



An introduction
to SafetreeTM

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Tree Falling Observer

A tree falling observer must be on hand whenever there's a particularly hazardous tree falling situation to manage.

The ACoP requires an observer, who is themselves a competent tree faller, to be on hand if a one onto two tree drive doesn't work. There are extra hazards created by the drive's failure and the observer is there to help plan how to bring down the tree and manage those hazards.

If a tree drive requires a tree falling observer to be on site, all falling must stop until they arrive.

A tree falling observer's responsibilities are to:

- ▶ make a felling plan with the tree faller, including what cuts and escape route to use
- ▶ show good hazard identification and management skills
- ▶ watch the operation and warn the faller about the tree's movement or any other hazards
- ▶ make suggestions as necessary
- ▶ to stand in a safe position
- ▶ communicate clearly with the faller and anyone else involved in the operation.

It may be helpful if an observer can bring extra wedges and a large hammer with them.



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Communication is key

Communication between the observer and others involved, especially the faller, is essential to the faller's safety. The observer must be in visual and/or radio telephone communication with the faller.

Communication can be difficult because of:

- ▶ **Noise** – from the chainsaw and the need to wear earmuffs
- ▶ **Proximity** – the observer must stand in a position far enough away to be safe
- ▶ **Limited visibility** – there may be other trees or scrub between the faller and the observer, but the observer must be able to clearly see the tree faller and any possible hazards.

Clear communication procedures must be established before the falling operation continues.

To communicate between the faller and observer use:

- ▶ radio telephones with voice activation and speakers in the earmuffs are best
- ▶ hand signals, which everyone agrees on and understands
- ▶ radio telephones.

For more information on being a Tree Falling Observer: ACoP Section 11.7.4; BPG for Tree Felling.