

SAFETY ALERT 02-S-7



FOREST RESOURCES ASSOCIATION INC.

600 JEFFERSON PLAZA, SUITE 350
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20852

PHONE: 301/838-9385

FAX: 301/838-9481

WASP ATTACK CAUSES MEDICAL EMERGENCY

February 2002

BACKGROUND: Two foresters with a Southern timber company were marking timber in a hardwood stand prior to harvest. It was a warm, early summer day in central Alabama.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS: One of the two foresters, a 30-year-old man, had worked on this timberland for various owners over the previous eight years. He had no previous record of accidents. He was dressed properly for the activity and had no previous indication of allergic reaction to insects.

UNSAFE ACT OR CONDITION: Located within the timber stand being marked was a red wasp nest measuring three inches in diameter. The nest was built in a hollowed area of a hardwood sapling. A small vine was growing on the sapling.

ACCIDENT: While marking timber approximately half a mile from the foresters' truck, the forester's foot snagged on the vine and shook the hardwood sapling. The wasp nest was at head-level to the forester. Eight to ten wasps stung the forester on the side of his face and neck.

INJURY: The forester noticed numbness in his mouth soon after making his escape from the area. This sensation was followed by uncontrollable shaking and a severe and progressive difficulty breathing. As the two foresters attempted to return to their truck, the sting victim collapsed and went into convulsions. All of these symptoms occurred within ten minutes of the sting incident.

The second forester initiated rescue breathing procedure when he was unable to detect the victim's breathing. After several minutes, it was clear that the victim's condition was deteriorating, so he opened the victim's airway as much as possible and went for help. The local rescue squad soon arrived, carried the forester out of the woods, and transported him to the hospital, where he received medication to counteract the allergic reaction. The victim remained in the hospital overnight and, fortunately, was able to return to work after being released.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORRECTION:

- While working in remote areas of the woods, workers should have a reliable means of outside communication whenever possible.
- Anyone susceptible to an allergic reaction should be evaluated and carry proper treatments to counteract the reaction.
- Several over-the-counter allergy medications are available and should be carried at all times. Such a preventive measure could provide the vital time needed to get a victim to emergency medical care.

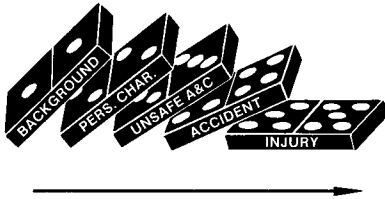
Loggers and foresters should never work alone. In this case, working as a pair clearly saved the victim's life.

Reviewed by:

Wayne Tucker
Southcentral Technical Division Forester

Please follow equipment manufacturers' recommendations for safe operation and maintenance procedures.





This Safety Alert analyzes an injury in accordance with the chain of events represented by the five dominoes at left. Pioneer industrial safety experts H. W. Heinrich and Alfred Lateiner developed this accident analysis system to provide a graphic sense of how injuries can be avoided. Their methodology has been accepted by safety professionals worldwide.

SAFETY MEETING REPORT

Date: _____ Company: _____

Topic(s) Discussed: _____

Names of Employees Attending:

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Conducted By: _____

Signed: _____

Comments / Recommendations:

