3D Safety talks

FROM THE ISAO SAFETY COMMITTEE: FIRST AID KITS

As we know, arborists work in high-risk environments involving chainsaws, climbing equipment, heavy branches, traffic, working at heights and variable weather conditions. Injuries can occur at height, in remote locations, or far from immediate medical assistance. A well-equipped first aid kit is a critical safety resource that supports rapid response to injuries and helps reduce the severity of incidents. First aid kits for arborists must be tailored specifically to the hazards of tree work rather than relying on generic workplace kits.

DESCRIBE the Hazards

- Arborists face a high risk of lacerations and puncture wounds from chainsaws, handsaws, and sharp branches.
- Crush and struck by injuries may occur from falling timber, rigging failures, or equipment mishandling.
- Falls from height can result in fractures, sprains, spinal injuries, punctures or internal bleeding.
- Eye injuries are common due to wood chips, sawdust, and debris during cutting operations.
- Burns can occur from friction, hot exhausts, or fuel exposure.
- Remote or elevated work locations increase the risk of delayed treatment, worsening otherwise manageable injuries.
- Environmental hazards such as heat, cold, insects, and uneven terrain can complicate injury management.

DISCUSS Control Measures

- Provide arborist-specific first aid kits that include trauma dressings, haemostatic bandages (check expiration dates), and tourniquets for severe bleeding.
- Ensure kits contain sterile eye wash pods and eye pads for debris-related eye injuries.
- Include compression bandages and splints to stabilise fractures and sprains until emergency services arrive.
- Store first aid kits in labeled accessible locations, such as climbing harnesses, vehicles, and at ground stations.
- Inspect and restock kits regularly to ensure contents are within expiry dates and fit for purpose.
- Train arborists in first aid techniques relevant to tree work, including catastrophic bleeding control and aerial rescue scenarios.
- Establish clear emergency response procedures so workers know how to access and use first aid kits quickly.

DEMONSTRATE Knowledge

- Arborist first aid kits should comply with relevant workplace health and safety regulations and industry best practice as a minimum.
- Trauma-focused supplies are essential due to the high likelihood of serious bleeding injuries.
- Kits should be weather-resistant and durable to withstand outdoor conditions.
- Individual climbers benefit from personal first aid kits carried on their harness for immediate access while aloft.
- Ground crew kits should be more comprehensive in case of multiple injuries.
- Knowledge and training of first aid kit contents and their correct use is as important as the equipment itself.
- Regular drills and refresher training reinforce effective first aid responses and improve confidence during emergencies.

Date: _____

Location: _____

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Presenter: _____

MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY
(Each participant is to sign below)

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ISA ONTARIO