

# **Excerpts from template document**

## **Work Health and Safety Policies and Procedures Manual For Tree Works Companies**

### **Modifications you may need to make**

This template document provides a typical description of the policies and procedures that apply to a small to medium sized tree works business.

Before you implement it as your own Policies and Procedures Manual, you should review the content material and decide on whether you wish to adopt it as your procedural system, or whether any details should be added, deleted, or changed. The final document should be an accurate description of the way your business actually operates.

Some of the text is shown in red to help you identify the material that may need to be changed. Note that the Acts and Regulations referenced in this document apply to NSW. If you work in a different state or territory, you should either delete these references or change them to the laws and regulations that apply.

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# Introduction

**Company name** is a tree works business specialising in ... . The company prides itself on the high-quality customer service and workmanship it provides to clients. Services include:

- tree removal
- pruning and dead wooding
- stump grinding
- onsite chipping
- power line clearing
- hedge trimming

This WHSE Policies and Procedures Manual has been developed in consultation with employees and industry experts.

The policies and procedures set down in this manual are designed to comply with industry best practices, and meet all of the relevant Acts, Regulations, Industry Guidelines and **SafeWork NSW** requirements, including:

- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017*
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
- *Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2021*
- *Guide to Managing Risks of Tree Trimming and Removal Work 2016 (SafeWork Australia).*

The company's environmental policies and procedures are integrated into the health and safety policies and procedures. They are also built into the operational procedures relating to activities such as chipping and waste removal.

# Health, Safety & Environment Policy

**Company name** is committed to ensuring that the company's workplace is safe and that its systems of work are environmentally sound.

Our policy is to:

- provide a safe and healthy workplace for all personnel who carry out work on our behalf
- make health, safety and environment considerations central to our business strategies
- identify, assess and control risks prior to commencing work activities
- apply standards that meet all relevant legislation, regulations and community expectations
- continually improve our performance by regularly monitoring and reviewing our operations
- use resources and energy efficiently and minimise waste and emissions
- reduce and, wherever possible, prevent pollution from our activities.

The company has a goal of zero injuries, zero occupational-related diseases and zero environmental incidents.

Each employee and contractor on-site has a personal responsibility to comply with this Policy. All personnel are required to acknowledge that they have understood the company's WHSE procedures and have agreed to follow them at all times before being permitted to work on-site.

The company is committed to a process of continual improvement in its performance on WHSE matters. We welcome contributions and suggestions from employees on ways to improve on-site safety, health and environmental care.

# Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided by the company to reduce the risk of injury where hazards are unable to be removed from the worksite.

The company supplies the following items of PPE to workers:

- hard hats, fitted hearing protection and a full-face shield
- high visibility vests
- cut-resistant pants
- other equipment as required; such as gloves.

## PPE requirements

The general PPE requirements are as follows:

- safety boots: to be worn at all times on-site
- cut-resistant pants: when climbing and/or operating a chainsaw
- hearing protection: to be worn when working with or near noisy machines
- face shield (or safety glasses): to be worn whenever there is a risk of flying particles
- high visibility vests: to be worn at all times on-site
- hard hats: to be worn while ever work is underway on-site
- sunscreen: to be worn when there is a risk of sunburn.

Workers who do not comply with their responsibilities will be counselled in the first instance, and then officially warned if they refuse to wear appropriate PPE.

## Responsibilities

### Supervisors

Supervisors are responsible for:

- assessing the need for PPE and providing adequate supplies
- implementing disciplinary action where workers refuse to wear PPE
- training workers in the correct use of PPE.

### Workers

Workers are responsible for complying with management directives to wear appropriate PPE in designated areas and when carrying out designated tasks.

# General behaviour & communication

## General on-site behaviour

The company does not tolerate misconduct or disruptive behaviour by any person on-site – including employees, contractors and visitors. Examples of misconduct may include:

- fighting, violence or verbal abuse
- stealing or misusing other people's property
- non-compliance with the company's policies or procedures
- refusing to obey lawful and authorised directions from a supervisor or manager.

Employees who engage in any of the above behaviours or are found to have conducted themselves inappropriately in any other way will be subject to disciplinary action.

Serious misconduct will be treated in accordance with the company's legal obligations to maintain a safe workplace and compliance with the law. It may include notifying the police and immediate termination of employment.

Contractors or visitors who engage in any of these behaviours will be asked to leave the site immediately.

## Electronic Communication

The use of mobile phones or tablets for private communication while on-site can be disruptive to productivity and pose potential safety hazards.

Private mobile phones and tablets may only be used on-site:

- during designated breaks or before and after work
- so long as all communication complies with this policy, including the provisions set out in the social media section below.

Workers who wish to make private calls or send messages while work is in progress must ask their supervisor or team leader for permission first, to allow for any safety issues or substitution of job tasks to be dealt with. This particularly applies when tree works operations are underway.

Company devices may be used on-site for business purposes at any time, so long as their use complies with all WHS policies and procedures and the Social Media policy set out below.

## Social media

Social media provides an instantaneous form of on-line communication, and messages posted to social media sites are often accessible to the public for a very long time. For the purposes of this policy, 'social media' includes all social networking sites, video and photo

sharing sites, blogging and micro-blogging sites, forums and discussion boards, and instant messaging services, such as SMS.

Employees may use their personal on-line accounts during designated breaks or outside of work hours, so long as all posts comply with the conditions set out in this policy.

When posting messages online that relate to the company, co-workers or customers, employees are asked to:

- use their discretion, and think about the consequences of posting comments on-line
- be respectful of other individuals' beliefs and right to privacy
- follow generally accepted social media etiquette
- protect the reputation of **Company name**.

Employees must not make on-line posts that:

- could damage **Company name's** reputation
- disclose confidential information about the company or any of its employees
- make derogatory comments about the company's employees or customers
- undermine the safety culture at work, such as photos of co-workers doing silly things
- reduce productivity at work, such as posting during working hours.

Minor breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action being taken. Serious breaches could lead to termination of employment, and render the employee liable to civil or criminal prosecution.

## Behaviour after leaving the company

Employees are reminded that they owe the company a 'fiduciary duty' under the law to act honestly, loyally and in good faith while they are employed by **Company name**, and that some of these legal obligations continue after they leave the company.

For example, former employees must not disclose confidential company information to other parties at any time – such as client lists or other sensitive company information – or use that information to benefit themselves or another party (such as a competing tree works business) to the detriment of **Company name**.

The company reserves its right to take action against former employees who breach this fiduciary duty, and engage in activities that could damage the reputation of **Company name** or its employees, or misuse confidential information.