

## APPENDIX P

# RECOMMENDED SAFE PRACTICES FOR TREE MAINTENANCE AND REMOVAL OPERATIONS

*These recommended safe practices are in addition to the required safe practices contained in Section 31.*

## 1. TREE CLIMBING

a. The climber should not trust the capability of a dead branch to support his/her weight. If possible, dead branches should be broken off on the way up and hands and feet should be placed on separate limbs.

b. A worker should never shin a tree for a distance greater than 15 ft (4.6 m) or shin for any distance beyond his/her demonstrated physical abilities. When the climbing distance is greater than 25 ft (7.6 m) or is beyond the worker's physical capability, the worker should not climb or footlock the rope but should use a safety saddle or sling.

c. The climbing rope should be passed around the trunk of the tree as high above the ground as possible using branches with a wide crotch to prevent any binding of the safety rope.

*Exception: Palms and other trees with similar growth characteristics that will not allow a climbing rope to move freely.* The crotch selected for tying should be directly above the work area, or as close to such a position as possible, but located in such a way that a slip of fall would swing the worker away from any electrical conductor. The rope should be passed around the main leader or an upright branch, using the limb as a stop. Feet, hands, and ropes should be kept out of tight V-shaped crotches.

d. While climbing, the location of all electrical conductors should be noted and the worker should climb on the side of the tree that is away from electrical conductors, if possible.

EM 385-1-1

3 Nov 03

- e. A figure-eight knot should be tied in the end of the rope, particularly when climbing high trees, to prevent pulling the rope accidentally through the taut-line hitch and possibly falling.

## **2. PRUNING AND TRIMMING**

- a. A scabbard or sheath should be hooked to the belt or safety saddle to carry a handsaw when not in use.
- b. A separate line should be attached to limbs that cannot be dropped safely or are too heavy to be controlled by hand. The line should be held by workers on the ground end of the rope. Use of the same crotch for both the safety rope and the work rope should be avoided.
- c. Cut branches should not be left in trees overnight.
- d. A service line should be put up for operations lasting overnight or longer and should be used to bring the climbing rope back into position at the start of the next day's work.

## **3. CABLING**

- a. Branches that are to be cabled should be brought together to the proper distance by means of a block and tackle, a hand winch, a rope, or a rope with a come-along.
- b. Not more than two persons should be in a tree working at opposite ends during cabling installation.
- c. When the block and tackle are released, workers in trees should be positioned off to one side in order to avoid injury in case the lag hooks pull out under the strain.
- d. Groundmen should not stand under the tree when cable is being installed.

#### **4. TOPPING/LOWERING LIMBS**

- a. Workers performing topping operations should make sure the trees can stand the strain of a topping procedure; if not, some other means of lowering the branches should be used.
- b. If large limbs are lowered in sections, the worker in the tree should be above the limb being lowered.

