



## Oregon Occupational Safety & Health Division Technical Guidance

**DATE:** July 2, 2004

**REVISED:** August 16, 2016

**TO:** All Oregon OSHA Staff

**FROM:** Peggy Munsell, Standards & Appeals Manager

**SUBJECT:** Leg Protection for Firefighters Using Chain Saws

**Question:** Are chaps or leg protection required to be worn by fire-fighters using chain saws?

**Answer:** Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 437-002-0182, within Division 2/L, is the standard for structural fire-fighting activities. OAR 437-002-0182(16) specifically addresses “Foot and Leg Protection”. The standard includes a note specifying that chaps or leg protection is required for non-firefighting activities in accordance with Division 2/I, OAR 437-002-0134(11)(b).

The fire-fighters’ standard was written with consideration for the need of quick action to preserve public life and safety, coupled with a high degree of training for emergency responders. Under OAR 437-002-0182(11)(a), “the employer must develop and implement a policy for appropriately educating and training all department firefighting classifications (ranks) before they perform assigned duties.” A firefighter using a chain saw must be trained in its use to be competent in their ability to safely operate it.

**Action:** When using a chain saw for structural ventilation or another activity directly related to structural firefighting, or when training for such activities, the use of chaps or leg protectors by firefighters is not required when:

- 1) The firefighter is trained and proficient in the safe operation of a chain saw; and
- 2) turn-out trousers are worn.

All other (non-firefighting) uses of a chain saw (such as cleaning up a fire scene or performing yard work around the station) require chaps or leg protectors be worn.