



## OR-OSHA HAZARD ALERT

April 7, 2003

Two reports of circular saw blades coming free from cut-off type industrial saws have come to Oregon OSHA's attention. These two incidents happened in the Portland area and underscore the need for caution by users of such equipment. This type of portable saw is typically used by local fire departments and emergency service providers. In each of these cases, saw blades that were not recommended by the manufacturer broke loose from the saw and flew off. This poses obvious hazards to the user and any workers or others near the saw. It is important that the equipment you use is appropriate and **authorized** for that use by the manufacturer.

Stihl Inc. cautions users **not to use carbide tipped, wood cutting or circular saw blades as they can cause severe personal injury from reactive forces, blade contact or thrown tips.** Oregon OSHA agrees with the manufacturers. The only blades that are safe to use with these type of saws are diamond blades and abrasive blades, both of which are the blades recommended for use by the manufacturer. Other types of blades require additional blade guarding.

Remember when using woodcutting blades on any type of circular saw you must comply with the following rules:

### ***§1910.243 GUARDING OF PORTABLE POWERED TOOLS.***

***(a)(1)(i) All portable, power-driven circular saws having a blade diameter greater than 2 inches shall be equipped with guards above and below the base plate or shoe. The upper guard shall cover the saw to the depth of the teeth, except for the minimum arc required to permit the base to be tilted for bevel cuts. The lower guard shall cover the saw to the depth of the teeth, except for the minimum arc required to allow proper retraction and contact with the work. When the tool is withdrawn from the work, the lower guard shall automatically and instantly return to covering position.***

Hazard alerts are produced by the Oregon OSHA Standard and Technical resources Section. They provide information on unusual safety or health hazards or unusual or hazardous materials or practices. They contain information from OR-OSHA field staff, research from the Standards and Technical Resource staff and various published materials.

For more information contact the Standard and Technical Resources Section at 503-378-3272, toll free at 1-800-922-2689 or visit our website at [www.orosha.org](http://www.orosha.org)