Timber Times

Partners for Healthy Forests

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Working Safely Around Stinging Insects
- Cartoons
- Tick Safety
- Helpful Links

Safety Flyer

Hello All,

Logging is dangerous work, and safety has always been a primary focus for CTIA. I hope these monthly safety flyers contribute to your company safety program and to the safety of you and your crews.

Please share this safety flyer with your employees, contractors, or fellow loggers. If you'll send me their email address, we'll add them to our list. Our goal is safety for every logger, trucker, and mill worker in Colorado.

If you find an interesting article or an OSHA related issue, please share with me so I send to our email list or incorporate into a future Safety Flyer.

Molly

The Colorado Timber Industry Association (CTIA) is an association of small, family-owned businesses committed to logging, processing and performing service work in the forests of Colorado. We are exceptional partners to the public and private stewards of our valuable and beautiful forests. We embrace Best Management Practices (BMPs) and sustainable forestry. To meet these values, we host annual continuing education classes on BMPs and conduct field audits to demonstrate our accountability to high quality, active management designed to promote long term forest health.

Working Safely around Stinging Insects

What are stinging insects?

Stinging insects have a sting (or stinger) at the posterior end of their abdomen. This group of insects includes honey bees, bumble bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, and ants. However, many ants do not have stings. A couple of species that do have stings are army ants, found in the southern U.S., and harvester ants, found in the southern U.S. and western Canada.

The sting (formally called an aculeus), which is connected to a venom sac, is a modified egg-laying tube (ovipositor). So if you are stung, it was a female insect that did it. In North America, yellow jacket wasps are involved in about 70% of the stings to humans. They are often mistaken for bees because of their yellow and black bodies. Most stinging insects can sting you more than once. One exception is the honey bee (worker bee), which has a barbed sting. When the worker bee escapes after stinging a person, the sting and attached venom sac are ripped out of the bee and stay in the victim's skin; the bee will die afterwards.

Why worry about stinging insects?

It is important to be prepared for any possible effects from an insect sting, whether it happens at work or at home. Generally, most stings will only result in a temporary injury - pain, swelling, and skin redness around the sting. However, sometimes the effects can be more severe - even life-threatening, depending on where you are stung and what allergies you have.

If you are stung in the throat area of your neck, it may cause edema (swelling caused by fluid build-up in the tissues) around the throat and may make it difficult to breathe.

Remember, if you are startled or stung by a bee or wasp while you are driving, working with power tools or machinery, or are on a ladder, you could end up getting injured with much more than a sting!

What are the health hazards?

Most people experience local effects like pain, swelling, itching, and redness around the sting site. Painful stings in the mouth and throat can result if you accidentally swallowed a wasp or bee (e.g., drinking a soft drink from a can that a wasp had entered).

Some people will experience swelling in a larger area, not just immediately around the sting site. They may develop hives but no systemic effects (effects in the body away from sting site like effects on breathing and blood flow). This is a **mild allergic reaction** and can last a few days. The area will be sore and uncomfortable but one should not give in to the temptation to scratch the stung area. Scratching may cause a break in the skin, which could lead to an infection.

In rare cases, a **severe allergic reaction** can occur. This situation is serious and can cause "**anaphylaxis**" or anaphylactic shock. Symptoms of anaphylaxis can appear immediately (within minutes) or up to 30 minutes later. Symptoms to watch for include:

- Hives, itching and swelling in areas other than the sting site.
- Swollen eyes and eyelids.
- Wheezing.
- Tightness in the chest and difficulty breathing.
- Hoarse voice or swelling of the tongue.
- Dizziness or sharp drop in blood pressure.
- Shock.
- Unconsciousness or cardiac arrest.

Although most deaths result from severe allergic reactions, some are caused by direct toxicity of the insect venom. Of those who die from a severe allergic reaction to a sting, half die within 30 minutes, and three-quarters within 45 minutes.

This reaction can occur the first time you are stung or with subsequent stings. Watch for signs of this reaction.

- If you see any signs of reaction, or even if you are not sure, call or have a co-worker call emergency medical services (e.g., 911) right away. Also, get medical help if the sting is near the eyes, nose or throat.
- Stay with the person who has been stung to monitor their reaction.

If you have experienced a severe allergic reaction to an insect sting in the past, you will likely experience a similar or worse reaction if stung again. Doctors will prescribe a bee sting kit (self-injectable syringe containing epinephrine) to allergic people so they can carry the medication with them at all times. For people who are hypersensitive to stings, wearing a medical alert bracelet will enable first aiders to respond promptly and appropriately to a sting victim who is unconscious.

People who have been stung multiple times (such as when fleeing from a swarm or nest) can sometimes suffer serious health effects. While rare, death may occur. If you have been stung many, many times at once, talk to your doctor. You may need to have your health monitored over the next few days or week.

Employers should be notified if a worker, especially one who works outdoors, has allergies to insect stings. Co-workers should be trained in emergency first aid, be aware of the signs of a severe reaction, and know how to use the bee sting kit (self-injectable epinephrine). Always carry a cellular phone in case you need emergency medical help.

Tick Safety

What is a Tick?

Unfed tick Fed (engorged) tick

Ticks are tiny parasites in the Arachnid family that feed exclusively on blood from their hosts to carry out their life cycle. There are hundreds of different kinds of ticks in the world. Many of them carry bacterial, viral or protozoal pathogens that can be transmitted to wildlife, pets and humans through their bite. However, of the approximately 900 species found throughout the world, only a select few are known to bite and transmit disease to humans. Of the 84 species of U.S. ticks, **40 have been documented as ectoparasites of humans**. Ticks transmit more kinds of disease agents than any other kind of arthropod vector and are increasingly being found to harbor more than one pathogen; they are then capable of transmitting multiple diseases in a single bite. In addition to being vectors, ticks can also cause, potentially fatal, **tick paralysis** via toxins in their saliva to both humans and other animals, and appear to cause red meat allergies in some people.

General Tick Behavior:

Understanding tick behavior will help you minimize your risk of tick bites. Though some ticks are "nidicolous", meaning they remain on their host or near their host species nest and burrows, the majority of ticks most frequently encountered by humans, pets and wildlife actively "quest" for their blood meal. A questing tick will crawl up the stem of usually tall grass or brush and extend its front legs. On its front legs, a tick has a special sensory structure called the Haller's organ, with which it can detect a nearby host by smell of body and breath odors, heat, vibrations and even carbon dioxide emission through breath from humans, pets and wildlife! Once a tick detects that a potential host is approaching, it waits to grab hold. Ticks do not jump from above, but attaches to a host as they brush past the vegetation. They then crawl upward in search of a good place to bite and attach to take their blood meal. Some ticks are more aggressive in their questing behavior than others and may seek a host rather than waiting passively for the host to come to them. Taking care not to walk through areas of thick or high vegetation and avoidance of sitting directly on the ground, on logs, against trees or near rodent nests or dens can help limit your exposure.

TICK-BORNE DISEASES

Tick-borne pathogens can be passed to humans by the bite of infected ticks. Ticks can be infected with bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Some of the most common tick-borne diseases in the United States include: Lyme disease, babesiosis, ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, anaplasmosis, Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness, Tick-Borne Relapsing Fever, and tularemia. Other tick-borne diseases in the United States include: Colorado tick fever, Powassan encephalitis, and Q fever. Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the United States. In 2010, more than 22,500 confirmed and 7,500 probable cases of Lyme disease were reported to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
Outdoor workers are at risk of exposure to tick-borne diseases if they work at sites with ticks. Worksites with woods, bushes, high grass, or leaf litter are likely to have more ticks. Outdoor workers in most regions of the United States should be extra careful to protect themselves in the spring, summer, and fall when ticks are most active. Ticks may be active all year in some regions with warmer weather.

Ticks in Colorado

Twenty-five species of tick are known to occur within Colorado. Many of these ticks pose potential risk to human, pet, livestock and/or wildlife health. Many tick species have been found outside of their previously known distribution ranges, so Coloradans may encounter additional tick species within our state or when traveling. Surveillance and study of ticks within Colorado is limited, and more research is needed. Small mammals are important host reservoirs for many of the diseases these tick vectors may transmit. Large mammals, like deer and elk provide both blood meals and transport of ticks as they migrate between habitats, sometimes into our own back yards. Birds are very efficient transporters of ticks as well as competent host reservoirs for many diseases. Surveillance and study of ticks within Colorado is limited, and more research is needed.

Primary Ticks in Colorado: Rocky Mountain Wood tick, American Dog tick, Brown Dog tick, Lone Star tick, and the Relapsing Fever ticks. For a complete list visit: http://coloradoticks.org/the-ticks/other-colorado-ticks/

Prevention Recommendations

Ticks are capable of transmitting multiple pathogens that can cause more than one illness in just a single bite. Your risk of contact with these vectors and potential exposure to multiple diseases, including Lyme, varies regionally throughout the United States and the world. Every season is potential tick season. Practice tick safety year-round especially in more mild or temperate climates. Ticks can remain active even when there is snow on the ground and temperatures drop. We encourage enjoyment of the Colorado outdoors and beyond, but we urge you to increase awareness and to take precautions to keep you, your children, and your pets healthy!

Whether you live, work or recreate within Colorado or elsewhere, the BEST way to deal with the problem of tick-borne diseases is to prevent tick-bites!

Recommendations for prevention of tick bites:

- Wear **Permethrin** treated clothing, gaiters or gear. Permethrin is an insecticide that can be safely applied to clothing or outdoor gear. **It should never be applied to skin!** If you spend a lot of time in tick habitat, wearing permethrin-treated clothing is very effective at reducing your exposure to ticks.
- Use **repellents** (chemical or natural) that are labeled for ticks. Follow the directions on the label carefully!
- Wear light colored clothing (long sleeved pants and shirts) so that it is easier to spot ticks. Tuck pants into socks and shirt into pants, wear hats and place long hair in braids to minimize access to skin from questing ticks.
- Stay on the center hiking trails. Avoid walking through high grass and bushy areas. Avoid sitting on logs or against trees. Use a blanket or tarp to avoid sitting directly on the ground when resting or picnicking.
- **Conduct Tick Checks**! Check yourself, your children and your pets for ticks often while participating in outdoor activities. **Perform tick checks daily** after spending time outdoors. Check carefully along the hairline, nape of neck, inside and behind the ears, armpits, and groin area, behind the knees, inside belly button and between your toes.
- Check your gear and clothing prior to getting into a vehicle or entering your home as ticks may hitchhike inside and pose a risk to you or other family members as they seek their meal.
- Place outdoor exposed clothing directly into dryer on high heat for 20 minutes to kill any ticks that may be clinging to the fabric.
- Shower as soon as you come inside if you have been in tick habitat.
- Avoid sleeping with your pets. As much as we love them, they can transport ticks onto your bed increasing your chance of a tick bite.

How do I properly remove a tick?

- Avoid touching the tick with bare hands.
- **Use fine-tipped tweezers and firmly grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible.** A tick tool that does not twist the tick may also be an effective method especially for very small ticks. Avoid using blunt tweezers or fingers as this may squeeze the tick guts and increase chance of disease transmission.
- **With a steady motion, pull straight up** until all parts of the tick are removed.
- **DO NOT** twist, crush or jerk the tick as this may agitate the tick and increase the chance of transmitting infections the tick may be carrying.
- Thoroughly wash your hands and the bite area with soap and water or an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Sanitize your tweezers or tick tool as well!
- Clean the tick bite with an antiseptic such as iodine or rubbing alcohol to avoid bite site infections.
- It is recommended that you always consult with your physician regarding concerns or questions about your exposure, testing and potential treatment.

NEVER use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish or other topical products to remove a tick! These methods are not effective and may increase chances of disease transmission.

If you find a tick that has not embedded (you have found it crawling on clothing, gear or pets) and you wish to dispose of it without testing, place the tick between adhesive tape and throw it in trash. Wash hands thoroughly!

Helpful Links

http://coloradoticks.org

https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-119/

https://www.cdc.gov/features/stopticks/

https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/insects/

http://www.nsc.org/Membership%20Site%20Document%20Library/Safety-