Logging Safety Fatality File

Logger Crushed While Felling A Tree

A 36-year-old male logger died as a result of being crushed by a fallen oak tree. The victim had been working by himself in a remote area felling trees on the day of the incident. As the logger finished making the final cut on the oak tree he was felling, he began to walk away from the area. As the oak tree was falling, it hit another tree that horizontally crossed another standing tree. As the falling tree hit this crossed tree, the butt of the falling tree was thrown up into the air and backwards away from the stump. The logger was knocked down by the falling tree, and was subsequently crushed underneath the weight of the tree. When the logger did not return home, his wife became concerned and called a co-worker. The co-worker was able to find the logger after some searching, and called for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) with his cell phone. EMS responded and transported the victim to the hospital where he was pronounced dead by the county coroner.

New York State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (NY FACE) investigators concluded that to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future, loggers should:

- Utilize proper notching techniques when felling trees.
- Fell trees in areas clear of hazards.
- Work in teams while felling trees.