Safety gear unveiled

MT. HOREB, Wis. — Gempler's now offers a complete line of hard-to-find, head-to-toe safety gear for professional and hobby chain saw operators (see photo, page 1).

"Using the latest in technology, the company's protective clothing prevents injuries from saw kick back, slips, and flying debris. Leg chaps, vests, and hand mitts are made of a special material that resists cuts from chains moving at speeds up to 3,000 feet per minute and explodes on contact with running chains to jam the saw sprocket and stop chain movement.

To prevent head and face injuries, hobbyists and professionals alike can use Gempler's head protectors with a mesh face shield to screen out flying debris. The head protectors come with high-rated, noise-reducing earmuffs to prevent hearing loss and optional hard hats that give overhead protection from falling branches and trees.

For more information, contact Gempler's, Inc., P.O. Box 270, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572; phone 800-382-8473; Fax: 800-551-1128.

Incentives lower insurance

On the second phase, a hotel, first prize was a little less, a fishing boat and jet skis.

Meanwhile, Landscapes Unlimited's incentive program has also reaped benefits.

"Our program is multifaceted," Buell said. Each job site does a weekly "toolbox meeting," with a variety of topics relevant to the phase of the job the crew is in. All the employees sign off on a sheet describing the topic. If they do not suffer a lost-time accident — more than three days lost to injury — during the first quarter of the year, they qualify for a small safety award like a sweatshirt. Leeway is given for such things as back strain and dust in the eyes.

The same qualification applies to the second quarter, but the award value increases to items like shirts and jackets. By the fourth quarter, the firm generally gives away cash prizes that it delivers personally to the employees.

"By the end of the fourth quarter we have 300 people getting the safety award," Buell said. "We give the same awards to the office personnel, and everything has our logo on it, to instill company pride and get our name out."

Worker's comp

Worker's-comp cases are typically settled out of court, but usually two years after the claims are filed. According to the Illinois Industrial Commission's 1994 annual report, a standard, minimal-injury claim can cost approximately $5,000 in medical bills, benefits and settlement costs, plus an average of two to four weeks of sick time.

Pre-employment testing helps control these risks before applicants are hired. The Reid Safety Scale, for example, is tailored to screen for potentially careless employees who coat employers money in claims. Ultimately, this type of screening tool could save employers millions of dollars in wages, loss of productivity, medical expenses, and legal fees.

For more information, contact Gary W. Koeb at Reid Psychological Systems, 800-922-7343.