

# OSHA and the Tree Man

By Robert Felix, Executive Secretary  
National Arborist Association, Inc.

## guest editorial

When President Nixon signed the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970 no one had any idea what its impact would really be. The Tree Care Industry was as poorly prepared as anyone else. Three years have passed since OSHA became law (April 28, 1971) and I wonder how many tree companies are complying with the law today.

From the time your office door opens in the morning until the lock snaps at night, your personnel, your equipment and your techniques come under the scrutiny of OSHA. In my brief tenure as executive secretary of the National Arborist Association I have had occasion to visit the offices and shops of many tree companies. In some instances the degree of compliance has been substantial, in others feeble.

We are not currently a target indus-

try, but don't let that lead you to believe that you will not be visited by the man from OSHA. A number of tree companies have been visited resulting in citations in some instance in excess of \$2500.00. Don't be a victim of your own disinterest.

Keep in mind that OSHA was intended to provide a safe place to work for every American in private enterprise. By complying with the law and preparing in advance for the OSHA visit that may or may not come, you are improving your own position from a safety standpoint. In the long run you will save money.

Your cost of insurance will decrease as employee safety increases. Granted, initially you will incur some expenses in acquiring the necessary safety devices. But over a long term you will recover this in reduced cost of Workmans Compensation Insurance, reduced lost time due to injuries and increased efficiency. It is not as bad as it seems and if

you do it right it is almost painless.

How does a tree company comply with OSHA? There are numerous publications that interpret the law. Some insurance companies can offer guidance. The American National Standards Institute Z133 Standard has not yet been adopted by OSHA but provides most of the operational safety information. The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in Washington, D.C. can help and if your plant requires considerable rehabilitation to comply. The Small Business Administration is prepared to help with low interest loans.

The National Arborist Association has distributed to its membership an "OSHA Manual" which interprets the law as it applies to the tree care industry. This manual is available to members only and is divided into several categories including management responsibility, plant safety, employee safety, equipment safety, material safety and operational safety.

As new regulations are made by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration they are interpreted and sent to NAA members for insertion in their NAA OSHA Manual.

OSHA might seem like a monster but if properly accepted and applied it will be a tremendous benefit to the employer. It was not designed as a penal code. You can live with it and make a profit from it if you handle it properly.



## POWER-KART

**RIDE** .....  
(seat for two)

**HAUL** .....  
(500 pounds gross)

**TOW** .....  
(pulls like a mule!)

(Shown with optional  
headlight)



Snowco's torque converter drive converts the output of an 8 HP engine into almost unbelievable power for hauling and towing over all terrain.

Wide low pressure tires protect turf from compaction or other damage; and, at the same time, enable the Power-Kart to buck through mud and sand.

Save hundreds of dollars in time plus (as compared with larger vehicles) original cost, maintenance and operating costs.

**SEND COUPON  
TODAY!**

  
**THE  
SNOW COMPANY**

Division of Beatrice Foods Co.  
Box B, 4386 McKinley, Omaha, Nebr. 68112

Please send illustrated folder on the Power-Kart.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Check if dealer