



GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT 06: HEDGELAYING

ACTIVITY ASSESSED	ASSESSMENT DATE	
HEDGELAYING page 1 of 2	DECEMBER 2014	
ACTIVITY LOCATION	ALL SITES	DATE FOR RE-ASSESSMENT
persons at risk: all volunteers; especially young persons	rev 12-11-17	ASSESSED BY
risk level: generally moderate except as indicated		GRASSROOTS

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION	<p>Preparation</p> <p>General site safety</p> <p>Falling trees and flying wood</p> <p>Contact with hand tools</p> <p>Contact with overhead powerlines</p> <p>Repetitive swinging movements</p> <p>Thorn injuries</p> <p>Eye injuries</p> <p>Use of ropes</p> <p>Farmland/farm animals</p>
HAZARD OR HAZARDOUS EVENT	PRECAUTIONS
Preparation	<p>Volunteers will normally work in teams of 2 or 3 persons</p> <p>Clear all obstacles from around the hedge first so that you can move easily and escape if you need to</p> <p>Try to lay in the direction the tree is naturally leaning</p> <p>Maintain a safe working distance from other workers</p> <p>Assess condition of hedge; old wood may be hard or rotten; advise volunteers to take care with the first cuts</p> <p>Plan work session: volunteers should examine the length of hedge to be worked on before beginning any cutting work</p>
Falling trees and flying wood	<p>Cease work in high winds</p> <p>If necessary cordon off area using hazard tape ; place 'no entry' signs and post lookouts on any paths</p> <p>Ensure good working practice as outlined in the BTCV handbooks - Woodlands, Hedging and Hand Tools</p> <p>Minimum safe working distance from any other group is the equivalent of twice the height of the tree being worked on; this applies especially at the end of each working length</p> <p>Volunteers should review safe working distances continually</p> <p>Volunteers throwing wood towards wood stack must review direction to ensure no volunteers are within the minimum safe working distance; call out warning</p> <p>Wear helmets when felling trees over 3m</p>
Contact with hand tools	<p>Tools will have been inspected by Tools Officer before allocation to task</p> <p>Tools are maintained off site</p> <p>Tool talk to be held at start of all tasks</p> <p>Train all on site in correct tool use, according to TCV booklet 'Hand Tools- a guide to safe use and care'</p> <p>No gloves to be worn when using swinging tools; GR will not work in areas where plant sap is likely to present a hazard</p> <p>Sturdy footwear with a firm grip must be worn</p>

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Contact with overhead powerlines	<p>GrassRoots will not normally undertake hedging work within two tree lengths of overhead lines</p> <p>Hedges do not normally reach overhead lines; the site assessment should identify any potential hazards; the client/site owner should be informed and asked to deal with the problem before the task begins</p>
Repetitive swinging movements	Everyone should take regular rest breaks and vary any repetitive actions
Thorn injuries	<p>Clear ground of material before kneeling</p> <p>Use protective kneelers or mat</p> <p>Leather protective gloves to be worn when handling thorny material</p> <p>Protective goggles, BS EN 166, must be worn when there is a risk that thorns may go in eyes</p> <p>Remove any blackthorn thorns immediately</p> <p>Warn of the dangers of infection from blackthorn thorns</p>
Eye injuries	<p>Working around bushes/grasses/weeds: sharp/fine twigs & leaves</p> <p>Take care when walking towards</p> <p>Take care when bending down</p>
Use of ropes	<p>Ropes may be used to control any larger trees within the hedge</p> <p>Ensure that all ropes have been checked before taking them out on site, and any rope with signs of fraying must not be used</p> <p>Polypropylene rope of at least 16mm thick to be used</p>
Farmland/farm animals	<p>Do not work in fields with livestock present</p> <p>Leaders to assess & manage access through areas with livestock; preferably take instruction from landowner</p> <p>Do not cross fields with cows & calves present</p>