



City of Wharton

Office of Emergency Management

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James Cooper/City of Wharton EMC

POST-STORM PREPAREDNESS: WORKING SAFELY TO CLEAR FALLEN TREES

When the hurricane has passed, the danger is not over. Many deaths and injuries occur after the storm, as residents try to clear fallen trees, brush and debris. Be alert to these hazards:

- Wear protective clothing when clearing trees, fallen branches and wood debris. This should include items to protect the head and face as well as hearing, including: cotton or leather gloves, heavy clothing to cover arms and legs and protective work boots, preferably with steel toes.
- Keep children and pets out of the area when you are clearing brush and debris.
- Do not work when you are tired or when you are alone. Experts say many accidents occur in the late afternoon, when residents are tired and pushing themselves to finish the work.
- When chopping down a tree, keep others at least “two tree lengths away.”
- When picking up heavy wood debris, avoid back injury by getting help. Even a two-foot log can weigh as much as 100 pounds.
- Be extremely careful when using chain saws and power tools. Re-read safety manuals before you start.
- Leave the job of cutting down a broken tree, which could weigh several tons, to a professional cutter.
- Be careful working around young, thin trees when other trees or debris have fallen across them. A bent tree can act like a spring pole, propelling a chain saw back into your leg or body.
- If you plan to use trees for firewood, stack them at least 30 feet from your home or outbuildings.
- If you decide to burn limbs and trees damaged by the storm, check with your local fire department to make sure conditions are right. Keep your burn piles small and never leave the fire unattended.