



FROM THE ISAO SAFETY COMMITTEE: NECK STRAIN



Neck pain is all too common in the arboriculture industry and comes in many forms and does not discriminate based on age or experience. The article found earlier in this issue outlines the potential impact of neck pain. Also outlined in the article, are the important anatomy involved including muscles and nerves, and how they connect to, and impact the rest of the body. This is a very real problem with too little existing research specific to the industry.

DESCRIBE the hazards

Arborists are exposed to a number of working conditions which may lead to neck strain and injury.

- ◆ Overhead work (and prolonged overhead work)
- ◆ Poor posture
- ◆ Lifting heavy weights far from body
- ◆ Lack of breaks
- ◆ Poorly adjusted car seats
- ◆ Prolonged time without changing positions.

DISCUSS control measures

- ◆ Breaks: Take as many breaks as possible from the same posture/positions, and overhead work. At the very least, take quick breaks to check, and readjust your posture.
- ◆ Daily stretches: Take the time in the morning, and at night to perform the stretches as posted on the Instagram site to restore and promote range of motion and hopefully, decrease neck pain.

- ◆ Posture checks: Take frequent moments throughout your day to check your posture and readjust as necessary.
- ◆ Ensure your seat is well-positioned and adjusted: let the seat support your head and neck, and hold your hands at 'four' and 'eight' point positions.. This includes resting your head back on the rest provided. Take frequent breaks when possible.
- ◆ Carry loads close to your body and yourself: Note that shorter distance, and height are associated with lower muscle activity levels. Consider when you can adapt your position to be closer to your subject.
- ◆ Use heat and cold treatment as needed to help reduce pain. Could be used when the above preventative measures are not sufficient.
- ◆ Seek out appropriate medical professionals as appropriate: With sharp, electric pain, sudden changes, or serious injury, or anything else of concern, always consult a medical professional for thorough assessment, testing, and prompt treatment before the issue gets worse.

DEMONSTRATE knowledge

- ◆ Demonstrate that you understand how to check and readjust your posture.
- ◆ Demonstrate that you know how to adjust your seating position when driving vehicles and equipment.
- ◆ Demonstrate stretching exercises

Date: _____

Location: _____

Presenter: _____

MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY
(Each participant is to sign below)
