



Hardwood Manufacturers Association

665 Rodi Road, Suite 305, Pittsburgh, PA 15235 – 412-244-0440 – www.HMAmembers.org

Stretching exercises can relieve machine operators' fatigue

Safety brochure illustrates with clear text and diagrams

A straightforward program for “Reducing Machine Operator Fatigue,” with text and diagrams, is among the safety brochures now posted at www.loggingsafety.com

The program contains guidelines and stretching exercises developed by the Logging Industry Research Organization in New Zealand and passed along by the National Timber Harvesting and Safety Foundation, which maintains the logging safety website.

The program rests on four main principles for machine operators:

- Maintaining a good working posture. This means keeping shoulders, arms and wrists straight; sitting back in your seat with feet flat on the floor; and avoiding long periods of leaning to the side or front.
- Relaxing your arms and hands for a few seconds every few minutes to relieve muscle tension.
- Building breaks into your workday to get up and move around.
- Stretching to relax muscles and relieve muscle fatigue.

The brochure illustrates a set of eight stretches, starting with wrist and forearm stretches and then alternating between arm-and-shoulder stretches and lower back stretches.

Instructions for the exercises are extremely clear and precise. Here's what it says about stretching your:

- Wrists and forearms. “Lift your arms out in front of you. Keeping your arms straight, move your hands in circles, first in one direction, then in the other.” (Repeat 5-15 times in each direction.)
- Shoulders. “Rotate your right shoulder forward, up and back, and then in the opposite direction. Repeat this for your left shoulder. Keep your spine straight, and be careful not to move your chest upwards.” (Repeat 5-15 times on each side.)
- Arms and upper back. “Holding one hand in the other, straighten your arms in front of you. Your palms should be facing away from you as you stretch. (Don't let your



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shoulders go forward.) Feel the stretch in your arms and through the upper part of your back.” (Hold for 20 seconds, repeat at least twice.)

- Neck and upper back. “Looking straight ahead, pull chin inwards, creating a double chin, and gently turn to the left, then to the right. You should feel the stretch at the side of your neck. Pull your shoulders down gently to increase the effectiveness of the stretch. This will stretch your neck and upper back.” (Repeat 2-3 times.)

For the full brochure, go to www.loggingsafety.com and click on “safety brochures.” The machine operator safety brochure is #99-A-1, and is available in Spanish as well as English.