Chippers and Shredders – Landscaping Fatality File



Fatal Chipper Shredder Incident in Landscaping – October 2023 Incident Report

On October 3, 2023, a fatal accident involving a chipper shredder occurred in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, resulting in the death of a 32-year-old landscaping worker, Kenneth Pountain. The incident happened while Pountain was feeding branches into a DK2 3-Inch Disk Chipper Shredder during routine landscaping activities.

The investigation revealed that Pountain was using the chipper shredder when a large branch caused a jam. In an attempt to clear the blockage without shutting off the machine, Pountain was pulled into the shredder, resulting in fatal injuries. Despite the immediate efforts of coworkers and emergency services, he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Contributing factors included a failure to follow proper safety procedures and insufficient use of personal protective equipment (PPE). The incident underscores the importance of adhering to safety guidelines, such as turning off machinery before attempting to clear jams and ensuring the use of all recommended PPE, including gloves, safety glasses, and protective clothing.

Woodchippers and shredders present serious risks in landscaping, with thousands of injuries reported each year, predominantly affecting fingers and hands. The potential for severe injuries, including amputations, underscores the necessity for proper training and safety measures when operating this equipment.