



Forestry & Arboriculture

Epic Tree Care - Health & Safety Policy

Statement of Intent:

Our health and safety policy is to, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- provide and maintain safe plant and equipment;
- ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Signed... 

On Behalf of Epic Tree Care
Date: 20/09/2023

1. Introduction

Epic Tree Care Ltd undertakes the full range of forestry and arboricultural tree work operations including tree pruning, tree felling, stump grinding, cable bracing, advice and consultation services.

Epic Tree Care has been operating since 01/10/2014, our emphasis is on efficiency, sustainability and low impact, high quality services. We are fully committed to health & safety and all our staff and sub-contractors are fully qualified and experienced in the operations they undertake. We undertake refresher / update training on a regular basis to ensure all our staff are kept up-to-date on the latest techniques and technologies.

This company health and safety policy has been written to outline our existing practices and so is fully in line with our way of working, all employees are aware of contents through working usage on a day-to-day basis. We review the policy, and associated procedures, on a regular basis to check their effectiveness and update in line with any changes or improvements which are identified by ourselves or others.

2. Contacts

Primary point of contacts for all Epic Tree Care operations are:

Elaine Rush

Job Title: Operations Director

Email: sales@epictreecare.co.uk

Mobile: +44(0)7498063229

Clive Coney

Job Title: Managing Director

Email: info@epictreecare.co.uk

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3. Organisation (Roles & Responsibilities)

3.1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety

Managing Director

3.2. Day-to-day responsibility

Directors, Team Leaders, Office Manager

3.3. Overall Responsibilities

All employees shall perform the following actions to ensure their own safety, and the safety of persons who may be within the vicinity.

- ✓ Co-operate with Directors, Team Leaders and Office Manager on health and safety matters
- ✓ Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
- ✓ Take reasonable care of their own and others health and safety
- ✓ Report all health and safety concerns to an appropriate person (as detailed in this policy)
- ✓ Visually inspect all equipment prior to use

3.4. Risk Assessments

Risk assessments will be undertaken by:	Directors, Team Leaders and/or Office Manager
The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to:	Directors, Team Leaders and/or Office Manager
Action required to remove/control risks will be approved by:	Directors and Team Leaders
Responsibility for ensuring the action required is implemented is with:	Directors and Team Leaders
Checking that the implemented actions have removed / reduced the risks is with:	Directors and Team Leaders

3.5. Competency for tasks and training / qualifications

Induction training will be provided for all employees by:	Directors and/or Team Leaders
Job-specific training will be provided by:	Directors/Team Leaders or qualified instructor where formal training is required.
Specific jobs requiring special training / qualifications / experience include but are not limited to:	chainsaw use, tree felling, tree climbing operations, aerial rescue, use of MEWP's, vehicle driving, use of winches and large machinery.
Training records are kept/by:	Directors and Office Manager
Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by:	Directors and Office Manager
Supervision of young workers/trainees will be arranged/undertaken/monitored by:	Directors and/or Team Leaders
The first aiders are:	Team Leaders + others that hold a first aid certificate
Loler inspection responsibility:	Managing Director

Directors are responsible for ensuring that our employees working at locations under the control of other employers, are given relevant health and safety information.

3.6. Accident reporting and investigation

Directors are responsible for investigating accidents, near misses, work-related causes of sickness absences, and then acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Directors are responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority (HSE or your local authority depending upon where you work) as per RIDDOR requirements.

3.7. Safe plant and equipment

All employees are responsible for ensuring they visually check any equipment to be used prior to first use in the morning.

For ongoing maintenance and testing, Managing Director is responsible for ensuring equipment is safe and tested for use.

3.8. Worksites

Directors or Team Leaders are responsible for identifying sites where utility services are present and represent a hazard to work operations. Directors will also be responsible for identifying sites where asbestos may be present.

4. Risk Assessment and Work Process Detailed Information

Generic risk assessments will be reviewed periodically or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

Owing to the nature of the work, risk assessments will be undertaken on a site-by-site basis, in the format of a discussion along with generic risk assessments for repetitive operations i.e. chainsaw use, to establish a safe method of work. In the event of an unusually complex scope of work, difficult area, or new process, a full site specific risk assessment may be completed. These are also available for completion if required by contractor.

4.1. Communication and consultation with employees

An up-to-date copy of this policy is available to all employees from the office and on the company website, "Qualifications & Certificates" under Company Information & Policies.

Direct consultation on health and safety matters will take place routinely as they arise and following any review of health and safety matters where changes are required. Toolbox talks are prepared and presented to employees (and labour-only subcontractors where applicable).

Depending on the nature of an incident or near miss, a full meeting with all parties involved may be required. Notes to be taken at meeting and actions to prevent recurrence will be recorded.

The Health and Safety Law leaflets are available from the office.

Additional health and safety advice is available from:

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website*
- The Forestry Industry Safety Accord (FISA) website **

*Health and Safety Executive – HSE Infoline 0845 345 0055 – HSE Website www.hse.gov.uk

** Forestry Industry Safety Accord-www.ukfisa.com

4.2. Work at Height

Work at height is a day-to-day part of tree work, and as such is usually covered by generic risk assessments with exceptions as outlined in section 4. All workers who operate at height undertake formal training and hold necessary qualifications.

4.3. Manual Handling

Manual handling risk assessment available and on display in the office. A manual handling toolbox talk is also available. We provide lifting aids where practicable and encourage suggestions from the team for improvements.

4.4. Temporary Site Utility Services (overhead & underground)

These would be identified in normal onsite discussion / risk assessment activities. Where necessary utilities may require to be switched off / redirected and traffic management may be required.

In all cases care shall be taken to ensure all employees are safe and utilities are not at risk.

4.5. Equipment Maintenance and Safety

LOLER inspections are conducted in-house at regular intervals or subcontracted where applicable.

Vehicle servicing may be conducted in-house or arranged externally. Vehicle testing is subcontracted per test schedule where applicable.

Portable appliance testing is arranged for items in office and workshop.

4.6. PPE

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) appropriate for the risks involved and suitable for the task and the person undertaking it, will be supplied to employees and must be used whenever there is a risk to an employee's health and safety which cannot be adequately controlled by alternative means. Any defects in PPE must be reported immediately on discovery.

4.7. Safe handling and use of substances including asbestos

All substances currently in use with Epic Tree Care are on a COSHH register. Spill Kits and eye wash stations are available on site and at work, PPE is provided for all substances.

Register is reviewed periodically, or when a new substance is identified / introduced, whichever comes first.

Relevant ‘experts’ / specialist contractors will be contacted for assistance where asbestos might be present.

4.8. Accidents, first aid and work-related ill health

Toolbox talks are provided, and measures are put in place to mitigate safety and health-related issues, with tools replaced regularly, emphasis on PPE and usage, plant used wherever possible to reduce associated manual handling risks. Health surveillance is required for all employees performing work with Epic Tree Care Ltd due to the high-risk nature of the work.

The first-aid boxes are kept:	Within work vehicles and in the workshop / office.
First-aid contents checks:	At intervals during the year
All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded electronically in the accident book. The book is kept:	Within storage system

4.9. Monitoring

To check our working conditions, and ensure our safe working practices are being followed, we will monitor health and safety actively by regular spot checks and/or work site visits and reactively by investigating any accidents or ill health should they occur.

4.10. Emergency procedures

4.10.1. Work premises

- Fire risk assessments available and on display in the office.
- Escape routes are kept clear, this is checked visually at least once per week.
- Fire extinguishers and blankets available.
- All areas have relevant alarm systems in place.
- For first aid, refer to section 4.8.

4.10.2. On site

- Fire extinguishers, eyewash stations available in work vehicles.
- Adequate arrangements for aerial rescue provision at all work sites involving climbing, including competent/experienced ‘rescuers’ and suitable equipment.

4.11. Welfare

Welfare facilities available to staff on work premises. Water is available to be put in vessels before heading to a site. When on temporary work sites, homeowner or site owner welfare facilities are to be used. Cleaning products are available in vehicles.

4.12. Sub-contractors – use of

All training certificates are requested for checks and availability prior to first day on site. Employees are restricted to activities for which they are trained with some exceptions where a qualified person is on site and monitoring / training. Certificates also required for any subcontractor provided equipment i.e PUWER / LOLER certification where appropriate.