



Risk Management Committee

Safety Warning FINAL

Date: 08/01/2014

Subject: Stihl Chainsaw Fuel/Oil Caps

Issue: Recently, a wildland firefighter was seriously burned while operating a saw in hot ash when fuel spilled from a Stihl chainsaw onto the saw chaps, which then ignited. At least one other report of fuel and oil leakage has been received. The exact cause(s) of the failures are unknown at this time, and wildland fire equipment experts are working with the manufacturer to identify the issue. In the meantime, the hazard posed by potential fuel leakage is sufficient to warrant this safety alert.

Some Stihl chainsaw fuel/oil caps can be improperly closed or otherwise fail to seal properly. It has been identified that fuel/oil caps can appear to be closed correctly, but upon closer inspection are found to be improperly seated (threads not in complete alignment) resulting in caps leaking and/or becoming dislodged.

Required Action: All chainsaw operators should:

- Immediately inspect fuel/oil caps to ensure that they are undamaged, in good condition, and seat properly when closed.
- If damaged fuel/oil caps are found, discontinue use of the chainsaw until the fuel/oil cap is replaced.
- Ensure a thorough check occurs on cap closures prior to and periodically during chainsaw use to ensure the caps are properly seated. See attached excerpt from *the Stihl MS 362 Instruction Manual* describing proper fuel cap installation procedures.
- Report upward through your local safety channels should you experience a chainsaw related fuel/oil leakage issue.

Follow-up Actions: If the ongoing research reveals additional information on causes of fuel/oil cap failures, a subsequent safety alert will be issued.

Discussion/Background: A wildland firefighter was recently seriously burned as a result of fuel spilling from the chainsaw onto the saw chaps, which then ignited while working with a Stihl chainsaw in hot ash.

Additional Information: Rocky Ridge Fire 24- and 72-hour Reports:
<http://www.wildfirelessons.net/communities/resources/viewincident/?DocumentKey=4cc9ad76-8e32-4c2a-ac1a-2aa77a114c45>

Attachment: *Stihl MS 362 fuel cap installation procedures*