

Somers Land Trust Volunteer Safety Practice Including NYC DEP Requirements

Approved by the SLT Board on April 21, 2011

The Somers Land Trust (SLT) is a volunteer organization that depends on community volunteers to carry out its mission of stewardship and partnership in maintaining properties in the town of Somers.

It is expected that all SLT volunteers will approach their activities in a way that ensures their personal safety and the safety of those around them as well as protecting the environment they are working in. Each volunteer needs to assess the following and if they answer “no” to any of the following statements they need to consider backing away and not engaging in the task or project

- I am comfortable in performing the task or project.
- I have the skills, training and knowledge to perform the task or project.
- I have the correct tools and equipment, with appropriate safety features, to perform the task or project.
- I have the personal protective equipment to perform the task or project.
- I am comfortable that the surrounding work area is safe to perform the task or project.

The decision to perform a task or project rests solely with the volunteer or if a youth, their parent, guardian or responsible adult. There may be situations when a member of the SLT or the task or project leader may decide a task or project should not be done by volunteers.

The use of power (gas or electric) open blade cutting equipment such as chainsaws, brush cutters, weed wacker and power saws is restricted to adults over 18 years old. It is recommended that at least two people be present in the work area when working with the above listed power equipment.

Youths may only use hand cutting tools such as clippers, loppers, bow saws, axes and pruning saws when supervised by a parent, guardian or responsible adult.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance:

When using power open blade cutting equipment such as chainsaws, weed wacker and brush cutters, it is recommended that the volunteer wear a helmet, face screen, hearing protection, safety glasses, safety pants or chaps, work gloves, sturdy work boots, long pants and a long sleeve shirt.

When cutting trees, vines, tree limbs or engaged in tasks that are performed above their head, it is recommended that the volunteer wear a helmet, safety glasses and wear work gloves at a minimum to protect themselves from falling objects.

Equipment Safety Features:

When using power open blade cutting equipment such as chainsaws, weed wacker and brush cutters, it is recommended that the volunteer review and understand how to use the safety features of the equipment and ensure their equipment is in good working order.

DEP Permit Safety Requirements for Chain Saw and Power Equipment Use on DEP Property (Angle Fly Preserve):

Volunteers using chainsaws must have successfully completed a chainsaw safety class and be chainsaw certified. The volunteer using the chainsaw must wear the PPE equipment noted above. At least two persons must be present in the area when a chainsaw is being used. A first aid kit must be available at the activity site. A petroleum spill containment pad must be under the gas power equipment when refueling. An appropriately rated fire extinguisher must be available.

DEP Permit Safety Requirements for Volunteers Working on DEP Property:

All volunteers working on DEP property should wear appropriate PPE for the task or project being performed.