

Fencing

AgSafe Safe Work Procedure

Avoiding hazards associated with fencing on a ranch, requires diligent use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Use the following PPE:

1. Gloves to protect against barbed wire, splinters, scratches etc.
2. No loose clothing, depending on weather - high-visibility clothing may also be appropriate
3. Protective boots with good grip and ankle support
4. Eye protection is strongly advised because of the danger from flying debris, particularly when dismantling old fences
5. Wear protective clothing appropriate to power tools if they are being used

Each person should carry a First Aid kit, including a large wound dressing. Hand-cleaning material such as waterless skin cleanser or soap, water and paper towels should also be available.

Manual handling

1. Do not attempt to carry too much and adjust the load to suit the site conditions
2. Lift the power tool using the leg and arm muscles. Keep the back straight
3. Tools and equipment must be well maintained with all cutting edges adequately guarded when not in use
4. Do not place hand tools on the top of posts/stakes
5. Organize the delivery of fencing materials to minimize manual handling; use mechanized unloading or team work at a prepared site
6. Organize the layout of materials on the site to minimize carrying

Preparing to Work

1. Check the proposed fence line for underground hazards and services, e.g., cables, water and gas mains. Where present, ensure they are clearly marked.
2. Consult the local electricity company as required if working on fences with overhead power lines.
3. When dismantling fences, check for vegetation growth that could make the behavior of the wire and net unpredictable. Take particular care with old fences.
4. Unload a trailer from the top side or the rear when it is on a side slope.

Preservative-treated Timber

1. Wear chemical-resistant gloves to handle timber, which is still wet with preservative. (Dried preservative, or dried treated timber rewetted by rain is safe to handle.)
2. If hand application of preservative has been used do not use treated timber until the preservative has completely dried (up to 2-3 weeks after treatment).
3. Do not burn off-cuts of treated timber on site; dispose of them properly.
4. If wood preservatives approved for hand application are used to treat cut surfaces, observe the safety instructions on the label for eye protection, gloves and overalls. Always use the least hazardous product.

Manual post-driving tools

1. Do not support the post by hand - use a post holder.
2. Do not test or adjust the post by hand while the driving tool is being used.
3. Keep a firm stance with the feet and legs clear of the driving tool.
4. When using a stake/post driver do not allow it to be lifted too high above the top of the post.
5. When using a maul, ensure no one is close to or in line with the swing.

Mechanical post/stake drivers

1. This is a one-person operation.
2. If the post/stake driver is mounted to a tractor via a three-point linkage, the tractor must be large enough to remain stable during post/stake driving.
3. The machine must be properly parked and braked before post/stake driving begins.
4. There is a risk of flying debris from the driven post/stake. Suitable face protection should be worn.
5. The post driver should be fitted with a gripping device to remove the need for the operator to hold the post during operation of the machine. Ropes or Y poles can be used to guide the post rather than a hand being placed anywhere upon the post.

Barbed wire

1. Always wear protective gloves when handling barbed wire.
2. When dispensing barbed wire keep it taut. Take care to avoid breakage and recoil, particularly with HT barbed wire.

Please use the following ***Safe Work Procedures*** as a guideline to building your own safe work procedures.