



Professional Timber Harvesters

The logging profession is an essential link between Missouri woodlands and the forest products industry. Along with landowners and foresters, loggers are partners in managing our forests for wood, water, wildlife and recreation. Missouri's forests are capable of sustaining these resources if properly managed through training and education.

The State of Missouri has determined the importance of trained loggers. Since 2000, the Missouri Department of Conservation has required loggers to complete the Professional Timber Harvester (PTH) Training Program, a five day training session sponsored by Missouri Forest Products Association (MFPA), before they harvest timber on state owned land. "It is very important to the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) to be able to work with loggers that have gone through the PTH Program," said Jason Jensen, Forest Products Supervisor of the Forest Products Division at MDC. "These individuals have been trained on the importance of good forest management and they become a partner in ensuring sustainability of the forest."

The Professional Timber Harvester (PTH) training is based on *The Game of Logging (GOL)* training program which is widely acknowledged as the premier timber harvesting training program in the country, offering hands-on training emphasizing safety and sustainable timber harvesting.

The PTH Training Program is designed to educate the logger, skidder operator, forester, forest contractor, and landowner to harvest timber safely and professionally, while protecting the forest ecology and wildlife.

"Professional timber harvesting is a vital part of Missouri's over 5 billion dollar forest products industry," said Steve Jarvis, MFPA's Executive Director. "Decisions made today impacts our forests for many decades to come."

The PTH Training is broken down into five classes taught on different days. The sessions are spaced out to allow the logging professional time to incorporate what is taught into their daily schedule before moving on to the next level.

The Forest Management class focuses on Best Management Practices (BMPs), managing for long term profitability, forest ecology, and wildlife. BMPs are activities that eliminate or reduce impact on soil erosion and other environmental effects, information that is essential when developing a plan for good forest management.

The cutting sessions, Levels 1-4, are taught by MFPA's Trainer, Joe Glenn. Glenn has been the association's instructor for many years. He was trained under international logging expert, Soren Eriksson, the founder of *The Game of Logging* organization.

Level 1 introduces the participant to open face felling and the development of techniques to safely use it. Topics covered include personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, chainsaw reactive forces, bore cutting, pre-planning the fell, and understanding hinge wood strength.

Level 2 includes instruction on maximizing chainsaw performance through basic maintenance, carburetor setting, and filing techniques. Limbing and bucking techniques are introduced, spring pole cutting is covered and more felling is practiced.

Level 3 offers techniques for handling difficult trees. Topics covered include limbing, height measurement, segment calculations, wedging techniques and hinge placement. The felling is done against the tree's natural lean and participants also limb and buck using techniques demonstrated in Level 2.

Level 4 offers ways to maximize a harvest plan for safety and productivity. Felling is practiced at working speed using all the techniques from previous levels.

"Safety is high priority in the training," said Joe Glenn. "Since logging is the second most dangerous occupation, it goes without saying that safety cannot be stressed enough. Additionally, I stress professionalism and proper cutting techniques to ensure good forest management."

In 2008, in collaboration with Missouri Department of Conservation, MFPA developed the Missouri Master Logger Certification. The PTH training is required

just to apply for the Master Logger Certification which is **not** a training program, but a field **verification** of sixty eight specific measures ensuring compliance with Best Management Practices (BMP) taught in the Professional Timber Harvester Training. The process is detailed and rigorous, so they deserve to be recognized as “the best of the best”

For more information about the PTH Training or Master Logger Certification visit www.moforest.org or call 573-634-3252.

Missouri Forest Products Association is dedicated to serving and promoting the forest products industry of Missouri. Founded in 1970, MFPA has over 300 members representing primary and secondary wood industry, supplier and service industries, loggers and landowners. MFPA advocates sustainable management and sound stewardship of Missouri’s forests to benefit current and future generations.

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