

Safety Alert

December 2015



Falling Tree Branches

Recently there was an incident involving a gum tree branch falling onto a VicRoads employee. The branch fell onto his leg whilst he was resting under a tree; minor injuries were sustained, though the outcome could have been much worse.

Beware of Trees

Trees and limbs may fall unpredictably. Being under or near trees may be dangerous and could cause injury. Trees can drop limbs, or entire trees can fall, without warning and there is no way of determining when.

Do

- Be aware that it may be dangerous to park your car, have a break or camp under trees as limbs can swing out beyond the drip line (the edge of the canopy) of a tree;
- Stay well away from trees that appear to be dead or have dead limbs; and
- Take extra care in hot weather, still and windy days or during severe weather events.

Don't

- Damage trees in any way, including cutting or marking them; and
- Ignore tree risk.

Trees can be particularly prone to dropping a limb or falling when they are under stress.

Tree stress can be caused by:

- High wind;
- Extreme temperatures or sudden changes in temperature;
- Droughts;
- Fire;
- Compaction; and
- Flood.

As there is no way to predict exactly when a tree might fall or drop a limb it is ALWAYS better to be safe than sorry.

Issued 23/12/2015 by VicRoads Corporate OHS Team.