

SAFETY IS YOUR JOB!

Poisonous Plants

Employees should take precautions when working in wooded areas or in heavy foliage. About 90% of Americans are allergic to poison ivy, oak, and sumac. **Rashes caused by urushiol oil found in these plants can be irritating, painful, and sometimes lead to serious infections.** The following tips will help you stay clear of these plants and help avoid exposure.

Know what the poisonous plants look like.

- Poison ivy can be vine-like or a low shrub with 3 shiny green leaves.
- Poison oak is shrub-like with leaves of 3 (red or green).
- Poison sumac is a woody shrub with stems of 7 or 13 leaves.

Know the symptoms of a rash caused by these plants.

- Redness or rash within a few days
- Patches of red, bumps, and streaking or weeping blisters
- Swelling of affected area
- Itching

Know what to do to minimize rash if exposed.

- IMMEDIATELY cleanse affected skin with alcohol and then follow with fresh water.
- Shower with warm water and soap.
- Clean affected tools, equipment, shoes, and clothes with alcohol and water.
- Use gloves while cleaning equipment and then discard.

Know how to treat the rash.

- Cool compresses
- Oral or topical antihistamines
- Topical corticosteroids
- Calamine, zinc acetate, baking soda, or oatmeal bath to dry blisters

