

Fallen Trees and Stumps

We recently had an incident at a campsite where a youth member was collecting firewood from a large fallen tree. The tree had been reduced to a stump some time ago, with its root ball still partially attached to the ground and acting like a hinge, while the rest of the stump lay on its side, exposed to the elements. The youth member was using a hand saw from inside the root-ball cavity to harvest hardened roots for the evening campfire.

While this work was underway, the stump shifted its balance and swung back upright, trapping the youth member from the waist down. Our leaders responded quickly, and Emergency Services attended and freed him using a chain and winch.

Thankfully, the youth member sustained only minor physical injuries, but the incident could easily have been far more serious.

Fallen trees and stumps can be unstable and are not always recognised as a safety hazard. This bulletin is a reminder to assess significant stumps on your sites and develop a management or removal plan where needed.

If you have any questions contact sc.campsites@scoutsvictoria.com.au

