



BC Forest Safety Council  
*Unsafe is Unacceptable*

# NEWS RELEASE

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### **BC Forest Safety Council Faller Trainees to take classroom instruction to the woods**

Nanaimo, B.C. – (October 17, 2006) – A group of students from the BC Forest Safety Council faller training program have completed their 30-day formal instruction program at a worksite near Port Alberni. They demonstrated their new falling skills to employers and Council representatives before being hired by falling contractors and heading into a six-month work experience program.

The eight trainees, representing the new face of safe logging, completed the first part of the Council's New Faller Certification Program at Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo. The comprehensive training program started with five days of class work followed by 25 days of closely supervised field training.

The trainees are now starting the second part of the program that includes up to 180 days of actual falling experience with a forestry employer. Trainees who successfully complete the training and work experience program are entitled to take a written exam followed by a field evaluation to become a certified faller.

This program represents an industry first, where safe falling practices are taught in both the classroom and the workplace. It leads to the certification that is now necessary to work as a faller in B.C.

“The new faller training program ensures trainees know the importance of arriving mentally and physically prepared, equipped and ready for work,” explains Bill Bolton, head of the Faller Certification Program for the B.C. Forest Safety Council. “The bottom line is this training will teach fallers to do their job safely, ensuring that everyone returns home safe at the end of the work day.”

It is now mandatory for all fallers in B.C. to be certified. More than 3,000 working fallers have already stepped up to be evaluated and received certification over the 18-month mandatory certification period.

The Council's new Faller Training Program, is aimed at making sure new fallers entering the workforce are properly trained and prepared to work in a safe and productive manner.

Based on the BC Faller Training Standard, the new faller training program reinforces three key aspects of a professional tree faller: recognizing hazards and completing a risk assessment of each situation before making any cuts; continuously improving workmanship; and seeking qualified assistance when the faller is unsure of his or her abilities or requires help.

"If you want to work as a faller in this province, you have to be certified. It's not an option anymore," says Bolton. "The program offers an opportunity to get that certification to become a professional faller and work in one of the toughest and most satisfying occupations in the forestry sector."

The pilot program consists of four groups of trainees; two courses have been completed at North Island College in Campbell River and two sessions will run at Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo. Malaspina University-College's next course starts on October 30.

In 2007, new faller training will be offered throughout B.C., with the B.C. Forest Safety Council monitoring the quality of the training.

To find out more about the new faller certification program, visit the Council's website at [www.bcforestsafe.org](http://www.bcforestsafe.org) or call 250 724-2813.

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The BC Forest Safety Council is a not-for-profit society dedicated to promoting forest health and safety. The Council was founded and is supported by all major forestry organizations in B.C. and works with forestry employers, workers, contractors and the provincial government and agencies to implement changes necessary to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries in the forest sector.

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