

Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

December 2009

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

Are you ready if the worst happens this winter?

If your company is returning to work after being inactive for an extended time, it's important to review your safety policies and procedures to ensure that you meet SAFE Company requirements as well as WorkSafeBC regulations. This includes first aid, which depends on trained personnel, proper equipment and tested systems. It's all about being ready to deal with any emergency situation you might face as you go to work each shift.

First aid policies and procedures are important elements of your company's health and safety management system, so part of your overall review should involve conducting a first aid assessment based on the circumstances of your own work sites.

Exactly what is a first aid assessment?

The assessment goes beyond first aid requirements for field activities, and should also cover company sites like shops and offices, as required by [OHS Regulations Part 3.16](#). To help employers determine adequate levels of first aid, WorkSafeBC has published a guideline to help employers determine adequate and appropriate levels of first aid.

The guideline takes you step-by-step through issues like first aid attendant qualifications, assigned hazard ratings list, contents of a first aid kit and minimum required levels of first aid. It's all online at: [click here](#).

You can also access these online WorkSafeBC resources. A first aid assessment flowchart can be found at: [click here](#). The accompanying worksheet is located: [click here](#).

How you count employee numbers

Here's an important point: when calculating the size of your on-site work force, be sure to count dispatched workers like log haulers as $\frac{1}{4}$ or 1 in 4.

For example, if you have eight log haulers on your block, you need to count them as two workers in your first aid assessment [Guideline G3.16](#).

Consider Emergency Transport by Air, Land and Water

After determining your first aid requirements, be sure to identify any possible barriers to first aid -- such as blocked roads, adverse weather conditions, communication method or unavailability of emergency transport. If air transport is the primary or only way to move an injured worker, you must determine the availability of appropriate aircraft each day before work starts [OHS Regulation 3.17.1](#). If you are working night shift, helicopters may not be able to fly and you need a different method to transport injured workers.

Once you have completed your first aid assessment and integrated it into your Emergency Response Plan, you should test it. Do the phone numbers work? Does everyone know what they are supposed to do if there is a medical emergency? Is all your equipment ready and in good repair? Until you've tested your system, you can't really rely on it.

First aid policies and procedures are a **critical** part of a company's health and safety management system. The key to successful first aid response is trained personnel, good communications, proper equipment and tested systems.

