



BC's Forestry "TruckSafe"

Getting forest workers home safely

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More than 25% of fatalities in the forest industry occur during the transportation of logs, wood products, and forest workers. This fact has prompted the BC Forest Safety Council to start the Forestry TruckSafe program. Its mandate is: "To promote safe drivers, safe vehicles, safe resource roads, safe conduct on public highways, and vehicle safety awareness generally in the forest sector."

WorkSafeBC also has a TruckSafe program, which focusses on issues related to trucking in general. However, the injury and fatality rate in forestry transportation demands specific attention, hence the decision to start the Forestry TruckSafe program

Forestry TruckSafe's activities fall into two broad categories: Driver Safety and Road Safety. The program operates out of Prince George, the heart of Interior logging activity. The program's approach is to build relationships and partnerships, and to focus its core activities on problem solving and prevention, which allows the program to be responsive and proactive. The plan is to assist a broad spectrum of interests, from the individual owner/operator to industry associations, to the

major licensees, and to government agencies. Forestry TruckSafe often acts as a network broker and provides a clearinghouse for safety information for the industry.

Forestry TruckSafe takes its direction from, and is accountable to, the industry itself and communicates directly with its target constituent group, the drivers. Communication is through seminars and workshops on specific issues, such as Hours of Service (how to properly keep records), Driver Fatigue Management, Stress Management for Drivers, and Personal Wellness. The annual forum on road safety in the industry invites other industry and road safety partners to share the latest developments, initiatives, technology, and outcome measures, and allows such collaborative efforts to be evaluated through surveys and one-on-one discussions. A bi-weekly newsletter called "Rumblings" reaches an estimated 15,000 audience through email and fax. This newsletter is often posted at truck scales and is used for discussion at safety meetings.

Watch for future articles dealing with specific forestry-related driving safety topics. 

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