

Measuring Safety Performance in BC's Forest Industry

Impact of Safer Practices in the Forests 2005 to 2006

Safety Performance Measured Through the WorkSafeBC Claims and Assessment Process

There has been a significant improvement in the safety performance in the harvesting sector of the forest industry from 2005 to 2006.

Safety Performance

- Decrease of 21.5% in total claims from 1,193 to 936
- Drop in length of short term disability by 3% from 73.5 to 71.5 days
- Decrease of 32% in Benefit Cost Rate (the total of all safety related costs per \$100 of payroll) from 4.74 to 3.21

Safety Impacts

- Reduction in overall number of injuries resulting in 39% decrease in costs from \$45,517 million to \$27,776 million (net reduction of \$17,741 million)
- Fewer short term disability injuries resulting in 25.5% reduction in costs
- Fewer long term disability injuries resulting in 36% reduction in costs
- Reduction in number of injuries requiring health care by 27.5%
- Reduction in number of injuries resulting in indirect costs; a savings of over \$53,000,000 (three times the total cost of direct injuries)

- Total reduction in injuries resulting in a safety dividend of more than \$70,000,000 (direct and indirect costs)

Safety Actions – 2005 to 2006 to present

In addition to the countless company safety meetings, crew tailgate meetings, conferences, and individual efforts, the following major programs have been undertaken:

From Industry:

- 2,260 forest companies registered in the BC Forest Safety Council SAFE Certified Companies program and 149 forest companies successfully completed certification
- 1,200 small employer representatives trained in basic occupational health and safety as part of SAFE Companies
- 3,300 experienced fallers certified under the Council's Faller Certification Program
- 55 new fallers trained and certified by the Council
- 300 forest supervisors trained by the Council
- Province-wide outreach, education and road use management activities undertaken to reduce incidents and fatalities in the working woods and on BC roads
- From WorkSafeBC:
 - A major review of forestry compliance policies, as recommended by the BC Forest Safety Task Force
 - More safety officers added
 - A rigorous compliance pilot project on forestry safety drilling down safety systems
 - Introduction of the Certificate of Recognition Program (COR, the WorkSafeBC portion of industry's SAFE Companies Certification program)
 - Review of the Forestry Operations Regulation Part of the Occupational Health & Safety Regulation
 - Transferring administration of the BC Faller Training Standard to the Council

From Government:

- The appointment of a Resource Industry Coroner to focus on fatalities in forestry and other resource industries. As a result there have been two Coroner's inquests into forestry related fatalities; the Gramlich Inquest into a faller fatality in 2006 and the Leroux Inquest into a Logging Truck fatality in 2007
- The commitment of BC Timber Sales to become SAFE Certified and to require that companies harvesting Timber Sales fibre obtain SAFE Certified status
- Referral to the Auditor General the issue of forest safety. Their report is expected later this fall

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