



# RUMBLINGS

FOR SAFE ROADS, LOADS AND DRIVERS — ACROSS BRITISH COLUMBIA  
FORESTRY TRUCKSAFE



BC **Forest Safety** Council

○ PRINTABLE VERSION

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**Safety in Forestry Transportation TruckSafe Rumbings is published biweekly to keep you informed on what is happening in forest hauling safety in BC. Call MaryAnne Arcand to provide input or get the news out on best practices and concerns in the industry.**

## **Wider log bunks to be allowed on highways in certain areas**

CVSE and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure have approved the use of 9'6" log bunks on highways, 12" wider than they currently are on highway trucks. From Forestry TruckSafe's perspective this poses a potential safety problems in a number of areas: where logging trucks have to go right through the middle of a town in between regular traffic to get to and from the mills; on narrow rural roads; on forest service and licensee roads which were not designed for wider bunks and on roads with crowning and corners banked to the outside. As winter conditions continue and the roads narrow up because of snow piled on the sides, all of these concerns increase.

The RoadHealth coalition, made up of representatives from, ICBC, RCMP, WorkSafeBC, Northern Health, the Coroner's Service, Ministry of Forests & Range, Ministry of Transportation, and Forestry TruckSafe, has expressed deep concern that this move will increase the risk of crashes, and the coalition strongly objected in a letter to CVSE. Through 2007 and most of 2008 mayors throughout northern BC also expressed concerns about the safety implications of wider bunk trucks in their communities.

The Central Interior Logging Association surveyed its members and results show that contractors and truckers are also not happy with this move due to a number of safety concerns. In their view, forest Service and licensee roads were never designed to accommodate the wider bunks and no risk assessments have been conducted to ensure that the roads and bridges are properly designed for the wider bunk widths. CILA members raised the question of what improvements in the roads will be made to safely accommodate an increase in bunk widths in light of decreasing dollars for road maintenance and construction. Road maintenance standards and levels of maintenance have deteriorated in the past number of years including frequency, width and levels of grading and snowplowing on forest and public roads. Truckers also raised the issue of reduced right of way brushing affecting sight distance.

The justification for this change is that mountain pine beetle wood is light, therefore at 8'6" bunks the trucks can't get loaded to their full legal axle weights. The loads can't get any higher due to wires, overpasses and balance restrictions, and they can't get any longer due to the length of sweeps, etc, so the licensees lobbied to make them wider, and the CVSE agreed.

CVSE officials assured users that routes that would be permitted for wider bunks would be reviewed and approved on a route-by-route basis, and that very stringent conditions would apply before a route is approved. This doesn't seem to be the case when you look at Form T-60(November 2008) on the CVSE website. It shows where the permits are currently allowed, largely from Quesnel south. Go to <http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/CVSE> to see

for yourself or [click here](#) to get a copy of [Form T-60](#).

If you share these concerns, we encourage you to share your views with your local MLA, since the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure approved this change. They need to hear your voice on this!

### **VIN Plate On-line registry**

The Vehicle Identification Plate on-line registry is ready to go and is being loaded with company plate numbers as we speak. The purpose of the registry is to add value to the plates, by providing access to the name and phone number of the company holding the plate, in order to provide monitoring of the vehicles by many eyes, which increases the accountability of drivers.

It is entirely a volunteer registry, but we're hoping company owners take advantage of the opportunity to have increased monitoring of their vehicles and to hear directly from other drivers and the public about how their vehicles are behaving on the road. We know that there are thousands of vehicles around the province with the plates, and hope that those companies will participate in the registry. It's just one more tool to help bring awareness and accountability to the roads.

Forest & Range Minister Pat Bell says, "There's no room on forestry roads for aggressive or careless driving. We can only correct unsafe driving if we are able to track the vehicle back to the responsible driver or company. There are now about 5,000 forestry vehicles and logging trucks carrying special plates designed to help road users identify and report dangerous incidents."

"The identification plates program has proven effective in enabling the forest sector to self-monitor and be more accountable for its driving performance," said MaryAnne Arcand, Forestry TruckSafe Director. "The online registry will give us an even better grip on unsafe driving. It can also be used as a way to highlight good driving records and safe operators behind the wheel."

To access the registry, go to [http://www.bcforestsafe.org/forestry\\_trucksafe/tool\\_truckers/vin.html](http://www.bcforestsafe.org/forestry_trucksafe/tool_truckers/vin.html)

If you want to put your vehicle numbers into the registry, email them to [meise@bcforestsafe.org](mailto:meise@bcforestsafe.org) and Kathleen will upload them.

### **BC Forest Safety Council says goodbye to founding CEO**

Tanner Elton, founding CEO of the BC Forest Safety Council, is moving on to other ventures at the end of December. Tanner first led the Task Force on Forest Safety, which recommended the formation of the Council back in 2003, and then became its CEO in 2004. Although he came from outside the forest industry, his background in organizational development, government and the private sector provided the skills and experience needed to get such a daunting task accomplished.

More than that, though, Tanner has a vision for what the forest industry could be, and shared that vision with all who would listen. His own commitment and motivation has inspired the Council's staff to work long and hard right alongside him.

Whatever Tanner sets his hand to next, we are thankful for the time he gave this industry and its people. While you may or may not have agreed with him or his style, the undisputable fact is that Tanner has guided the industry through the process of sitting around wondering what to do about safety, to a full-fledged organization that's making a difference. And that's no small accomplishment. Thanks Tanner! An all the best wherever you go next.

### **New "Mandatory Snow Tires" Signs**

Winter has arrived with a bang in many parts of the province, and as you read this, the first snow of the year has been forecast in the lower mainland. We all know what that means – vehicles in ditches, crashes, and chaos.

The interior got a record dump of snow last week and still there are people trying to drive around without snow tires. New signs have been popping up on highways indicating that snow tires or chains are mandatory October 1 – April 30. That has been the rule for commercial vehicles but now it appears to be for the general public as

well. Problem is, there has been no communication from government or advertising – just a new sign on the side of the road.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure staff told us that the use of snow tires for non-commercial vehicles in specific areas has always been their policy. They have the power to require that vehicles be equipped with chains, winter tires, sanding devices or any combination of the three before proceeding on the highway. The power is exercised by posting signs on certain highways and they are now posted in all areas of B.C.

In a lot of areas, such as the Coquihalla or the Fraser Canyon there are signs stating "Use good winter tires or carry chains beyond this point" are posted beside our highways with the coming of winter each year. The new signs put up in the past couple of weeks have a graphic of a tire with chains on it, and simply say "Winter Tires or Chains, October 1 – April 30". Apparently that's not a recommendation, it's a requirement. Such signs have been posted on Hwy 16 West in Prince George, and between Prince Rupert and Terrace for example.

If your vehicle is not properly equipped according to the sign, you may be prohibited from travelling any further. You may also be fined, or have your insurance voided, if you are not using winter tires on signed stretches of highway.

A winter tire is a tire that is advertised or represented as a tire intended principally for winter use and is designed to provide adequate traction in mud and snow. A true winter tire is identified by a mountain and snowflake symbol on the sidewall. Tires without the snowflake symbol but marked M+S or mud and snow are all season tires, and are a compromise for all driving conditions. They cannot be expected to perform on snow and ice as well as a true winter tire.

The winter tire must have adequate tread, meaning a tread depth of at least 3.5 millimetres.

Where a driver is prosecuted for driving without tires suitable for winter driving, it is up to that person to prove that tires being used were suitable.

Studded winter tires may be used on B.C. highways from October 1st to April 30th each year. For more information on Winter Tires, visit the Ministry's website and download: [http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/popular-topics/driver\\_info/winter/winter\\_safety\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/popular-topics/driver_info/winter/winter_safety_brochure.pdf)

Drivers of four wheel drive vehicles should consider using winter tires for the same reasons as the drivers of two wheel drive vehicles. You may have good acceleration when road conditions are poor but your ability to stop is exactly the same. Winter tires will increase your ability to stop when compared to all season tires

### **Roads, roads, roads!**

We've had lots of calls complaining about road conditions and road maintenance from around the province in the past week, since winter arrived with a bang in most areas of the interior. Snow and freezing rain in combination are deadly. Williams Lake and Quesnel had an actual "ice storm" and power was out in parts of those cities for a couple of days. Municipal and highways crews just couldn't keep up. And of course, we complain.

The challenges facing road maintenance crews include people's expectations, and the fluctuating temperatures. People expect the crews to be everywhere at once, and to keep the roads bare. When you get a 24 hour snowfall, with accumulations of more than 20 cm, the crews have to do the same routes 3 or 4 times. Meanwhile, residential streets, and then rural outlying areas move farther and farther back down the priority list.

Temperature fluctuations around the zero mark cause serious problems for road maintainers in terms of what to put on the road surface and how to manage sanding and de-icing. According to one road maintenance contractor, they had put de-icer on the road prior to the snowfall, but it doesn't do any good when you get 12 inches.

RCMP Traffic Services members tell us that many motorists still don't take the changed conditions into account when they plan to go somewhere. Drivers often don't leave themselves enough time to get to their destinations,

and don't slow down to conditions.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

January 13-16	Truck Loggers Convention, Vancouver
January 23, 24	Natural Resources Forum, Prince George
February 4 -6	Western Silviculture Contractors Conference, Victoria
February 26-27	ExpoFor, ABCFP Conference, Prince George

If you have a trucking related event you'd like us to post for you, email [arcand@bcforestsafe.org](mailto:arcand@bcforestsafe.org) with the details.

***If you know someone who would be interested in receiving TruckSafe Rumblings, please forward this email along. Signing up is easy. Just [click here](#) and you will be taken to our new sign up page. If you know someone who'd be interested but doesn't have email, forward their fax number to us at [arcand@bctrucksafe.org](mailto:arcand@bctrucksafe.org)***

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