

FOREST SAFETY News



October 2018
issue 5 / vol. 5

Safety is Good Business

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State of Emergency in BC:

SAFE Companies audit due dates extended for those directly affected by wildfires



Welcome to the October edition of Forest Safety News, covering news about safety topics in forestry. This is YOUR safety newsletter. We look forward to your input and feedback! Email the editor at editor@bcforestsafesafe.org or call 1-877-741-1060.

THANK YOU

To all industry, BC Wildfire Service, national and international crews who worked to help put out the fires: **THANK YOU!**

Many operations as well as auditors (internal and external) were directly affected by work shut-downs and evacuations related to the wildfires; or were actively participating in firefighting efforts.

As a result, the BC Forest Safety Council made the decision to extend SAFE Companies audit due dates to September 26, 2018 to give companies additional time to complete their audits. Operations that were not impacted by the fires were asked

to still complete audits by their original due dates so that SAFE Companies staff would be able to serve those who might need extra help when the state of emergency was over. The plan at the time of going to print was that if the state of emergency was extended beyond the second extension (September 12, 2018), audit due dates would be adjusted accordingly. If you need to talk to us about your audit submission, please email us at safeco@bcforestsafesafe.org or call toll-free 1-877-741-1060. 📞

A Nanaimo area forestry worker and a water tank driver, Darrell Drake, died from a medical emergency while supporting local firefighting efforts on the Nanaimo Lakes wildfire (above). Forest Safety News extends sincere condolences to his family, friends and colleagues and appreciation to all industry workers, volunteers and BC Wildfire staff and contractors who answer the call to fight fires each year. Photos of the Nanaimo Lakes wildfire (above) courtesy of Clare Craig.



WorkSafeBC has issued a new risk advisory: Exposure to ash during logging operations after wildfires

Workers conducting forest harvesting activities can be exposed to ash particulates and increased levels of ash dust during work activities following wildfires. The 2-page risk advisory issued late August 2018 provides the steps employers must take to assess the risk to workers and provides the following guidance as to how wood ash/dust exposure may be reduced by:

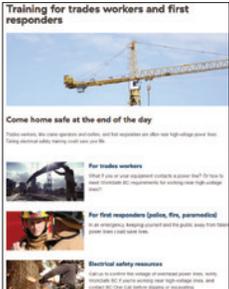
- Educating workers on the hazards of wood ash and how exposure can be prevented
- Providing face- and handwashing facilities to remove ash/dust from workers' skin
- Providing personal eyewash units
- Ensuring that vehicle and equipment cabs

are properly sealed (door and window seals are present and in good condition) and operated with the windows closed and cab air filtration systems in place

- Considering the use of respiratory protection and disposable coveralls for workers who spend most of their time outside of vehicles.

For the full risk advisory, please see: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/risk-advisory/exposure-ash-logging-operations-wildfires?lang=en> and for more information on how WorkSafeBC identified this risk, see www.worksafebc.com/emergingrisks. 🚩

Recent incidents involving powerlines: STOP work and call BC Hydro!



Visit www.bchydro.com/safetytraining for free online or in person training about electrical safety.

In their most recent (August 2018) public safety update document, BC Hydro lists a total of 36 safety incidents across all industries,

three of which are related to forestry/tree work as follows:

- A non-utility arborist was trimming a tree when he lost control of it and it fell on a high voltage line, breaking the line
- A crew was called to a tree on wire with customers out. A tree had hit the line and knocked it off of its insulator. A feller-buncher was working close by and may have caused the incident
- A crew found three spans of neutral down in a logging area.

In forestry settings it may be the first aid attendant who is first on scene where a downed powerline might be involved. Knowing what to do and what not to do could save your life and others' lives.

BC Hydro provides free electrical safety awareness training both online and in person for workers, first responders and members of the public who may have interaction with their facilities. For more information please see: www.bchydro.com/safetytraining. 🚩

Government announces next phase of forestry contractor sustainability review – facilitating solutions

A former BC premier and provincial government cabinet minister, Dan Miller, has been hired by the provincial government as the independent, third-party facilitator for the next stage of the logging contractor sustainability review. See the press release here: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018FLNR0237-001612>

The initial contractor sustainability report, drafted by George Abbott, earlier this year made 13 recommendations. These included making better use of technology, improving communications and information-sharing, and ensuring best practices for setting contractors' rates of pay and dispute resolution mechanisms.

Miller is scheduled to report back to the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development before the end of October 2018. 🚩



New Record: More than 3,000 companies SAFE certified

Reflection of how far industry travelled on its safety journey

As at the beginning of September this year a total of 3,012 forestry operations had successfully completed SAFE Certification. Previously the record for the total number of SAFE Certified companies was just over 2,900 this time last year. Before that, it has hovered between 2,500 and 2,700 each year. The new record is due in part to the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development's requirement (effective April 1, 2017) for all contractors who want to bid on infield forestry work contracts to be SAFE Certified.

The other reason for the record number is that fewer numbers of companies are coming off the SAFE Certification list. In the past well over 100 companies came off the list on June 30 each year, for either not submitting their annual maintenance audit on time or because they just chose to not recertify as they were no longer working in forestry settings in BC.

"I believe we will continue to see the number of SAFE Certified companies grow over time," said Cherie Whelan, Director SAFE Companies. "Our commitment is to be responsive to the needs of forestry operations and make all our processes less paper-intensive, simpler and easier to use. The new technology options that are currently in development will be available to companies in 2019 and further enhance our service and response platforms. I think these continuous improvement measures will make it even easier for companies to not only maintain SAFE but to support improved safety performance with less time spent on paperwork." 🚩

Check out WorkSafeBC's bulletin on blade guard replacement for table saws

Employers are responsible for ensuring all saws are equipped with effective safeguarding.

View or download the 2-page PDF bulletin here: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/hazard-alerts/blade-guard-replacement-options-table-saws?lang=en> 🚩

Screenshot of the recent WorkSafeBC health and safety bulletin on blade guard replacement options for table saws.



Wildfire season update: 2,017 fires as at August 30, 2018

By the numbers, according to data released by the BC Wildfire Service:

Current Statistics

Aug 30, 2018	TOTAL	Coa	NW	PG	Kam	SE	Car
New Lighting-Caused Fires	3	1	0	1	0	0	1
New Human-Caused Fires	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total Fires to Date (<i>current fiscal year</i>)	2,017	279	154	436	417	426	305
Total Area Burned (Ha.) (<i>current fiscal year</i>)	1,281,203	162,641	815,196	149,673	51,711	52,438	49,544

Coa = Coastal
 NW = Northwest
 PG = Prince George
 Kam = Kamloops
 SE = Southeast
 Car = Cariboo

New fires are those that were discovered on Aug 29, 2018.

The current fiscal year is from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019.

Wildfire Averages

The current 10-year average*, taken from 2007 to 2016, is 1,692 fires, 42.7% caused by people and 57.3% caused by lightning.

The following table shows the number and percentage of person and lightning-caused fires for last year and the 10 preceding years.

Year	Total Fires	Total Hectares	Total Cost (millions)	Average Hectares per Fire	Person Caused	Person Caused (%)	Lightning Caused	Lightning Caused (%)
2017**	1,353	1,216,053	\$568.0	898.8	552	(40.8%)	773	(57.1%)
2016	1,050	100,366	\$129.0	95.6	564	(53.7%)	486	(46.3%)
2015	1,858	280,605	\$277.0	204.9	617	(33.2%)	1,237	(66.6%)
2014	1,481	369,168	\$297.9	249.3	664	(44.8%)	817	(55.2%)
2013	1,861	18,298	\$122.2	9.8	564	(30.3%)	1,297	(69.7%)
2012	1,649	102,122	\$133.6	61.9	708	(42.9%)	941	(57.1%)
2011	653	12,604	\$53.5	19.3	444	(68%)	209	(32%)
2010	1,672	337,149	\$212.2	201.6	680	(40.7%)	992	(59.3%)
2009	3,064	247,419	\$382.1	80.8	881	(28.8%)	2,183	(71.2%)
2008	2,023	13,240	\$82.1	6.5	848	(41.9%)	1,175	(58.1%)
2007	1,606	29,440	\$98.8	18.3	687	(42.8%)	919	(57.2%)
Average*	1,692	151,041		94.8	666	(42.7%)	1,026	(57.3%)

* The average does not include the most recent year.

** Figures for the most recent fire season are preliminary estimates.

Media coverage of the 2018 wildfire season has included stories of anger, frustration, fear, thankfulness, determination, illness, unquantified short and long term health effects, tourism, carbon and economic impacts. A diverse sample of stories follow:

August 29, 2018: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/emotions-running-hot-in-areas-ravaged-by-b-c-wildfires-1.4802263>

August 26, 2018: <https://vancouver.sun.com/opinion/op-ed/anthony-britneff-ministers-forest-panel-should-embrace-these-reforms>

August 23, 2018: <https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/b-c-wildfires-2018-prime-minister-visits-wildfire-crews-as-hundreds-of-blazes-burn>

BC Wildfire smoke crosses Canada and Ireland: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4406758/bc-wildfire-smoke-canada-ireland/>, while Seattle and Portland struggle with smoke from BC wildfires: <https://vancouver.sun.com/pmn/travel-pmn/wildfire-smoke-blots-out-mountains-skylines-across-us-west/wcm/65fa437b-8556-451a-aa59-86f0a42d4c74>

August 22, 2018: <https://www.myprincegeorgenow.com/82464/more-resources-needed-to-make-bc-communities-fireproof-bcafn-chief/>

Mental health concerns and impacts: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/forest-fires-smoke-mental-health-1.4792195> and <https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/mental-health-a-concern-as-wildfire-smoke-continues-to-choke-province>

Forest fuel work needed to slow wildfires says premier Horgan: <https://www.vernonmorningstar.com/news/forest-fuel-work-needed-to-slow-wildfires-b-c-premier-says/>

Medical issues surge: https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/wildfires-2018-medical-issues-surge-as-air-quality-advisory-becomes-longest-on-record?video_autoplay=true

August 20, 2018: <https://www.timescolonist.com/smoke-from-b-c-wildfires-prompts-air-quality-advisories-across-western-canada-1.23405804> and <https://www.opb.org/news/article/wildfire-smoke-oregon-washington-california-northwest-emergency-room-visits/>

Fires negatively impact watersheds, quality of water: https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2018/08/19/british-columbia-wildfires-water-supply_a_23505054/

Experts' concerns: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-bc-wildfires-renew-experts-concern-over-hectares-of-dead-or-dying/>

More fires burning now than in 2017 record-breaking season: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4384377/b-c-wildfire-update-monday/>

Grim future: <https://www.theweathernetwork.com/news/articles/british-columbia-wildfires-grim-future-stagnant-weather-climate-change-factor/110199>

What do you think? How do we prevent fires and promote safer, healthier outcomes for all in industry and our communities? Share your thoughts: editor@bcforestsafesafe.org or call toll-free 1-877-741-1060. 🗣️

The early days of legalized marijuana may prove to be a bumpy ride



Screenshot of recent Vancouver Sun story on potential drug-detection device challenges.

A recent Vancouver Sun story has two BC lawyers making the argument that the proposed system of road-side testing is not what it should be, while the manufacturer of the testing equipment refutes their claims: <https://vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/roadside-drug-detection-device-to-face-court-challenge> 🗣️