



# Your Take on Safety

## Western Forest Products and Island Timberlands employees successfully complete log truck driver training program



A number of local Woss area dignitaries, VIU staff and forestry licensee and contractor representatives attended the graduation ceremony for newly qualified log truck drivers.

Earlier this year 11 Western Forest Products employees celebrated their graduation from a log truck driver program putting them one step closer toward pursuing their new careers with the forestry firm, while another VIU student secured a permanent position with Island Timberlands after completing the program.

The seven-week training program, fully funded by Western for their employees and developed with Vancouver Island University's (VIU) School of Applied Trades and Technology, included nine former Greenwood train employees.

### Balance of classroom teaching and in-field mentorship = success

"It was a steep learning curve," said participant Robin Kenny. "The VIU instructor was excellent. He was experienced, knowledgeable and patient. A critical piece of my success was the time I spent working with a mentor. Allowing the flexibility to spend extra time with an experienced driver if needed helped solidify my learning and increase my confidence. Hosting the program directly in the operations made a huge difference."

The training was based on safety and technical competencies that were developed by the BC Forest Safety Council's Log Truck Technical Advisory Committee.

Ted Dillman, VIU Chair of Forest Fundamentals and Driver Training, spoke at the graduation celebration in July in Woss and praised Western for its safety focus.

"In decades of teaching truck driving, I have never had a chance to work with a company like Western. They really put a focus on safety

first and this is so important particularly when you are training new drivers," said Ted. "If a driver wasn't quite ready, they immediately put them through more training and mentoring until they were. And so far this has resulted in a 100 percent pass rate and very happy, excited and safe graduates."

Participants in the program received three weeks of classroom learning and four to six weeks of mentoring with experienced log truck drivers followed by a final evaluation by a third party assessor.

Another participant was Chris Robinson, who had applied for his Class 1 training with VIU and was interested in becoming a log truck driver. "Choosing VIU for my class 1 Driver training and specializing in logging trucks was one of the best decisions I've made. I was in search of a new career and attended an information night on the logging industry at VIU. I was fortunate enough to meet some instructors who set me in the right path to apply for my Class 1. The trainers taught us what it takes to be a safe, skilled driver. After I passed, I enrolled in the specialty of logging trucks," said Chris.

Island Timberlands agreed to provide mentorship support to Chris. "They start off with the basics and through the course they expand into the greater scope of becoming a professional log truck driver," says Chris. At the completion of his training Island Timberlands hired Chris as a full time driver.

"The VIU team was very helpful in helping me find a fantastic job placement near my home, and after meeting the company's requirements and safety tests, I was very lucky to have a job offer," said Chris. He added that he was able to build his confidence, set goals, and find a great career doing something he loves to do. 🌲

## ABOUT Forest Safety News

Forest Safety News is published six times a year: February, April, June, August, October and December. All submissions – letters to the editor, safety tips, photos, safety stories, concerns etc. – are welcome. The opinions expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor, staff or board of the BC Forest Safety Council. All decisions to publish materials rest with the editor. 12,000 copies of each edition are distributed via mail or email. Additional copies are distributed at industry events.

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