

FATALITY ALERT

– PRELIMINARY INFORMATION –

BCFSC #2023-09-29

On September 29th, a bridge maintenance worker was fatally injured when they were struck by a tree that fell from a steep slope above the bridge. This incident occurred in the Kootenays region of the province.

We extend our condolences to the family and friends of the deceased and our sympathies to all those affected by this incident.

This incident is under investigation and details are still to be determined; so contributing factors to the incident are not available.

Consider the following safety information:

1. When conducting bridge maintenance, working at height, working over water and uncontrolled vehicle traffic are significant hazards. There are less obvious hazards to consider as well including dangerous trees and overhead hazards such as falling rocks and other debris.
2. On steep slopes, debris from a dangerous tree can travel long distances and surprise workers. If there are no natural breaks in the terrain, the debris can gain momentum as it travels down slope.
3. Managing dangerous trees is challenging. The features that can make a tree dangerous may be hidden. Stem or root rot, dead tops or hung-up branches may be difficult to see especially if they are located high in the tree canopy.
4. A thorough and effective hazard assessment is required to spot dangerous tree characteristics. Training and good coaching can help workers successfully complete these assessments and know what actions are required to manage identified hazards.

Dangerous Trees Training Resources:

[Introduction to Dangerous Trees on Forestry Worksites](#)

[Wildlife Dangerous Tree Assessor Certificate Program](#)