

# FOREST SAFETY

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# NEWS



## BC Forest Safety

Safety is **good** business

achieve our collective goal of ensuring every forestry worker goes home safe, every day. With each passing year, industry has achieved new milestones in improved safety culture and performance.

The BC Forest Safety Council is proudly celebrating 20 years of service to the forest industry and to mark the occasion, we will be sharing stories and insights throughout 2024 in the upcoming issues of FSN that look back on industry and explore how safety practices have changed over the years. 🌲

## Then and Now – BCFSC’s Look Back on Safety in the Forestry Sector

Twenty years ago, the number of fatalities in the BC forest industry ballooned to 43 causing an outcry for serious changes to be made to save lives. A task force of forest industry leaders was appointed to develop an action plan to eliminate deaths and serious injuries in the BC forest industry. The task force outlined a comprehensive strategy using details from a 2004 report and developed the Forest Safety Accord. This accord incorporated a combination of legislation, education, safety performance and practices and shared responsibility as the roots of the commitment to improve safety in the forestry sector.

With the action plan set in place, the Forest Safety Task Force created the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) to support BC’s forest industry as the dedicated Health and Safety Association for forest harvesting. In 2014 and 2015, the Wood Pellet and Sawmill sectors made the decision to join BCFSC which provided additional opportunities to improve worker health and safety in BC’s forest products manufacturing sector.

The BC forestry industry has undergone a significant cultural and safety transformation over the past 20 years and as a result, has seen a significant decline in work-related injuries and deaths.

While there is still more work to do, the forest industry has worked diligently in making dynamic and positive changes in safety. Forest sector stakeholders have demonstrated that when we work together, we can

Since 2004, BCFSC has worked alongside dedicated industry advisory groups and subject matter experts to determine the cause of injuries and work-related deaths using injury statistics, incident investigations and industry feedback. Shared insights and collaboration between industry peers and the BCFSC have been the driving force in the crucial work we have all done to develop safety best practices, training and safety management systems that forestry companies and workers can implement in their daily routines to ensure they stay safe on the job.

There were four areas initially addressed by the BCFSC based on the task force’s recommendations:

### 1. Develop Uniform Training and Certification Standards

All forestry workers must be skilled and competent professionals. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that uniform training and certification standards be developed that are recognized by all employers across the sector and

Welcome to the Spring 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](mailto:editor@bcforestsafesafe.org) or call 1-877-741-1060.

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include measures to support ongoing competence. It is also recommended that Faller and Bucker Certification be implemented as soon as possible and be followed by the certification of other appropriate forestry industry occupations. The Task Force recommends this process begin with the certification of supervisors and that all supervisors be recognized by the industry as skilled and experienced professionals.

**The Outcome:** New Faller Training and Certification, SAFE Companies Program, Professional Industry Driver Training Program, Forest Worker Essentials Program, Supervisor Training, Worker Assessment and Competency Training, Free Online Training, In-class and In-field training, Blended courses.

### 2. Make Health and Wellness Programs Available

The Task Force recommends that on-going health and wellness and

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support programs be more broadly available and recognized within the sector and not just within the larger companies. Such programs must effectively address current and emerging physical and mental conditioning issues (including fatigue, dehydration, etc.) that adversely affect health and safety. Support programs must be available to assist workers to deal with personal issues that can affect safety. Additionally, substance abuse must be recognized as an issue and mechanisms put in place to prevent substance abuse on the job. Employers and supervisors must have the tools to effectively address substance abuse issues when they are revealed.

**The Outcome:** Fatigue Management Research and Best Practices, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Resources, Communicable Disease Prevention Resources, Fit to Work Program, Silviculture Fit to Plant Program and Health Awareness Resources

### 3. Enhance Information Dissemination

The Task Force supports the recommendation of the IWA Task Force on BC Coastal Logging Occupational Health and Safety that “when a fatality occurs in the forest industry, public awareness be heightened by putting forward relevant, meaningful, constructive and considerate information to the media in a timely manner.”

**The Outcome:** Safety Alerts, Fatality Alerts, Crew Talks, Industry Alerts (voluntary anonymous shared incident alerts), Forest Safety Newsletter, accessible website for both desktop and mobile devices and the FIRS App. (in development).

### 4. Provide Better Information

The Task Force recommends that industry and government agencies collaborate to ensure more timely distribution of information on investigations, deaths and serious injuries in the forest sector (without compromising their legal mandates)

**The Outcome:** Collaboration and information shares with WorkSafeBC and the BC Coroner’s Office, the development of several industry advisory committees, free safety conferences and free safety resource materials.

These recommendations were just the tip of the iceberg. Despite the progress we’ve made, challenges persist, and constant vigilance is required when it comes to forestry safety.

With our sights set on the next twenty years, we must be willing to continuously adapt and stay ahead of emerging risks to ensure that safety measures keep pace. With our collaborative approach and the dedicated and unwavering commitment of industry leadership, industry advisory groups, BCFSC staff, and trainers, we will continue to drive safety forward in the forestry sector and ensure the well-being of its workers in the years to come. We have come a long way, but there’s always more work to be done to see every forestry worker goes home safe - every day. 🙏

## BCFSC Staff Stories

BCFSC’s staff are committed to serving our members day in and day out. Some of the staff have been with BCFSC since



day one and we’ve invited them to share their stories.

**Allison Thompson,  
Training Development  
Manager**

I feel privileged to have worked alongside many colleagues that have been passionate about workplace safety. Here are some initiatives that stand out to me in my 16 years of working at BCFSC.

Not long after Ted Gramlich’s death, the Coroners Service conducted a Death Review Panel for three 2008 Workplace Incidents involving Tree Fallers. The Coroner’s report resulted in many recommendations coming to our organization and other agencies. I was tasked with supporting the

implementation of the recommendations that year! Efforts included more emphasis on elements of falling supervision and workload, focus on faller competency, human factors and much more. Looking back, I’m proud to say that some of this work paved the path for future improvements that led to what we offer today.

Sadly, years later our organization participated in Charles Englebert’s Inquest. Among other things, I took away that there was a still a significant need for improved supervision with a particular gap in emergency response plans. We tried to implement what we could, and our work continued.

At some point later, efforts were made to help clarify the roles of BCFSC and WorkSafeBC and lay the foundation for our current Falling Programs.

Transitioning to our Training Team, I was fortunate to be involved with the early days of the competency standard development work and the Forest Worker Essentials Program. As part of the

work along with some significant financial contributions from government, we were able to create a vast number of online courses. Countless hours have been put in by a dedicated team of BCFSC staff along with many industry subject matter experts to make this impressive resource available to Industry.

Thinking back over my 16 years, what I can say is it has been a process to get to where we are today. It takes time, and many meetings, to influence change! Our initiatives/projects have shaped our training content development. It’s safe to say that we embrace the philosophy of continual improvement. We are always listening to what is needed and trying to develop and enhance programs that meet the needs of industry.

When you read the latest FSN Training History article, you will see that this organization has delivered close to 40,000 instances of training since our inception! It takes a dedicated team to get to those outstanding results and ensure quality training is delivered to our clients. 🙏



## What's New

Here is the latest on what we have to offer since December 2023. Find direct links to safety alerts, industry-specific resources, industry information and more to download and/or share with employees, industry and safety peers. And make sure to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with the latest news. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

**[NEW SAFE Companies Annual Audit Due Date](#)** - SAFE Companies announces the **annual year-end audit date is moving to November 30th**. Visit the [SAFE Companies Audit web page](#) for more details .

**[New Video Release: Emergency Response Plan \(ERP\) Operator Extraction and Steep Slope Rescue Drill](#)** – This video is the second in a series highlighting the importance of emergency response planning in forestry operations, particularly on steep slopes.

**[Online Training for Forest Supervisors](#)** – BCFSC has six NEW, free, online Forest Supervisor training courses available for current and future harvesting and silviculture Forest Supervisors.

**[Video: Successful Return to Work Strategies](#)** – WorkSafeBC presents successful return to work strategies addressing collaboration between employers and employees and early rehabilitation.

**[Operator Safety Training Fact Sheet](#)** – The Wood Pellets Association of Canada (WPAC) and BCFSC have launched an industry-wide initiative that delivers a comprehensive digital e-learning safety training program for plant operators and supervisors across companies.

**[Training Calendar](#)** – Our 2024 Training Calendar is now fully loaded and offers both in-classroom and online courses. We also provide requested training bringing courses directly to your preferred location at a convenient time that works for you.

**[Safety Alerts](#)** – Alerts provide timely information on incidents and issues which cause, or result in, serious or fatal injuries. The alerts we send by email and post on our website are intended to raise awareness and educate industry so we can learn from each other's experience and effort. Here are the latest alerts from BCFSC and industry.

- **[BCFSC Safety Alert of the Month](#)** – Winter Hazards
- **[Industry Alert](#)** – Processor Chain Shot Incident
- **[Manufacturing Weekly Safety Alert](#)** – Click on the link to see the latest weekly alert

**To subscribe to our safety alert emails – [Click Here](#)** 

## Upcoming Industry Conferences

<a href="#">2024 Council of Forest Industries (COFI) Convention</a>	Apr. 10 - 12	Vancouver, BC
<a href="#">8th Annual Indigenous Resource</a>	Apr. 24 - 26	Nanaimo, BC
<a href="#">66th Annual Interior Logging (ILA) Conference and AGM</a>	May 9 - 11	Kamloops, BC
<a href="#">2024 Interior Safety Conference</a>	May 9	Kamloops, BC
<a href="#">2024 BC First Nations Forestry Conference</a>	May 29-30	Penticton, BC
<a href="#">2024 Vancouver Island Safety Conference</a>	Oct 26	Nanaimo, BC

## Industry News

Get the latest on industry news from:

**[WorkSafeBC Enews](#)** – subscribe to Insight; WorkSafeBC's policy, regulation and research division e-Newsletter, Health and Safety Enews, Young Worker Enews and more.

**[WorkSafe Magazine](#)** – WorkSafeBC publishes WorkSafe Magazine six times a year to inform, inspire and provide practical tips on a range of topical occupational health and safety matters. It's free to [subscribe](#) and available online.

**[Tree Frog Forestry News](#)** – daily news with top stories and full news stories on the forest sector in North America and around the world.

**[Forest Enhancement Society of BC \(FESBC\)](#)** – FESBC shares news and information about BC forestry.

**[Truck Loggers Association \(TLA\)](#)** – a monthly newsletter and 1/4ly magazine (Truck Logger BC) offering stories from BC provincial forestry perspectives, information and updates.


**[Interior Logging Association](#)** – the ILA insider is a 1/4ly newsletter featuring timber harvesting news, information and updates throughout BC.

**[Western Forestry Contractors' Association](#)** – The Cache - The Cache is an online space to share wisdom, experience, information, tools and resources generated by the silviculture community.

## Industry Links

**[Shift Into Winter](#)** – Winter tires are still required until March 31st, and in some areas even longer. Check [DriveBC](#) or [Road Safety at Work](#) for information.

**[Road Safety at Work](#)** – visit Road Safety at Work for resources, webinars, workshops and news relating to road safety for you and your employees.

**[WorkSafeBC Announcements](#)** – check here for the latest information on WorkSafeBC policy and regulation updates, resource development, risk advisories and more. 

# 2024 Areas of Focus for the Planned Inspectional Initiatives from WorkSafeBC

WorkSafeBC's Planned Inspectional Initiatives (previously known as High-risk Strategies and Industry Initiatives) support employers' management of risks by examining and promoting occupational health and safety basics and specific areas of high risk for industries such as forestry.

These initiatives are reviewed annually to make any necessary adjustments and ensure employers and workers continue to focus their efforts on key areas of hazard identification, risk assessment and implementing the appropriate controls specific to on-site activities.

For 2024, many of these initiatives will continue to emphasize [risk management basics](#), in addition to specific risks for a particular industry. They target and refine identified risks based on data analysis, stakeholder engagement and input from advisory groups.


## **Forestry Planned Inspectional Initiative**

For forestry operations, WorkSafeBC has developed specific Forestry Planned Inspectional Initiatives that addresses preventative workplace safety in forestry operations. The intent of the initiatives is to execute impactful inspections focused on the risks that drive the serious injury rate and the time-loss claims rate.

The identified risks are linked to high-risk work activities that typically fall into five areas of operations:

1. Manual tree falling
2. Log transportation
3. Cable yarding
4. Mechanized harvesting (primary focus will be on steep slope and tethered/winch-assist operations)
5. Silviculture

Other operations such as shake block cutting and dry land sorting will also be examined on a regional basis due to the increasing injury rates in these operations.

Visit WorkSafeBC's Forestry Planned Inspectional Initiatives [webpage](#) and read more about WorkSafeBC's goals, the primary areas of focus, what you can do to better understand the safety issues and find downloadable resources including [Steep Slope Logging](#), [Site Inspections for Manual Falling Operations](#) and [Layout Planning for Faller Safety](#). 



## Proposed Amendments to Policy on Activity-related Soft Tissue Disorders of the Limbs

WorkSafeBC's Policy, Regulation and Research Department (PRRD) is proposing amendments to policy concerning activity-related soft tissue disorders (ASTDs) of the limbs. The proposed amendments are intended to address two ASTD projects in the PRRD's current workplan:

- ASTDs — CPR Recommendations #36–37
- Establishing Work Causation for ASTDs of the Limbs

The proposed amendments clarify policy on the issue of whether an ASTD is due to the nature of the worker's employment and are informed by recommendations from two external reviews:

- Paul Petrie's 2018 compensation policy review (CPR), *Restoring the Balance: A Worker-Centred Approach to Workers' Compensation Policy*
- Janet Patterson's *New Directions: Report of the WCB Review 2019*

Feedback can be provided until 4:30pm on Friday, April 26, 2024. Find out more about the [proposed amendments](#) and read the discussion paper [activity-related soft tissue disorders of the limbs](#). 

# Mental Health Strategy

WorkSafeBC's Mental Health Strategy is a comprehensive plan that focusses on an overall approach to workplace psychological health and safety. The strategy defines the terms used when talking about psychological health and safety and provides the framework that will be followed by WorkSafeBC over the next few years.

Many of the plans outlined in the strategy will be shaped through active engagement with WorkSafeBC stakeholders. Every opportunity will be taken to hear the concerns and needs of workers and employers with an aim to raise awareness, educate and provide resources and tools to help assess and address psychological risks in BC workplaces.

While many factors outside the workplace can affect psychological health and safety, the Mental Health Strategy addresses factors within the control, responsibility or influence of the workplace. There are three key principles identified for employers for building a strong health and safety culture:

1. Show leadership commitment.
2. Develop supportive managers and supervisors.
3. Ensure worker participation.

WorkSafeBC's vision is to lead the way in creating psychologically safe and healthy workplaces with a culture of care and recovery. Regular updates, resources and tools will be made available for employers, managements, supervisors and employees alike. For more information, visit [WorkSafeBC's Mental Health Strategies webpage](#). 🌱

## Applications Now Being Accepted for the BCFSC Special Research, Development and Opportunity Fund Operating Fund

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) has developed a special Research, Development and Opportunity Fund (RDO) to support initiatives that address current and emerging safety challenges and opportunities in the forest sector.

The fund is set at \$100,000 with application funding limits not exceeding \$30,000, however, the balance of the account is dependent on current approved projects and the availability of unrestricted reserves at year end.

BCFSC is now accepting applications for 2024 research grants and will prioritize approvals based on the significance of the emerging issue and proposed research projects that demonstrate innovation, impact, feasibility and scalability.

All applications will be reviewed by the CEO who will make the decision on whether to submit the application for further approval. Once a project is approved by the CEO, it will be distributed to the BCFSC Program Committee for consideration.

All requests for project funding will be required to complete the Research, Development and Opportunity Application.

Visit our dedicated [RDO webpage](#) to access more information including the [submission requirements](#) and [application form](#). 🌱

## WorkSafeBC Consultations

### Current Consultations

[Proposed amendments to policy on activity-related soft tissue disorders of the limbs](#)

**Consultation Deadline: April 26, 2024**

[Proposed amendments to policy on average earnings in Chapter 9 of the RS&CM](#)

**Consultation Deadline: June 28, 2024**

## Save the Date for the Interior Safety Conference

**Thursday, May 9th, 2024  
in Kamloops, BC**

The [Interior Safety Conference \(ISC\)](#) is an annual event that brings together professionals from the BC forest sector to discuss safety-related issues and explore ways to improve safety practices in the industry. This year's conference is taking place on Thursday, May 9th, 2024 at the Coast Kamloops Conference Centre, in Kamloops, BC.

The ISC is held in partnership with the [Interior Logging Association \(ILA\) Conference](#) which is celebrating it's 66th Annual AGM and Convention from May 9 – 11 in Kamloops, BC.

The ISC is FREE for anyone who works in any phase of the forest industry from harvesting to wood products manufacturing. It features forestry-related safety topics with speakers, industry experts, and relevant safety information

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION:** Register before April 1, 2024 and be automatically entered to win a BCFSC Stanfield and Toque. Spaces are limited so register early.

For sponsorship opportunities, contact Tammy Carruthers at [tcarruthers@bcforestsafe.org](mailto:tcarruthers@bcforestsafe.org) or by phone at 1-877-741-1060. 🌱

# Membership with the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC)

All companies who pay for their BCFSC contribution through a special assessment collected by WorkSafeBC, can apply to become BCFSC members. By becoming a member, you can nominate Board Members and vote for nominated Board Members to fill vacant roles.

To be eligible for BCFSC membership, companies must belong to one of the following WorkSafeBC Classification Units (CU's):

Rate Group	Classification Unit	Description
DR	703002	Brushing and Weeding or Tree Thinning or Spacing
DR	703003	Cable or Hi-Lead Logging
DR	703004	Dry Land Sort
DR	703005	Forest Fire Fighting
DR	703006	Ground Skidding, Horse Logging, or Log Loading
DR	703008	Integrated Forest Management
DR	703009	Log Booming or Marine Log Salvage
DR	703011	Log Processing
DR	703012	Logging Road Construction or Maintenance
DR	703013	Manual Tree Falling and Bucking
DR	703014	Mechanized Tree Falling
DR	703015	Shake Block Cutting
12	703016	Tree Planting and Cone Picking
DR	703019	Helicopter Logging
17	732044	Log Hauling
IS	714022	Sawmill
09	714019	Pressed Board Manufacture (Wood Pellets and MDF)

Becoming a BCFSC member does not involve any additional effort on your part unless you choose to become more involved.

Board members will be nominated and elected by BCFSC members for two-year terms. Efforts will be made to ensure Board members are qualified to serve on the BCFSC Board of Directors by representing industry sectors and/or having industry skills and experience needed to participate on the Board.

As a BCFSC member in good standing, you will be entitled to attend, speak and vote at the Annual General Meeting, elect the Directors and serve on Board Committees. To apply for membership, email us at: [membership@bcforestsafes.org](mailto:membership@bcforestsafes.org) 📧

# Spring is Here but Winter Tires are Still Required

Don't be fooled by the arrival of spring. Spring temperatures and weather conditions can change quickly and dry conditions can turn into wet, slick or snowy roads in mere minutes. Until March 31, you still need winter tires or chains on some highways. And in some mountainous areas, you'll need them until April 30.

## Look for signs

Designated BC highways requiring winter tires or chains are marked with signs. Although some BC roads don't require winter tires, winter tires are still best for safety when temperatures regularly fall below 7C.



If you drive for work, be sure to include weather conditions in your pre-trip inspection and take precautions to prepare yourself and your vehicle for changing road conditions. Road Safety at Work offers a comprehensive list of Safe Driving tips and resources for drivers as well as employers and supervisors.

[Safe Winter Driving](#)

[Employer and Supervisor Tools](#)

[Commercial Drivers](#)

[What Workers Need to Know](#)

[Shift Into Winter – Winter Driving Safety Alliance](#) 