

FOREST SAFETY NEWS

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Commemorating 20 Years of Service to Industry

By Rob Moonen

2024 has been an interesting year on a number of fronts. More importantly, it marked BCFSC commemorating 20 years of service to the industry, where a number of FSN stories were shared over the course of the year through the lens of industry and staff reflecting on the forest industry's journey to improving safety.

The first theme shared in these stories related to acknowledging the history of the unacceptable number of injuries and work-related deaths. The second theme that emerged highlighted the efforts of industry pulling together to make dynamic and positive change.

These stories also highlighted that there were no easy solutions for improving industry's safety performance. It came from leadership, the front lines and everywhere in between. It came from each one of you, starting with good safety management systems, good culture — trust, open communication, participative management — right through to training and supervision, supporting work practices and empowerment of workers and contractors. It required a commitment every day, on every block, with the felling of each tree to each load to every production and manufacturing process.

As we look forward to the next 20 years, it's important that we reflect on our journey and not forget why and how we got here and celebrate what we've collectively accomplished. Every person in our industry has a role to play in achieving our collective mission and together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of forestry workers across British Columbia.

Let's continue to honour the legacy of those who perished and were seriously injured to achieve our goal of ensuring **every forestry worker goes home safe. Every day.**

On behalf of BCFSC, we would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the countless industry members who generously provide their time, expertise, and our talented and committed staff, contractors and trainers.

We look forward to supporting you during the next phase of our journey. 🌲

Welcome to the Winter 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.

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What's New

Here is the latest on what we have to offer since September 2024. 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](#).

First Aid Requirements are Now in Effect – Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation relating to occupational first aid took effect November 1, 2024. Visit WorkSafeBC and find information and resources to assist employers in implementing these new requirements.

BCFSC FIRS (Forest Industry Reporting System) App – The full version of the BCFSC FIRS App is now available to download from your App store. Use the FIRS App to manage forms and documents for safety-related paperwork related to SAFE Companies Audit submissions.

Training Calendar – Plan your 2025 safety training. Our in-person training calendar is now fully loaded on the BCFSC website. Take a look and see what's in store for 2025. Is there a course you see that you might want delivered directly to your organization? 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** – Click on the link to see the latest monthly safety alert from BCFSC

- **Industry Alert** – Click on the link to see the latest industry provided safety alerts
- **Manufacturing Weekly Safety Alert** – Click on the link to see the latest weekly alert

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

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 is an online space to share wisdom, experience, information, tools and resources generated by the silviculture community.



Happy Holidays

BC Forest Safety

Extending you our very best for a **safe, healthy and happy holiday season.**

BCFSC Holiday Office Hours

Monday, Dec 23	8am – 4:30pm
Tuesday, Dec 24	8am – 3:00pm
Wednesday, Dec 25	CLOSED
Thursday, Dec 26	CLOSED
Friday, Dec 27	8am – 4:30pm
Monday, Dec 30	8am – 4:30pm
Tuesday, Dec 31	8am – 3:00pm
Monday, Jan 1	CLOSED
Tuesday, Jan 2	8am – 4:30pm
Regular hours resume	

Wood Products Association of Canada (WPAC) News – Read the latest news from WPAC and subscribe to receive the WPAC newsletter.

Industry Links

Shift Into Winter – Winter is here. Make sure you know what your responsibilities are as an employer and employee when it comes to driving in winter road conditions.

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. 🌲



2025 BC Forestry Conferences & Events

Start planning for 2025 and register for these upcoming forestry-related conferences. 📅

Conference / Event	Dates	Location	Information & Registration
21st Annual BC Natural Resources Forum	Jan. 14 - 16	Prince George, BC	www.bcnaturalresourcesforum.com
79th Annual Truck Loggers Association (TLA) Convention	Jan. 15 - 17	Vancouver, BC	www.tla.ca
2025 Western Forestry Contractors Association Conference & Trade Show	Jan. 29 - 31	Victoria, BC	www.wfca.ca
2025 Forest Professionals of BC Conference & AGM	Feb 5 – 7	Victoria, BC	www.fpbc.ca/professional-development/continuing-professional-development/annual-forestry-conference
2025 Council of Forest Industries (COFI) Convention	Apr. 2 - 4	Prince George, BC	www.cofi.org
2025 BC First Nations Forestry Conference	Apr. 23 - 25	Penticton, BC	www.forestrycouncil.ca
2025 Interior Logging (ILA) Conference and AGM	May 1 - 3	Kamloops, BC	www.interiorlogging.org
2025 Interior Safety Conference	May 1	Kamloops, BC	www.bcforestsafe.org/news-events/safety-conferences/
8th Annual Indigenous Resource Opportunities Conference	June 18 - 20	Nanaimo, BC	www.bciroc.ca
2025 Vancouver Island Safety Conference	October, 2025	Nanaimo, BC	www.bcforestsafe.org/news-events/safety-conferences/

New Occupational First Aid Requirements: Spotlight on Drills

Submitted by WorkSafeBC

On November 1, 2024, significant changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) came into effect regarding the provision of occupational first aid.

Among these changes is the introduction of mandatory first aid drills, a key update that has generated questions from forestry employers.

This article explains how to conduct effective first aid drills under the new requirements.

OFA challenges in forestry worksites

Forestry worksites are unlike most others in their complexity and mobility:

- **Dynamic operations:** Logging operations and other forestry worksites are constantly moving. A first aid procedure that works in one location may not in another, since each new location may introduce different hazards.
- **Multiple crews and roles:** Forestry operations often involve several parties, including prime

contractors, subcontractors, and licensees, making coordination and communication critical in emergencies.

- **Complex work environments:** In forestry operations, factors like rough terrain, heavy machinery, and remote locations make first aid planning more complicated than static worksites.

With these considerations in mind, first aid procedures must be robust, well-communicated, and regularly practiced to ensure effectiveness.

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Written first aid procedures: What's new?

The OHSR required that employers keep up-to-date written first aid procedures prior to the November amendments. However, the updated regulation introduces some new measures:

- **Barriers to first aid:** Employers must now identify any barriers that could hinder the delivery of first aid, such as the distance between workers and first aid supplies.
- **Solutions for overcoming barriers:** Employers must not only identify barriers but also provide clear solutions for overcoming them. This could involve plans for moving injured workers or ensuring quick access to first aid supplies in challenging conditions.

The new drill requirement

In addition to the changes for written first aid procedures, there is a new requirement for annual first aid drills. Employers must conduct these drills at least once a year to:

- Test the effectiveness of their written first aid procedures.
- Ensure first aid attendants and other relevant personnel can fulfill their roles in an emergency.

Drills are also required whenever there are significant changes to first aid procedures. For example, if the worksite undergoes changes in crew size or operational phases, a new drill may be necessary to ensure that all employees can still respond effectively to an emergency.

The importance of first aid drills

Conducting regular first aid drills helps employers identify and address potential weaknesses in their emergency response plans—before an actual emergency occurs.

A well-designed drill can reveal deficiencies in:

- **Procedures:** Are your first aid procedures up-to-date and easy to follow under pressure?
- **Equipment:** Is the necessary first aid equipment easily accessible and functional?
- **Training:** Do workers know their roles, and are they adequately trained to respond in an emergency?
- **Communications:** Are all parties—both internal and external—able to communicate effectively during an emergency?

By identifying these gaps, employers can make necessary adjustments, including revising procedures, upgrading equipment, or providing additional training.

Designing an effective first aid drill

An effective first aid drill should mimic the realities of a forestry worksite as closely as possible. Key elements that need to be tested include:

- **Summoning help:** How quickly and effectively can assistance be called?
- **Accessing supplies:** Are first aid supplies and equipment easy to reach, considering the remote and difficult nature of forestry workplaces?
- **Patient transport:** If the situation requires moving an injured worker, how efficiently can this be done? For instance, if the worker must be carried over rough terrain, the drill should test the crew's ability to do so.
- **Coordination with external agencies:** If the emergency involves outside help (such as a helicopter service or mutual aid from an adjacent operation), this coordination should be tested during the drill.

It's important to note that BC Emergency Health Services (ambulance) should not be contacted for drill purposes. Some private service providers may be willing to participate, but this should be arranged in advance.

Safety considerations during drills

To ensure drills are effective, they should be conducted in realistic conditions that reflect the challenges workers might face in an actual emergency. For instance:

- If a first aid scenario might involve carrying a stretcher over logging slash, the drill should replicate this condition rather than limiting the exercise to flat, easily accessible terrain.
- If procedures call for assistance from nearby operations due to crew size, then that should also be tested.
- While realism is important, safety during drills is paramount. Employers must ensure that no new hazards are introduced through the drill itself. Some practical steps include:
 - Using training dummies instead of workers for high-risk tasks, such as stretcher carries.
 - Locking out and de-energizing mobile equipment that could pose a risk during the drill.
 - Assigning a drill safety officer whose sole responsibility is to oversee participant safety.

Post-drill review: Learning and improving

After each drill, a thorough debrief should be conducted to review the drill's findings and identify areas for improvement.

Key points to address include:

- What went well?
- Where were the gaps?
- What changes are necessary?

This review should be shared with first aid attendants, joint health and safety committees, or worker safety representatives, as well as all drill participants. Documenting the drill, including who did what and when, can be valuable in assessing the overall response and implementing future improvements.

When to conduct additional drills

Drills should be conducted annually and after any significant changes to the worksite.

Changes that might necessitate an additional drill include:

- **New or different crews:** Bringing in a new crew requires a new drill, while downsizing an existing crew could require a fresh drill.
- **Changes in logging phases:** Different phases of work involve different crews with various skill sets who perform distinct types of tasks. These changes can also affect the size of the crew. Different hazards may arise from these changes, which may not be covered by existing first aid procedures.

Even if the changes to the worksite are minor (such as relocating equipment), employers can conduct a simplified drill or tabletop exercise in addition to the required annual drill. Remember, however, that regardless of workplace changes, the OHSR mandates that employers conduct first aid drills at least once per year.

Compliance and additional resources

For further guidance on these requirements, WorkSafeBC has posted [OHS Guidelines for Part 3: Occupational First Aid](#) on its website, offering additional insights into conducting drills and maintaining first aid readiness.

By implementing thorough, and realistic drills, forestry employers can ensure their crews are well-prepared to respond effectively in the event of a first aid emergency. Regular practice, coupled with continuous improvement, fosters a culture of safety and confidence in the workplace—key elements in keeping everyone safe in the demanding and dynamic environment of forestry operations. 🌲

Psychological Health and Safety in Forestry

By Alexandra Skinner

Working in forestry can be challenging, not just physically, but psychologically as well. That's why WorkSafeBC is advising forestry employers and workers about the importance of paying attention to psychological health and safety.

Managing psychological health and safety in the workplace is as important as managing physical health and safety. A psychologically healthy and safe workplace prevents harm to workers' mental health and promotes mental well-being. While many factors outside the workplace can affect mental health, it is an employer's responsibility to address the factors that are within the control, responsibility, or influence of the workplace.

Psychological health and safety involves how people interact with each other daily, how working conditions and management practices are structured, and how decisions are made and communicated.

Understanding psychological health and safety in the forestry sector

In the forestry sector, workers face unique psychological challenges, including financial stress from an unstable market, job instability, social isolation, and the impact of climate change and severe weather conditions. Additionally, the high-risk nature of the industry, with 695 serious injuries and 43 fatalities in the past five years, means forestry leaders and colleagues often provide grief and bereavement support.

"There is a lot of grief and stress for forestry workers to cope with, and some might turn to unhealthy coping tools like drinking or other forms of self-medication," said Amenda Kumar, manager of consultation and education services at WorkSafeBC.

A survey by Deloitte showed that each week, about 500,000 people in Canada miss work due to psychological health issues, leading to an annual economic cost of at least \$50 billion and indirect costs related to lost productivity as high as \$6 billion.

In addition to lost productivity, psychological ill health can cost employers through burnout, staff turnover, and workers' compensation claims.

Building a foundation for psychological health and safety

These three principles help to create, support, promote, and maintain a psychologically healthy and safe workplace:

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

Many employers already operate according to these principles, which are outlined in detail in WorkSafeBC's [framework for success](#). Those who effectively promote psychological health and safety have greater productivity and employee engagement. Their workers experience less conflict and higher morale and are less likely to leave.

Start with a risk assessment

The approach to managing psychological health and safety is similar to the approach for managing risks to physical health and safety: understand the risks, implement safety measures, communicate safety information, and monitor measures for effectiveness.

Step 1: Identify psychosocial hazards in your workplace, such as:

- Unclear job expectations.

- High or low job demands.
- Toleration of disrespectful behaviour.
- Lack of harassment prevention policies.
- Exposure to violence or trauma.
- Inadequate support for psychological health.

Consult workers, possibly through anonymous surveys, to assess risks at each location. Prioritize the highest risks and involve safety committees or workers.

Step 2: Implement Controls, including:

- Developing a psychological health and safety policy.
- Preventing and responding to harassment and violence.
- Encouraging open communication.
- Addressing mental well-being in return-to-work plans.
- Providing peer support programs.

Step 3: Communicate Safety Information

- Ensure workers are aware of your psychological risk management program.
- Train managers, supervisors, and workers on control measures.
- Establish a process for reporting psychosocial hazards.
- Inform workers about filing mental health condition claims.

Step 4: Monitor and Update

- Regularly monitor and improve control measures.
- Identify new risks with changing work conditions.
- Include psychosocial hazards in safety inspections.

Early intervention is key to preventing injuries, both physical and psychological. By following these steps, employers can create a supportive work environment that addresses both physical and psychological health needs.



Creating a culture of psychological health and safety

Work is central to mental health. For many, work is a primary source of well-being and community that is critical to financial and emotional security. While a psychologically healthy and safe workplace can protect and enrich mental health, the inverse is also true: a psychologically unhealthy or unsafe workplace can contribute to or cause poor mental health.

“It can be difficult to overcome the stigma associated with psychological health,” says Kumar. “Workers might feel ashamed and hesitant to seek help. It often seems easier to explain a physical injury like a broken arm than to speak up about psychological stressors in the workplace that are impacting someone’s ability to work.”

Challenging the stigma starts with leadership from employers and fostering a culture that encourages seeking help and ensures workers are connected to available social support.

Prevention is a joint responsibility

It is important to note that psychological injuries can be prevented and treated effectively. For employers, early awareness, access to resources and support, and appropriate and timely response can greatly reduce the impact of symptoms, promote mental well-being, and help people remain at work.

WorkSafeBC’s role as a regulator is to lead employers in promoting and supporting psychological health and safety in the workplace—through training and education, by involving workers in the discussion of risks and solutions, and by preventing psychological injuries—just as we work to prevent physical injuries.

For more information, visit [WorkSafeBC](https://www.worksafebc.com). 

17th Annual Vancouver Island Safety Conference Highlights

The 17th Annual Vancouver Island Safety Conference (VISC) took place on October 26, 2024 in Nanaimo, BC, attracting over 295 forestry professionals. This year's theme, "*Bridging Generations in Today's Safety Culture.*" featured three keynote speakers, and several industry presentations that were aimed at enhancing and improving safety practices in the forestry sector to help us all meet our collective goal of **every forestry worker goes home safe. Every day.**

Eldeen Pozniak kicked off the conference with her presentation, "*Young & Reckless, Fact or Fiction,*" addressing communication challenges across generations. She emphasized the importance of meaningful dialogue that respects the strengths and values of different age groups.

Next, Tim Page-Bottorff inspired attendees to embrace mistakes as learning opportunities during his presentation "*Embrace Errors – Don't Hide Them*". He discussed the tendency to hide errors due to embarrassment, shame and fear and provided strategies for supervisors to foster a culture of trust using the **REAL** acronym: **Respect, Empathy, Acceptance, and Less** — encouraging less talk, anger, and judgment while promoting active listening.

The day concluded with **Tom Wilson**, who shared his gripping story of surviving an "unsurvivable" plane crash in his presentation, "*Moments of Impact.*" His powerful story focussed on risk tolerance, behavioral influences and decision-making when it comes to the difference between bravery and courage when speaking up when something isn't right.



Additional presentations were provided by **Will Dirksen** from WorkSafeBC, who discussed new first aid regulations for the forestry industry and used an analogy that first aid can be thought of as a team sport that requires practice, working together and strategizing to be ready for any "play" or scenario that comes your way. **Patrick McDonald** from Superior Glove emphasized hand safety using his musical talent to impress upon the importance of Hand Safety and protecting your hands using glove protection that meets the task at "hand, and **Angelina Robinson** from Road Safety at Work gave a presentation that reminded attendees that traffic accidents are the leading cause of workplace fatalities and stressed the employer's responsibility to ensure workers are safe when driving for work.

The VISC Steering Committee extends its thanks to all volunteers and sponsors who made this conference possible. A comprehensive conference wrap-up will be available on the BCFSC website in early December. 🌲



SAVE THE DATE

VISC 2025

Saturday, October 25th

at the Vancouver Island Conference Centre

BCFSC Celebrates Leadership in Forestry Safety with the 2024 Leadership in Safety Awards

On October 26, 2024, the **2024 Leadership in Safety Awards** were presented at the Vancouver Island Safety Conference, honouring exceptional contributions to safety in the forestry industry. These awards recognize individuals, crews, and companies that have made significant strides in workplace safety, reinforcing the goal of ensuring every worker returns home safely.

This year, three outstanding individuals were celebrated:

- **Bill Bolton** received the **2024 Cary White Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award** for his unwavering advocacy for faller safety. As a former Felling Manager and senior advisor for the BC Forest Safety Council, Bill played a crucial role in developing key safety programs, including Feller Certification and New Feller Training. His dedication and passion have greatly impacted the industry.
- **Toby Jeffreys**, Area Supervisor at Interfor's Adams Lake Division, was awarded the **Forest Safety MVP Award**. Toby is recognized for his leadership in fostering a strong safety culture and mentoring young workers. His proactive approach to safety and effective communication have made him a respected figure in the field.
- **Chris Fowler**, Safety Coordinator at Canoe Forest Products (CFP), a division of the Gorman Group, received the **MVP Award for Wood Products Manufacturing**. Under Chris's leadership, CFP has achieved significant safety improvements, reducing injury rates and setting industry benchmarks. His commitment to proactive safety measures and transparent reporting has created a safer work environment not just for CFP, but for the entire Gorman Group organization.

Congratulations to all the award recipients for their remarkable contributions to forestry safety! 🌲



WorkSafeBC Reminder:

First Aid Requirements are Now in Effect

Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation relating to occupational first aid took effect November 1, 2024. The new regulations require employers to review and update their first aid procedures to comply with the new regulations and ensure injured workers can receive prompt and appropriate treatment and, if needed, be transported to medical aid without delay.

To determine the first aid needs of your workplace, first you'll need to do a [workplace assessment](#). Then review the findings and take the necessary steps to put effective first aid procedures in place. To assist employers in implementing these new requirements, the following resources are available:

[Backgrounder: Occupational First Aid Regulatory Changes](#)

[Changes to Occupational First Aid Requirements: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[Workplace First Aid \(video series\)](#)

See the amended sections of the [OHS Regulation](#) and the corresponding [OHS Guidelines](#). The preliminary guidelines listed below are posted for a 60-day period during which time stakeholders can comment and request revisions.

First aid guidelines: The following guidelines accompany regulatory amendments to the OHS Regulation that are effective November 1, 2024. These are new and revised guidelines which align with the new regulatory provisions. 🗣️

[G3.15\(c\) Proof of certification](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.15-2 Registered nurses working for health authorities](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.15-3 EMA licence holders working as first aid attendants](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.16 First aid assessment](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.16\(1\) Minimum requirements for first aid equipment](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.16\(3\) Reviewing first aid assessments](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.16\(3.1\) Involving workers in first aid assessment](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.17 Developing and implementing first aid procedures](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.17\(2\) Communicating first aid procedures to workers](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.17\(4\) Drills](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.17.1 Air transportation](#) December 30, 2024

[G3.21\(3\) First aid attendant responsibilities — Options for discharging responsibilities for care](#) December 30, 2024

New Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work Program Launched on November 1

WorkSafeBC has made changes to the structure of the occupational rehabilitation programs, known as OR1, OR2, and ASTD. The revamp will address existing service gaps and enhance the experience for both providers and our clients.

Effective November 1, 2024, WorkSafeBC enhanced the structure of the occupational rehabilitation (OR) programs with a new service, the Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work Program. The new service will transition from the existing OR1, OR2, and ASTD streams toward a single integrated service in areas that currently offer OR2 services, where the provider will assess and build a program customized for the individual worker. The new program will offer the

same clinical supports as the previous OR2 and ASTD programs, including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, kinesiologists, clinical counsellors and physicians.

The OR1 program will continue to exist as it does today but will operate only in rural or more remote communities.

The Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work Program will enhance a worker's experience and ensure they get a more tailored and timely approach to their care.

Learn more about the new program by visiting WorkSafeBC's webpage: [Customized Recovery and Return-to-Work Program](#). 🗣️

Wearing Earplugs Correctly: Proper Use of Hearing Protection is Essential for Preventing Noise-induced Hearing Loss

In the Fall issue of WorkSafe Magazine, a focus on the proper use and fit of hearing protection was featured, providing insights into the appropriate style and fit of hearing protection for specific work environments. [Read the full article](#) and find out if your hearing protection meets the recommendations for preventing long-term hearing loss. 🗣️