

# FOREST SAFETY NEWS

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## Phase Congestion Prevention

Back in 2013, the Coast Harvesting Advisory Group (CHAG) identified phase congestion as a priority at the request of coastal contractors. They were concerned about practices that could negatively impact worker safety when logging phases were not properly managed and became too close together or “stacked” for a variety of reasons including production pressures, poor planning, permit or other unexpected delays.

Here again in 2025, phase congestion has become a heightened concern as forestry operations are under pressure, trying to keep up production despite a lot of uncertainty. And as we’ve seen in the past, when the focus shifts heavily toward output, safety gets pushed to the backburner for some contractors. Not all contractors, of course, but enough to raise red flags. And when safety takes a back seat, it puts everyone at risk, even those who put safety first.

When the conflicting demands of contractors working in different phases are integrated together and operating simultaneously in a worksite and are not focussed on safety, it compromises everyone including the work being performed. And if an incident occurs because one contractor was pushing the limits to “get the job done”, all operations will come to a grinding halt for every contractor working in the area. And this means no one keeps working and everyone is affected because of the wrong mindset.

That is why it is imperative to ensure that “phase integration” – meaning different phases are organized to operate simultaneously in a worksite as a single “integrated” phase - is seamlessly built into the site plan to ensure worker safety is maintained and desired operational efficiencies are actually achieved.

To help you properly plan, manage and supervise a worksite, BCFSC has some valuable resources and training to help eliminate phase congestion and keep

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

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your operation running smoothly while working with other on-site contractors and ensure all those working on site remain safe.

Visit our [Phase Congestion Prevention](#) webpage and find essential tools, training and information that will help explain and what Phase Congestion is and how to avoid it. 🌲





## What's New

Here is the latest on what we have to offer since March 2025. 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 Course Offering – Basic Incident Investigation** – BCFSC's Basic Incident Investigation Course is now available as a requested instructor-led virtual course. Read more about this in the training section of this month's Forest Safety News or visit our [webpage](#).

**First Aid Requirements** – Are you compliant with the new amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation relating to occupational first aid? Visit WorkSafeBC and find information and resources to assist employers in implementing these new requirements.

**BCFSC FIRS (Forest Industry Reporting System) App** – Get the BCFSC FIRS App 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** – BCFSC's in-person training calendar is now fully loaded on the BCFSC website. If there's something you see that you might want delivered directly to your organization, we can help. [Contact the training department](#) to inquire about bringing courses directly to your preferred location at a convenient time that works for you.

**Save the Date – The 2025 Vancouver Island Safety Conference** will be held in Nanaimo at the Vancouver Island

Conference Centre on Saturday, November 1, 2025. This year's conference will focus on *Facing the Future Together: The Human Side of Safety*.

**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 - The Cache is an online space to share wisdom, experience, information, tools and resources generated by the silviculture community.
- **Wood Products Association of Canada (WPAC) News** – read the latest news from WPAC and subscribe to receive the WPAC newsletter.

## Industry Links

**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. 📢



# Are you Wildfire Ready? How BC Forestry Operations Can Prepare for the 2025 Fire Season

Last year, wildfires burned more than one million hectares across British Columbia. As of May 23, 2025, eleven fires are burning out of control in several regions across the province and the BC Wildfire Service is forecasting yet another intense year.

With summer just around the corner, BC forestry operations are strongly encouraged to take proactive measures now by planning ahead, preparing crews and equipment, and being ready to respond swiftly if conditions escalate. Wildfires pose significant risks to workers, equipment, forest resources and surrounding communities and being prepared is essential to safeguarding lives, livelihoods and infrastructure from the growing threat of wildfires.

And did you know that forestry employers may be eligible for **partial reimbursement of training costs** through the **BC Employer Training Grant**, especially for wildfire-related safety and emergency response training? Learn more at [WorkBC Forest Sector Supports](#).

## Here are Some Wildfire Preparation Steps for Forestry Operators

### 1. Review your responsibilities under the Wildfire Act and Regulation

Among other responsibilities in the Act and Regulation, forestry operators are responsible to carry out fire control of a fire that starts within one km (1km) of their worksite, regardless of the cause of the fire. The forestry operator must carry out fire control until the fire is extinguished, it becomes unsafe to fight the fire, or an official takes over the fire. The forestry operator must report the fire to the Wildfire Service as soon as practicable. Ensure that your operation is ready to meet these responsibilities.



### 2. Train and Equip Your Team

Ensure all workers are trained in wildfire awareness and that you have trained and tested your emergency procedures. Check your fire suppression equipment and communication devices and confirm that everyone is familiar with their use. Provide \$100 training (initial or the annual review) for all workers that may be needed to conduct fire response. The BC Forest Safety Council also has many courses that will support workers including Resource Road Driver, Off Road Vehicle, Introduction to Dangerous Trees, Forest Supervisor, and Incident Investigation. See our [course catalogue](#) for more information.

### 3. Monitor Conditions and Stay Informed

Monitor the [Fire Danger Rating](#) in the area that you will be working and be prepared to respond to any restrictions on high risk activities. Conduct on-site weather reading to confirm the local weather conditions. Pay special attention to sudden shifts in weather as these may increase the local fire danger and potentially increase safety risk. Use the BC Wildfire Service

mobile app and online dashboards to track wildfire activity, fire bans and evacuation alerts in real time. Staying informed allows for rapid response and safer decision-making.

### 4. Shared Responsibility

Collaboration with strong partners can help align wildfire preparedness efforts. When forestry operators, fire officials, local governments, Indigenous leaders and community members come together, they can share knowledge, coordinate planning and create a unified response framework. While these groups often operate independently, working collaboratively ensures that everyone understands their shared role(s) and can act swiftly and cohesively when a wildfire occurs.

Don't wait until it's too late —start preparing today. For more information, visit the [BC Wildfire Service](#).

## Report Wildfires Immediately

If you spot a wildfire, call **1-800-663-5555** or dial **\*5555** from a cell phone. Wildfires can also be reported on the BC Wildfire smartphone app. 📱

# First Aid Case Study: West Fraser's Commitment to Safety Saves a Life

## Article Source: National Safety Council - Southeastern Chapter

For employees at West Fraser, a local mill in Joanna, SC, safety isn't just a corporate mandate; it's a way of life. This dedication to safety was put to the test one workday when Marty Scott suddenly collapsed due to a cardiac event.

Thanks to the swift, skilled response of three trained coworkers and an on-site Automated External Defibrillator (AED), what could have been a heartbreaking tragedy became a life-saving success story.

"It was just a normal day," Marty recalls. "I grabbed my hard hat and started work. The next thing I knew, I heard someone calling my name, and then... nothing. When I woke up, the paramedic was asking if I could stand up and get on the stretcher."

In those fleeting moments, his coworkers were by his side, already taking action. One of his teammates, Rob Bearden, remembers the exact moment they realized something was terribly wrong. "I heard Marty make a strange noise, and when I looked over, he was down," he said. "I knew something wasn't right, so I called 911 and started CPR right away."

It was this kind of high-quality, trained response that makes a critical difference in outcomes during cardiac events. Another teammate, Ricky, ran for the AED. "When the AED delivered the first shock, it actually lifted him off the ground," Ricky Oxner recalled. "It was a sight I'll never forget, but that's when I knew we had a fighting chance to bring him back."

Barbara Greene, HSE Compliance & Training Director at GPS, was the team's NSC First Aid, CPR & AED Instructor who had prepared them well for this moment. "First aid and CPR training is so important to everyone," Greene noted. "Cardiac events happen every day, often without warning, and in those critical moments, every second matters. The more people around you who are trained, the better your chances of survival."

Greene's emphasis on preparation allowed Marty's coworkers to act quickly and effectively, without hesitation or confusion. "It was almost like muscle memory," said one of the rescuers. "I didn't have to think. My first aid training just kicked in, and everything fell into place."

For over 20 minutes, Marty's coworkers took turns performing CPR, tirelessly keeping his heart pumping as they awaited the arrival of paramedics. The AED delivered shocks when needed, helping to sustain his heartbeat and prevent further damage. "When you're in a situation like that, there's no time for second-guessing. I just remembered what I was taught: stay calm, do the compressions right, and trust the AED to guide us," his coworker said.

Finally, as paramedics arrived, Marty slowly began to regain consciousness. "Ricky came up to me and grabbed my hand and said, 'Man, it's good to be talking to you,'" Marty remembers with emotion. Confused and weak, he asked, "What happened?" His teammate replied, "We've been doing CPR on you for over 20 minutes."

The look of relief and gratitude on Marty's face was unforgettable. His life had been saved not by chance but by a powerful combination of preparedness and teamwork. West Fraser's commitment to safety extends

beyond mandatory training, like NSC First Aid. The company's leadership invests in creating an environment where every employee feels equipped to handle emergencies. AEDs and first aid kits are strategically placed throughout the facility, and regular training sessions ensure that every team member is prepared to step in when needed.

"We don't just train our employees for compliance. We train them because we believe in the value of every single life," explained Joshua Harris, EHS Manager. "By investing in CPR and first aid training, we're not just creating a safer workplace - we're empowering our employees to be heroes in moments that truly count."

Today, Marty's story serves as a testament to the strength of West Fraser's safety culture. The lives of his coworkers are also forever changed, having experienced the impact of their actions firsthand. "It's one thing to go through training," one of them said. "But when you're in the moment, and you see it work, you realize just how powerful those skills are. I'll never forget it."

For Marty and his team, this was a moment they'll carry with them forever. And for West Fraser, it's a reminder of why safety remains a top priority - a commitment that saved one life and changed many others in the process.


Watch the West Fraser First Aid Case Study on [YouTube](#). 



Photo: L-R Rob Bearden, Marty Scott, John Lindlar, Ricky Oxner



# Closing the PPE Equity Gap: A Call for Inclusive Safety

Article Source: OHS Canada Magazine – written by Brandi Cowen

In April, [Brandi Cowen](#) from [OHS Canada](#), wrote about closing the PPE equity gap in [OHS Canada Magazine](#). The article highlights that despite growing awareness and product availability, a significant gap remains in the personal protective equipment (PPE) industry when it comes to meeting the needs of women in the workplace. This issue took center stage at the recent **ProtectHer: The Women's Safety Leadership and PPE Symposium**, where experts emphasized that ill-fitting PPE not only fails to protect but can actively endanger workers.

**Amy Roosa**, founder of *The Safety Rack*, highlighted that 21% of women surveyed globally had experienced injuries due to poorly fitting PPE. Common issues include oversized hard hats, loose eye protection, and footwear designed with a “shrink it and pink it” mindset—downsizing men's gear without accounting for anatomical differences.

**Sally Morse** of *Spectra Supply* presented compelling data from a study of over 6,000 U.S. Army personnel, showing measurable differences in hand size between men and women. These findings underscore the need for manufacturers to design PPE that reflects real anthropometric data, not assumptions.

To bridge this gap, Roosa recommends a four-step approach for employers:

1. **Evaluate** current PPE programs and gather feedback from female workers.
2. **Review** existing offerings for inclusivity.
3. **Collaborate** with manufacturers to source gender-specific PPE.
4. **Reassess** regularly to ensure ongoing equity and safety.

The message is clear: safety isn't one-size-fits-all. True protection starts with proper fit.

The full article on *OHS Canada* discusses how the design of PPE has historically overlooked the anatomical differences between men and women—differences that go beyond size to include shape, proportion, and mobility. It emphasizes that gravity doesn't discriminate—hazards affect everyone equally, but protection must be tailored to fit the individual. The article also outlines practical strategies to improve access to properly fitting PPE for women, including better procurement policies, inclusive product development, and stronger advocacy within safety leadership. Most importantly, it asks: Where do we go from here? The answer lies in collaboration between employers, manufacturers, and safety professionals to ensure that equity in protection becomes the new standard.

**Read the full article here:** [Closing the PPE Equity Gap – OHS Canada](#)

And for more information on the importance of ensuring PPE fits properly – visit [WorkSafeBC's website](#). 🌱



## Check Your Bear Spray— Especially in Cold Weather

Last winter, Ashley Cameron, Emily Scott and Kyle Belanger, a group of archaeologists who work within the forestry sector, discovered that several of their bear spray canisters had frozen while in storage. Naturally, they were concerned if the spray would still work, so they searched online for answers but came up empty-handed. They decided to run their informal test to determine the efficacy of frozen bear spray.

**Note:** *This was not a formal scientific study, and the results are not industry-certified. The test was conducted independently to help the team make informed decisions about their safety in the field.*

They began their experiment with eleven canisters, using one control canister at room temperature, five frozen and thawed and five frozen at -20°C for a week. They used a mix of SABRE Wild and Frontiersman brands under conditions with a wind chill of -37°C

They found that the control canister at room temperature worked exactly as expected. It sprayed steadily for about seven seconds and reached a distance of 2-7 meters. The thawed canisters performed surprisingly well. Most sprayed consistently and even reached distances up to eight meters. A few showed minor sputtering, but overall, they were reliable. The frozen canisters had mixed results. Some worked fine and reached similar distances, but others sputtered, dribbled or sprayed unevenly—definitely not ideal in a real-life bear encounter. The expired canister was the worst performer. It had a weak spray and poor coverage, making it clear that expired bear spray should be discarded and replaced.

Whether you're heading into the backcountry in summer or winter, here are a few important lessons from their experiment:

- **Always check the expiration date** on your bear spray. If it's expired, replace it.



- **Inspect your spray before you go—**especially if it's been stored in cold conditions. Check the seal and look for abnormalities in the canister.
- **Cold weather can affect performance,** particularly the spray's range and consistency.
- **Tip for Cold Weather** - keep your bear spray functional in freezing temperatures. Store it in an insulated pouch and keep it close to your body. This helps maintain a usable temperature and ensures it's ready when you need it most.

A special thanks to Ashley, Emily and Kyle for sharing their insights. For more information on bear and wildlife safety, visit our [Wildlife Awareness webpage](#) to access downloadable resources. 📄

## Interior Safety Conference 2025 Recap: Building Safety Through Shared Experiences

On Thursday, May 1 at the Coast Kamloops Hotel & Conference Centre, 120 forestry professionals attended the 2025 Interior Safety Conference (ISC). The day was packed with meaningful and engaging presentations, all centred around the theme of “*Building Safety Through Shared Experiences*”. This year's theme was chosen because the power of shared stories and ideas are not just invaluable as conversation starters but can be used as catalysts for change. Change that can make a difference in keeping workers safe, both on the job and at home.

Throughout the day, we were presented with industry shares and insights into deeply personal stories. Every session gave us a chance to reflect, connect and learn new ways to make forestry workplaces physically safer but also more open, inclusive and supportive—where everyone feels not just safe, but valued.

The conference opened with emcee Nick Arkle from Gorman Group, who encouraged everyone to truly listen and learn from the day's presentations and take our insights back to the workplace and make important changes that could help save lives.

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Marla Guldbransen, Falling Programs Manager at the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC), followed with a powerful message to set the tone for the day. She reminded the audience that safety is more than just policy and checklists; it's a culture shaped by continuous learning and the stories we share with one another. She emphasized the importance of working together towards our common goal where every forestry worker goes home safe. Every day.

Here is a glimpse of the outcomes from the day's sessions:

## Keynotes

- **Greg Hemminger and Mika Dumont** from the Tailgate Toolkit Project spoke about the serious issue of substance use, advocating for harm reduction and stronger mental health support. Speaking candidly about their own experiences with substance use, they challenged the stereotypes many of us have about what a "substance user" looks like and reminded us that the reality is far more complex and human. Their personal stories, particularly around prescription opioid use, highlighted how even the medical community couldn't have predicted the devastating impact over-prescribing opioids would have and how it has led to the toxic drug crisis. They emphasized that blame has no place in this crisis. Instead, we need to focus on building better systems, breaking down stigma and creating a culture where people feel safe to talk about these issues and seek help.
- **Mark Black**—shared his remarkable story of facing adversity head-on when he was faced with his own mortality while waiting for a double lung and heart transplant at just 23 years old. He reminded us that when life throws challenges our way, we have a choice: let them define us or use them to grow. Using his own experience to walk us through his trademarked Resilience Roadmap™, he taught us how we can navigate through tough times and stay motivated with these key steps: acknowledging reality, accepting what's beyond our control, honestly assessing our situation, setting meaningful goals, adapting to change and taking action. His message was clear: resilience isn't about being tough all the time—it's about taking ownership of adversity and learning and growing from it - one step at a time.

## Featured Sessions

- **Forestry Together:** Marla Guldbransen (BCFSC) and Nicole Arkle (Gorman Group) discussed the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the forestry sector. They emphasized that DEI is not a fleeting trend or political platform, but a strategic approach to workforce development. By fostering a more representative and inclusive environment, companies will benefit from a broader range of perspectives



which can lead to fresh ideas and innovation. A diverse workplace also contributes to improved safety, stronger employee retention and a more resilient industry overall.

- **Jeremy Gauthier** shared his deeply personal story about a devastating workplace accident that led him down a path of addiction. Through resiliency and self-discovery, he found a renewed sense of purpose

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and transformed his life. His message emphasized the importance of prioritizing self-care and building resilience to create lasting change. Jeremy introduced the *SCALE* principle—**Small Consistent Actions Lead to Excellence**—as a practical framework to help individuals take ownership of their stories and strive for personal growth.

- **Psychological Safety:** Jennifer Irwin from WorkSafeBC joined us to talk about something that affects us all — mental health at work. She spoke to us about Psychological Health and Safety (PHS) and explained how WorkSafeBC's Mental Health Strategy could help companies build mental health injury prevention programs to help support those struggling with mental health. She pointed out that by the time Canadians reach 40, 1 in 2 have — or have had — a mental illness and when workplaces ignore this, it can lead to more people taking time off and an increase in claims. But when companies take mental health seriously and create a culture of psychological safety, it can make a huge difference. People feel supported, they think more clearly, stay focused and make better decisions. She reminded us that mental well-being is just as important as physical safety, and that creating a supportive environment isn't just good for employees—it's good for business.

- **Safety Innovation:** Forrest Weadock from Gorman Bros. Lumber gave us a great look at how they keep people safe in their busy yards where mobile equipment like forklifts, loaders and trucks are constantly moving around. They use a layered approach with a hierarchy of controls to help reduce the risk of pedestrians getting struck. Forrest explained that every day starts with a crew meeting to go over the day's work, so everyone knows where equipment will be operating and how supervisors lead by example and encourage everyone to speak up about hazards. Forrest explained that PPE is non-negotiable and there are clear rules on cell phone use and maintaining eye contact with drivers. He also explained that on-site contractors must go through safety inductions to ensure they know the worksite rules as well. On top of that, Gorman Bros. also uses motion-sensor crosswalks, red safety zones, cameras, mirrors and digital speed signs and their forklifts are also equipped with pedestrian detection systems, alarms, cameras and safety lights.

All in all, it was a great day, full of meaningful takeaways that left us with a lot to think about. A huge thank you to our generous sponsors whose support made it possible to offer this event free of charge to all attendees. Their commitment helps us all move closer to a shared goal where every forestry worker goes home safe — every day.

See you next year! 🌿

## Announcing New TLA Executive Director – Peter Lister

Source: Tree Frog

The Truck Loggers Association's Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of their new Executive Director, Peter Lister, effective Thursday, May 15, 2025.

Peter has been involved in the forest sector for over 25 years. As an engineer, he started his career working in sawmills to improve lumber recovery, sawing systems and sawblade maintenance processes. He later worked for an equipment supplier, managing new product development for wood rooms and OSB mills.



### Peter Lister

In 2008, Peter became the general manager and national research director for the Forest Engineering Institute of Canada (FERIC) where he

was responsible for western operations and the Canada-wide research program.

In 2009, when FERIC merged to create FPinnovations, Peter became vice president of the Forest Operations Division with full responsibility for research, membership, bottom-line financial performance and over 200 staff across Canada. Peter worked closely with industry members and federal and provincial governments to deliver a wide range of programs focused on expanding markets, developing new technologies, improving processes, worker safety and environmental performance.

In 2016, Peter joined Seaspan Marine providing tugboat services and transportation for the coastal BC forest sector. As senior vice president, Peter led a team responsible for Seaspan's business development, sales and customer service activities, was accountable for the bottom-line financial performance of commercial contracts,

and worked to enhance Seaspan's reputation for high-quality, reliable and safe marine transportation services.

Peter has a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of British Columbia and is a registered professional engineer in BC. He volunteers as vice-chair on the board of directors for the Pacific Salmon Foundation and is an Institute of Corporate Directors member.

"I am pleased to welcome Peter to the TLA," said Dorian Uzzell, TLA president. "He brings an expansive knowledge of the forest industry, and government relations experience to the executive director role and is an excellent addition to our team. I believe he will work hard for our members and the sustainability of timber harvesting contractors in BC. I'm confident he is the right person to lead the TLA through the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. We look very forward to working with him." 🌿



# Leveraging Social Media for Safety Communication

One of the most effective ways BCFSC communicates safety information to industry is through social media. Using LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, we share critical safety messages quickly and efficiently whenever we have it at our fingertips.

By using social media, we can instantly communicate with our followers. For example, when we receive a safety-related tip, a WorkSafeBC update relevant to forestry or an update to a training course, we do a quick post to alert our followers. This real-time capability means people don't have to wait for important information that may affect their day-to-day operations and allows them to adjust if necessary.

We have found that social media allows us to be more efficient to reach a large group of people with minimal effort. As we all know, a single post can inform our followers simultaneously and gives them the chance to share the information allowing the message to spread throughout the province in mere minutes creating a culture of safety where everyone feels involved.

Another advantage of social media is the ability for us to share visual and multimedia content, especially on our YouTube page and Instagram reels. Visual content like videos, infographics and images are easier to understand and incredibly useful to demonstrate proper safety procedures more effectively than words alone. Over the past few years, we have been developing safety videos on key safety topics which we share through YouTube channel and Instagram. We have seen considerable growth on our YouTube channel and on Instagram. Our videos have been used for training, tailgate meetings, in conferences and in safety shares which has helped provide a more engaging way to absorb the information.

If you use social media in your day-to-day life, consider following us to stay up-to-date on safety communication.

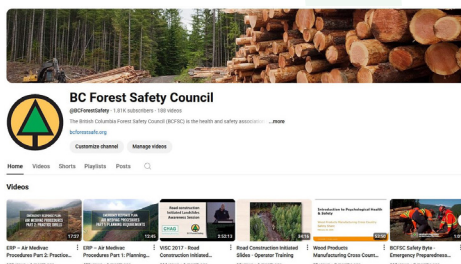
## BCFSC Social Media

[YouTube](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)



# COFI Opens Applications for 2025 Forestry Scholarships: Empowering the Future of BC's Forest Sector

The **BC Council of Forest Industries (COFI)** is now accepting applications for its **2025 Forestry Scholarships**, reaffirming its commitment to supporting the next generation of forestry professionals and skilled tradespeople across British Columbia.

This year, **10 scholarships of \$2,000 each** will be awarded to students entering post-secondary or trades training programs that align with the forest sector. Whether you're aiming to become a forest technician, wildlife biologist, heavy-duty mechanic, or business analyst in the forestry industry, this scholarship is designed to help you take the next step in your education and career.

## Who's Eligible?

To apply, you must:

- Be a **resident of British Columbia**
- Be enrolled or planning to enroll in a **forestry-related program** at an accredited post-secondary institution in **fall 2025 or spring 2026**
- Submit a **high school transcript**, a **one-page personal statement**, and **two letters of reference** from a teacher, principal, employer, or community member

## Fields of Study Include:


- **Forestry & Environmental Sciences:** Forestry, Forest Technician, Wildlife & Fish Management, Biology, Geography, GIS
- **Engineering & Trades:** Power Engineering, Welding, Carpentry, Heavy Duty Mechanics, Instrumentation, Saw Filer, Wood Product Manufacturing
- **Business & Technology:** Accounting, Business Administration, Human Resources, Marketing, Business Technology

## Why It Matters

Forestry is a vital part of BC's economy and environmental stewardship. As the industry evolves to meet the demands of sustainability, innovation, and climate resilience, COFI is investing in students who will lead this transformation. These scholarships are open to students from **all regions of BC**—rural, coastal, or urban—ensuring that opportunities are accessible and inclusive.

## Application Deadline: Friday, June 27, 2025

## How to Apply

Visit COFI's official Forestry Scholarship page to download the application form and review the full eligibility criteria and checklist. 

# Spotlight on Safety: Nominate a Champion of Safety from your Organization

In the forest sector, safety leaders are the unsung heroes that help get us all home safe, every day. Safety leaders guide us through the complexities of workplace safety with unwavering dedication and innovation. The Leadership in Safety Awards helps shine a light on these individuals and gives them the recognition they truly deserve.

BCFSC is calling for nominations for the esteemed Leadership in Safety Award to honour those who have made outstanding contributions to safety in our industry.

The award winners will be honored in person at the upcoming Vancouver Island Safety Conference on Saturday, November 1st, 2025 in Nanaimo, BC.

Don't miss this opportunity to nominate a deserving candidate who has exemplified outstanding safety leadership or accomplishments in one of three categories: harvesting, manufacturing, and a lifetime achievement in forestry.

## Award Categories

### 1. Cary White Memorial Award

This special award is presented to someone who has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving safety awareness, expanding safety knowledge, developing safety skills at ground level and building a lasting culture of safety among BC's forestry workers. It is someone who goes the extra mile to help others reach their safety goals with a helping hand, proven experience and knowledge.

### 2. Forest Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP)

This award recognizes an individual or group that has made a notable contribution to forest industry safety within their operation or company.

The MVP could be a worker whose idea resulted in improvements to workplace safety, a supervisor who communicated regularly with their crew spearheading safe work procedures, a crew that found a way to work more safely and productively, a manager who demonstrated commitment to worker safety, a committee that achieved safety improvements through persistent efforts to seek changes, or a company that has demonstrated leadership in integrating health & safety into their business practices.

### 3. Manufacturing Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP)

This award recognizes an individual or group that has made a notable contribution to wood products manufacturing safety within their operation or company.

The MVP could be a worker whose idea resulted in improvements to workplace safety, a supervisor who communicated regularly with their crew spearheading safe work procedures, a crew that found a way to work more safely and productively, a manager who demonstrated commitment to worker safety, a committee that achieved safety improvements through persistent efforts to seek changes, or a company that has demonstrated leadership in integrating health & safety into their business practices.

Let's celebrate those who make our workplaces safer. Nominate your safety leader today and let their exemplary efforts be recognized and applauded by their peers across the industry.



To nominate, simply send an email to [info@bcforestsafesafe.org](mailto:info@bcforestsafesafe.org) with the following details:

- Nominee's full name
- Nominee's job title
- Nominee's workplace and employer
- Chosen nomination category (Cary White Award or MVP)
- A comprehensive explanation of your nomination reasons (the more details, the better)
- Your contact information (name and email address)

## Nomination Deadline:

**Tuesday,**  
**September 23, 2025**

## Honoring Past Safety Leaders

Take a moment to read about the previous winners of the Leadership in Safety Awards. These trailblazers have set the bar high with their remarkable safety achievements. Their stories inspire us and remind us that dedicated safety leadership can help us meet our objective ... to get every forestry worker home safe – every day. 🌲



# Emergency Planning for Hazardous Substances

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By Steven Gilstead

Amendments to Part 5 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation came into effect on February 3, 2025. These amendments provide clarity and specify what emergency plans must include.

“Emergencies can happen suddenly and without warning,” says Diana Janke, senior prevention advisor. “The more prepared you are for them, the better you’ll be able to respond in a way that reduces the chance of injury.”

## What it means for employers

B.C.’s employers are already required to develop response plans for emergencies involving hazardous substances. The amendments now require them to:

- Prepare a written emergency response plan that is appropriate to the hazards of the workplace and clarifies roles and responsibilities during an emergency.
- Conduct training and drills annually or when a plan is revised.
- Engage staff in the emergency response plan process.

## Emergency response plans

“Employers must now document their risk assessment for hazardous substances that could endanger a person in an emergency,” says Janke. “They must then develop emergency plans for all reasonably foreseeable emergencies involving hazardous substances — even if the substance arises from outside the workplace.”

Hazardous substances that should be considered when developing emergency plans include:

- Products covered by the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)
- Explosives
- Pesticides

- Radioactive materials
- Hazardous waste
- Consumer products (if they could endanger someone in an emergency)

Examples of emergency situations that employers should consider when developing or updating their plans include:

- An accidental spill or release of hazardous substances at the workplace or at a neighbouring workplace
- A fire caused by or involving hazardous substances
- A natural disaster that could generate or impact hazardous substances in a way that would increase risk to people.

“Although both the terms ‘hazardous substance’ and ‘emergency’ should be interpreted very broadly,” Janke continues, “employers only need to plan for emergencies that are reasonably foreseeable.”

## Training and drills

Employers are still required to ensure workers are adequately trained in emergency procedures.

However, the amendments now clarify that employers are expected to conduct drills annually and after any significant change to the emergency response plan is made.

These drills must be designed to ensure that the procedures are effective.

## Worker participation

The amendments make it a requirement for employers to consult with workers when developing, implementing, reviewing, or updating all components of the emergency response plan. This includes the



hazard inventory, risk assessment, emergency procedures or a program for training and drills.

Employers must involve their workers in all aspects of drafting the emergency response plan, and ensure they have ready access to all elements of the plan. This means consulting with the joint committee or the worker health and safety representative, if present at the workplace. If your workplace doesn’t have these resources, employers should consult with the workers.

“Workers have first-hand experience about the risks and procedures in their workplace,” says Janke. Getting their input and having meaningful conversations about all aspects of managing risk makes emergency planning more effective.

## For more information

WorkSafeBC has developed guidelines and resources to support employers in implementing the new requirements. For more information, visit [worksafebc.com](https://www.worksafebc.com):

- [Emergency planning & response \(webpage\)](#)
- [Backgrounder: Emergency procedures for hazardous substances](#)
- [Section 5.97 – 5.104, Emergency Planning of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation](#)
- [Guideline G5.97-1 – G5.104 of the Occupational Health and Safety Guideline](#)

*This information originally appeared in the Spring 2025 issue of WorkSafe Magazine. To read more or to subscribe, visit [WorkSafe Magazine](#) 📖*

# WorkSafeBC Updates:

## New Data Analytics Dashboards

WorkSafeBC has added nine new data-analytics dashboards to their online health & safety data tools that feature charts and graphics useful for research, reports, business planning and injury-prevention training. These tools (previously known as shared data) allow employers, workers, industry groups and other audiences to interact with their injury-prevention data and key workplace injury statistics.

These latest dashboards provide access to anonymized, summarized, industry-level statistics on:

- Wildland firefighter claims
- Heat stress claims
- Musculoskeletal (e.g., sprain and strain) injury claims
- Slip, trip, and fall claims
- Mature worker (age 55 and up) claims
- Mental disorder claims
- WorkSafeBC incident investigation reports
- Acts of violence and force
- Falls from elevation

Visit [WorkSafeBC](#) for more information. 📄

## Emergency Planning for Hazardous Substances

Two new templates have been created to help employers meet requirements around emergency planning for hazardous substances.

- Emergency planning for hazardous substances: Risk assessment template
- Emergency planning: Inventory of hazardous substances

Both resources align with the updated requirements in Part 5 of the OHS Regulation, which will be effective on February 3, 2025. Employers can use the templates as they are, or they can be modified to suit your workplace. 📄

## Current Consultations

### Changes to Policy — Duration of benefits (retirement age) **Deadline June 6, 2025**

WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors have approved the policy changes relating to the *Rehabilitation Services & Claims Manual*, Volume II, on WorkSafeBC's determination of whether a worker "would retire" after the retirement dates set out in the Act which came into effect on January 1, 2024. These were approved in advance of stakeholder consultation. The Policy, Regulation and Research Department has now released a discussion paper on the 2024 changes to identify whether further policy changes are necessary.

You are invited to provide feedback by completing an [online form](#), emailing the Policy, Regulation and Research Department or mailing in your feedback. Deadline for feedback submission is 4:30pm on Friday, June 6, 2025. For complete details, visit [WorkSafeBC's website](#). 📄

