



## Safety Spotlight: Charles Bloom Secondary School Forestry Program

At BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) we like to highlight exciting, forestry-related programs that we see across the province. At Charles Bloom Secondary School in Lumby, BC, forestry teacher, Nathan Bartel, runs a unique high school program that introduces senior students to the forest industry through hands-on work experience and 'on-the-job' training.

The program is open to Grade 11 and 12 students throughout School District 22 (Vernon). Participants in the year long program learn about what it takes to work in the forest industry and other trades, both in the classroom and on the school's 600 ha woodlot (Woodlot 1908) which is located a short 15-minute bus ride from the campus. The program introduces students to every stage of a forestry operation, from layout planning to log sales and runs in the second semester of Grade 11 and the first semester of Grade 12 and includes a mix of students from Lumby and Vernon.

Generally, the students spend two days a week in the classroom, focusing on math, science, safety training and job skills. In Grade 11, the students learn math and science with a trades and forestry perspective and are introduced to the construction, electrical and plumbing trades. The remaining three days of their week are spent outdoors, rain, snow or shine, working on the woodlot.

All field days start with a morning safety meeting, and from there, the students are introduced to a variety of logging skills, including bucking and heavy equipment operation. Previously felled trees are limbed and bucked, then skidded to the roadside where they are loaded onto a truck and purchased by a local mill. Nathan says

the goal of the program is to make the class feel as much like a real forestry operation as possible.

In Grade 12, the students have a similar schedule, but the trades focus shifts slightly to include welding and heavy equipment maintenance, along with lessons on career planning, tree and lumber species identification and other related science topics. While these skills are all wonderful introductions to working in the industry, Nathan says that the most important outcomes for the students are an understanding of a **strong work ethic and a positive attitude**.


The program is backed by local logging companies, industry experts and WorkSafeBC, who provide prescription services, hand felling, timber purchase, guest speakers and other services and support. The forestry program also uses some of BCFSC's online resources, including the Basic Forest Worker online course.

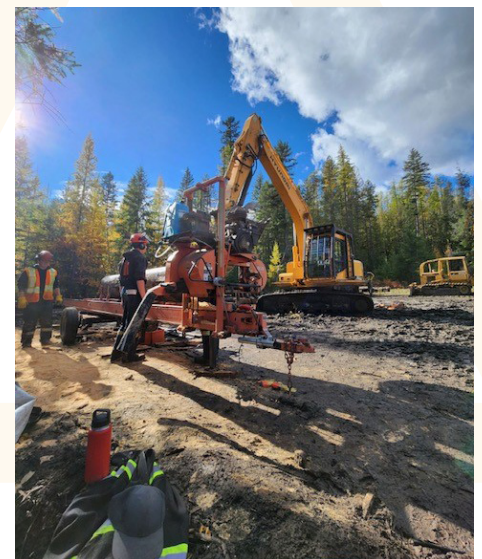
Nathan says that the program is very popular, with strong interest from students from all backgrounds and genders. Students must apply as early as Grade 9 for their Grade 11 year, or they may miss the opportunity as there is always a waitlist for students entering the program. The students must submit an application, obtain a teacher reference and participate in an interview to be considered for the program.

After graduating, many of the students continue to work in forestry or other trades occupations. Students either stay local or return to work in the area after they have finished their post-secondary education. Nathan says that most of the students in the program enjoy working with their hands and

often pursue hands-on careers in equipment operation, mechanics, plumbing, welding and more.

BCFSC applauds this excellent program. The good work that Nathan, his fellow teachers, and all the supportive local organizations do is invaluable in providing young workers with the critical skills and safety knowledge that will ensure their careers are long, prosperous, and injury-free. Their efforts are helping to build a safer, more skilled workforce—one student at a time.

If you would like more information about the program, please contact Nathan Bartel at [nbartel@sd22.bc.ca](mailto:nbartel@sd22.bc.ca). For information about using the BCFSC's program materials, contact us at [training@bcforestsafes.org](mailto:training@bcforestsafes.org). 



# BCFSC Launches New Virtual Instructor-led Format for Basic Incident Investigation Course

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) is excited to announce the successful delivery of a new format for our Basic Incident Investigation course. This innovative virtual instructor-led delivery method was first introduced in mid-April to a group from the BC Wildfire Service.


Participants appreciated the flexibility of the new format, noting that coordinating in-person training for all staff gathered in one location can be challenging. The virtual approach provided a more accessible and efficient solution, allowing teams to engage with the material without the need for travel.

Leveraging the content from our highly successful in-person course—which has trained over 2,000 individuals over the past 15 years—this new delivery option offers the same trusted instruction but in a more flexible and convenient format. The course is specifically designed to meet the needs of companies with employees spread across the province. It provides an instructor-led virtual format that combines live, online sessions with interactive online learning activities through BCFSC's Learning Centre.

The training is structured into two half-day sessions, allowing participants to balance their work responsibilities while developing essential incident investigation skills. The course includes:

- Instruction on best practices for conducting effective investigations
- Group discussions to reinforce key concepts
- Practical exercises where participants complete mock investigations
- Personalized feedback and coaching from the instructor

This approach ensures that learners can not only apply their new knowledge in real-time but can confidently apply it in their workplace. The result is a more impactful and meaningful training experience and reflects BCFSC's ongoing commitment to making safety training more adaptable and responsive to the needs of our industry partners.

For more information on the Basic Incident Investigation course (virtual instructor-led, or in-person) refer to the course [webpage](#). 

## Upgrade Your Workforce: BC Forest Safety Council Training May Be Funded Through the BC Employer Training Grant

Looking to enhance the skills of your forestry workforce? The **BC Employer Training Grant (ETG)** could help you do just that—while saving on training costs.

As part of the province's broader **Forest Worker and Community Support Programs**, the ETG provides financial support to employers across British Columbia who are investing in skills training for their current or future employees. This includes training offered by the **BC Forest Safety Council**, which delivers industry-recognized programs in areas such as faller certification, supervisor training, incident investigation and much more.

### What's Covered?

Eligible employers can receive:

- **Up to 80% reimbursement** of training costs
- **Up to \$10,000 per employee**
- **Up to \$300,000 per employer per fiscal year**

This funding can be used to train workers for:

- New or existing roles
- Adapting to new lines of business
- Transitioning workers from other companies affected by changes in the forest sector

### Who Can Apply?

The ETG is open to **small, medium, and large businesses** across B.C., including those in rural and forestry-dependent communities. Employers must apply directly using a **Business BCeID** and submit their application through the **Skills Training Grants System**.

Training must lead to:

- A **new job** for an unemployed person, or
- **Increased job security or advancement** for a current employee

### Apply Early

Employers are encouraged to apply **before training begins** to ensure eligibility. If training starts before approval and the application is denied, the employer is responsible for all costs.

### Learn More

To explore how your organization can benefit from this funding and to view eligible training programs, visit:

[Forest Sector Supports – WorkBC](#)

[B.C. Employer Training Grant – WorkBC](#) 