

# **FATALITY ALERT**

## **– PRELIMINARY INFORMATION –**

**BCFSC #2025-06-19**

On June 19th, a worker was fatally injured while tree climbing in the Woods Lagoon area north of Port Hardy, BC. WorkSafeBC and the Coroners Service are currently investigating this incident.

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

This incident is under investigation and details are still to be determined. Contributing factors to the incident are not available during an ongoing investigation.

### **Consider the following safety points:**

1. Tree climbing operations are high-risk. Strictly following safe work and risk assessment procedures are critical to the safe and successful completion of the work.
2. A thorough assessment of the tree that is to be climbed is essential. Make sure the base and main stem of the tree are structurally sound before climbing. If the tree cannot be safely climbed, have an alternative plan in place to complete the work.
3. When rappelling from a tree, the anchor must be chosen carefully. Ensure it is strong enough to support the weight of the worker. Add a safety factor into this assessment as there may be unseen defects in the anchor location.
4. [The regulatory requirements for arborists](#) may not apply to forestry operations but they do provide best practices on how to stay safe while tree climbing. [A separate set of requirements applies to climbers in forestry operations](#). Consider which requirements are applicable to your tree climbing operations.
5. Inspection and maintenance of climbing equipment is critically important. Replace any worn or damaged equipment before use.
6. Remote sites and high-risk work require a well-developed and fully tested safety program. Working alone check-in procedures and emergency response plans must be in place and thoroughly tested through regular drills.
7. Weather, including wind and rain, can negatively impact tree climbing operations. Establish and consistently follow weather shut down criteria.

### **Resources:**

- Link to WorkSafeBC's guide on tree climbing - <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/bulletins/keeping-arborists-safe-during-tree-removal-in-residential-recreational-settings?lang=en>
- Link to OHSR regulations related to Arborists - <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-26-forestry-operations#>