



# SAFETY ALERT & BULLETIN OF THE MONTH

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## Emergency Planning for Hazardous Substances

AOM: 2025-08-20

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulation was updated on Feb. 3, 2025, changing the requirements for emergency planning related to hazardous substances. Hazardous substances are defined as biological, chemical, or physical materials that are hazardous to the health and safety of anyone exposed to them. Substances covered by the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) are considered hazardous substances.

### New Requirements:

- 1) **Employers must complete an inventory** of hazardous substances. Materials in small amounts that wouldn't be dangerous in an emergency don't need to be inventoried.
- 2) **Complete a risk assessment** for each substance in the inventory to determine the risks that would be present in an emergency that involves that material.
- 3) **Update your Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and Safe Work Procedures (SWP)** based on the information in the risk assessment. Typical examples would be updating your ERP for fire or spill response and evacuation procedures.
- 4) **Worker participation** is required in this emergency planning process. Involve workers, the Worker Safety Rep, or the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) in the inventory, risk assessment and any changes to emergency plans or procedures.
- 5) **Consider neighbouring facilities and operations.** If there are hazardous substances stored close to your location, they must be included in your emergency planning.
- 6) **Training and emergency drill requirements** are also part of the updated regulation. Once your plans and procedures are updated, workers must be trained on them. A drill must be done annually and after any significant change to the ERP.

### Resources:

- 1) [WorkSafeBC Backgrounder](#)
- 2) [Hazardous Substances Inventory Template](#)
- 3) [Risk Assessment Template](#)





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## **BCFSC Latest News & Resources**

**New Course – Virtual Instructor Led Basic Incident Investigation** – The regular Basic Incident Investigation training is also available as a requested instructor-led virtual course which is convenient for companies with employees located around the province. It includes a combination of instructor-led virtual meetings and learning activities through BCFSC's online Learning Centre. The training is scheduled as two half-day sessions to provide flexibility for participants who are actively working.

**Forest Safety News** – read the latest issue of the FSN

**FIRS App** – The full version of the BCFSC FIRS App is now available to download from your App store. Use the FIRS App manage forms and documents for safety-related paperwork related to SAFE Companies and COR audit forms management.

## **BCFSC Training:**

**October 6 - 9 | Falling Supervisor – Nelson**

Participants will learn the roles and responsibilities of a falling supervisor and will become familiar with processes used by a falling supervisor to support their due diligence.

**October 9 - 10 | Due Diligence for Forest Supervisors – Kamloops**

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

**October 15 - 16 | Due Diligence for Forest Supervisors – Cranbrook**

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

**October 16 - 17 | Due Diligence for Forest Supervisors – Campbell River**

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

**October 17 | Basic Incident Investigation – Cranbrook**

This course provides a basic understanding of the methods, tools, and processes needed to conduct an incident investigation.

**October 23 - 24 | Due Diligence for Forest Supervisors – Prince George**

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

**October 23 - 24 | Leadership and Communication for Forest Supervisors – Nelson**

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

Refer to the [Training section](#) for more information on upcoming classroom training and costs.

## **Worker Assessment and Training**

Each forestry occupation requires different knowledge and skillsets to perform the job at hand. BCFSC worked with industry to develop competency-based standards, training, and assessment tools to help employers evaluate workers and complete on-the-job training.

Take a look at our [FREE assessment forms](#) for Basic Forest Workers, Yarding, Mechanized Harvesting and Road Building.

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