



SAFETY ALERT & BULLETIN OF THE MONTH

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Salvage Harvesting Burnt Timber

AOM: 2025-09-12

Wildfires burn significant amounts of trees each year and post-fire there are opportunities to salvage the timber. Working in burnt stands is a different working environment with different hazards. This alert will highlight some of these hazards with suggestions on ways to manage them. Consider updating your company's safety program with new procedures related to logging burnt trees.

Safety Considerations:

- Many trees in a burnt stand will be dead, dry and brittle. This will lead to more breakage and blowdown which can create issues with increased slash and ground debris. Take steps to ensure the stability of machines, especially on steep slopes. Take the time to move slash so equipment has contact with stable ground.
- Burnt trees may be dangerous and can fall unexpectedly. They may have burnt root systems or damaged stems which can be difficult to detect. Working outside of the machine should only be done in areas that are cleared of these danger trees.
- Ash pits are areas where a deep-seated fire has burnt deeply into the ground and left a depression that is filled with ash. These pits can be large and sometimes difficult to detect. Any significant ash pits should be marked on the map and their location communicated to other workers on site.
- Holdover fires may be a concern in areas with drought conditions. Even if you're logging in the winter, you may encounter a fire burning underneath the surface. Make sure your Emergency Response Plan has procedures for dealing with these holdover fires.
- Ash and the black dust from charred wood become airborne easily. Both are hazards that may cause respiratory illness if inhaled. Take steps to protect your airways like keeping windows closed and keeping the machine's climate control system in good order.
- Most of the logs produced from these stands will be dry and light-weight. Do not overload log trucks in order to try and make weight. Overloading can result in loads that are too high and unstable.
- Sites that have experienced large scale wildfires can be more susceptible to high water runoff, flooding events and landslides. Consider establishing rainfall shutdown procedures if you don't have them in place already.





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- Equipment maintenance, such as cleaning air filters and heat exchangers, needs to be done more frequently in wildfire salvage operations. The increased breakage and debris will mean more frequent cleaning around booms, cylinders and hydraulic hoses.
- The black carbon dust can conduct electricity and may cause electrical problems if allowed to build up. This char dust is also abrasive and that may result in more wear and tear on equipment, like saw teeth.

Resources:

- 1) [Risk Advisory – Exposure to Ash During Logging Operations After Wildfires](#)
- 2) [WorkSafeBC Guideline - Danger Tree Assessment in High Density Stands](#)



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 – Campbell River](#)

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



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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.

November 4 - 7 | [Falling Supervisor – Campbell River](#)

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.

November 7 | [Basic Incident Investigation – Prince George](#)

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

November 7 | [Basic Incident Investigation – Kamloops](#)

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

November 13 - 14 | [Leadership and Communication for Forest Supervisors – Kamloops](#)

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

November 14 | [Basic Incident Investigation – Campbell River](#)

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

November 24 - 25 | [Leadership and Communication 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.

November 27 - 28 | [Leadership and Communication 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.

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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