

FOREST SAFETY NEWS

DECEMBER 2025 • Issue 4 / vol. 12



2025 CEO Report

By Rob Moonen

In the spirit of full disclosure, I've taken the opportunity to reprint and update this article from a previous edition of FSN. In my role, I often get asked what keeps me up at night which is why I want to reinforce the importance of working collectively as the sector continues to navigate these challenging times.

In times of uncertainty and tragedy, it's difficult not to get distracted from our daily work activities. The past few years have presented the forest industry with some unique challenges. These challenges have put additional pressure on all forestry workers and can cause high-production pressure and a rush to get the work done once workers are back on the block or in the production environment.

As we continue to navigate these uncertain times, consider the following points to ensure that production pressures are effectively managed to ensure safe operations:

- It's tempting to work as much and as fast as possible when work is available; however, don't take shortcuts. Although shortcuts can lead to temporary benefits, they also greatly increase the risk of a serious incident, or worse. During these times, it's important that we lookout for one another. As leaders, co-workers and colleagues, we all have a role to play to help mitigate risks – if you see something, say something and do something.

During challenging times, actions from leadership become even more important and define the culture and set the tone of how work gets done. As leaders, managers, and supervisors, it's important to remember what gets recognized, gets repeated and what we permit, we promote.

- After long shutdowns, the pressures to "get 'er done" can be great. Companies want to get roads built, timber fallen, and logs to market. Workers want to get some decent paycheques to the bank. Other phases that follow behind you may want you to keep working so they can keep working. When it starts blowing, snowing, and raining hard, those pressures can influence decisions around weather related shutdowns that should be based on worker safety. It is important to maintain your shutdown criteria. Money problems can be very real, but not worth risking you or your fellow workers safety over.
- Increased pressure and additional work can be physically and mentally tiring for all workers. Monitor yourself and others around you for signs of fatigue. Be self-aware and think critically about the decisions you are making. Stress and fatigue can lead to poor decision making, potentially leading to safety issues. Be aware and adjust your work as required.

Welcome to the Winter 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@bcforestsafes.org or call 1-877-741-1060.

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- Stress and uncertainty can cause mental health concerns. People can turn to drugs and alcohol to help cope or self-medicate. Be aware and have tools and resources available to help you and your workers deal with these issues before they become bigger problems. There are resources available on BCFSC's Mental Health Resource Page.
- Work with your team of workers, suppliers, subcontractors, and clients. Communicate the challenges you face so they are aware and use their knowledge and experience to come up with potential solutions. This may alleviate some of the pressure and help to focus on safe operations.

As an industry, we've demonstrated that when we work together, we can accomplish great things. Let's ensure that we continue to focus on what's in our control to meet our collective goal of **ensuring every forestry worker goes home safe. Every day.** 🌲



What's New

Here is the latest on what we have to offer since September 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](#).

BCFSC Website Survey – weigh in our 2026 website refresh. Share your feedback and let us know how we can improve our website.

Training Calendar – Plan your 2026 safety training. Our in-person training calendar is now fully loaded on the BCFSC website. Take a look and see what's in store for 2026. Is there a course you see that you might want delivered directly to your organization? We also provide requested training bringing courses directly to your preferred location at a convenient time that works for you.

Share Your Manufacturing Safety Innovations – Manufacturing Safety Innovations play a vital role in keeping workplaces safe—and sharing those ideas can make a real difference across the industry. BCFSC is looking to highlight manufacturing safety innovations through eblasts, social media, and the BCFSC website to inspire safer practices on the job.

If you've developed or come across a safety innovation that others could benefit from, we'd love to hear about it! **Submit your idea** by emailing Bill Laturnus at blaturnus@bcforestsafesafe.org.

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 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.

Interior Logging Association (ILA) – the ILA insider is a 1/4ly newsletter featuring timber harvesting news, information and updates throughout BC.



Happy Holidays
BC Forest Safety

Extending you our very best for a **safe, healthy and happy holiday season.**

BCFSC Holiday Office Hours

Wednesday, Dec 24	8am – 3:00pm
Thursday, Dec 25	CLOSED
Friday, Dec 26	CLOSED
Wednesday, Dec 31	8am – 3:00pm
Thursday, Jan 1	CLOSED
Friday, Jan 2	8am – 4:30pm
Regular hours resume	

Truck Loggers Association (TLA) – a monthly newsletter and 1/4ly magazine (Truck Logger BC) offering stories from BC provincial forestry perspectives, information and updates.

Western Forestry Contractors' Association – 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 – get the latest information on WorkSafeBC policy and regulation updates, resource development, risk advisories and more.

Help Us Improve Our Website – We Want Your Feedback!

BCFSC is planning a refresh of our website in 2026, and we'd love your input.

Whether you visit our site regularly or just occasionally, your experience matters to us. Tell us what works well, and what could be better and give us ideas about features or information you'd like to see added or improved. All of your feedback will help us build a better site that will help meet your needs.

We created a short survey where you can share your thoughts. It will only take a few minutes, and your input will be used to assist in developing a better, more useful and user-friendly site.

We appreciate your time and insights!

[Click here to access the survey](#) or scan the QR Code. 📱



Stay Safe on BC Roads This Winter

Winter weather increases the risk for workers who drive for work. Snow, ice, rain and reduced daylight all contribute to increased crash rates during the colder months. Many incidents are preventable with proper planning, training and equipment.

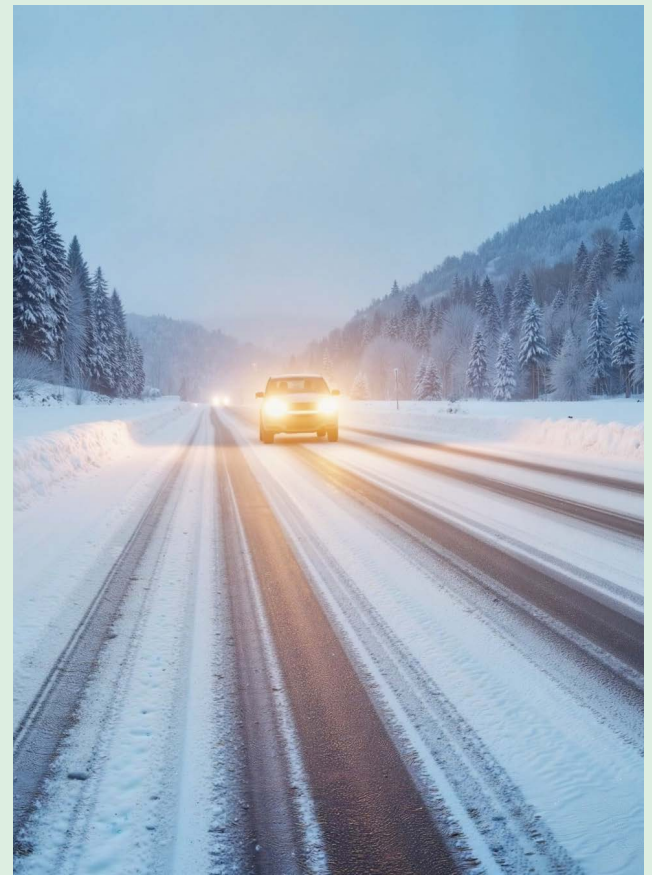
Employers have a legal responsibility to protect workers who drive for work and ensure their safety while on the road. The [Winter Driving Safety campaign](#) from Road Safety at Work has practical tools, training and resources to help you and your workers prepare for the challenges of winter driving.

Free Resources for Employers

- [Winter Driving Safety Planning Toolkit](#)
- [Tailgate Meeting Guide](#)
- [Winter Driving Employer Checklist](#)
- [Winter Driving Safe Work Procedures Template](#)
- [Online Course: Making Winter Driving Safer for Your Employees](#)

Free Resources and Training for Drivers

- [Winter Driving Safety Tips](#)
- [Winter Driving Quiz](#)
- [Online Course: Become a Safer Winter Driver](#)



Complete a course by December 19, 2025 for a chance to win a set of winter tires from Kal Tire! 🏆

Danger Tree Blasting Survey

The Danger Tree Blasting Committee was established in 2021 to explore initiatives that make danger tree blasting an accessible, efficient and effective tool for reducing risk to hand fallers and other forestry workers in Coastal operations.

Currently, there are fewer than 10 certified danger tree blasters in BC. The committee has recently examined possible reasons for the decline in certifications and believes it may be linked to explosive storage regulations or the certification and renewal requirements set by WorkSafeBC.

To gain better insight into current practices, barriers and benefits of danger tree blasting, the committee has created a survey for active fallers. The information gathered will help guide future decisions on regulations, training and in-field support for fallers. If you are an active faller, please consider completing the survey.

[Click here](#) to take the Danger Tree Blasting Survey or scan the QR Code to access. 📱



2026 BC Forestry Conferences & Events

Start planning for 2026 and register for these upcoming forestry-related conferences. 📅



Conference / Event	Dates	Location	Information & Registration
81st Annual Truck Loggers Association (TLA) Convention	Jan. 14 - 16	Vancouver, BC	www.tla.ca/convention/
23rd Annual BC Natural Resources Forum	Jan. 20 - 22	Prince George, BC	www.bcnaturalresourcesforum.com
2026 Western Forestry Contractors Association Conference & Trade Show	Jan. 28 - 30	Victoria, BC	www.wfca.ca
2026 Forest Professionals of BC Conference & AGM	Feb. 4 – 6	Vancouver, BC	www.fpbc.ca/professional-development/continuing-professional-development/annual-forestry-conference
2026 Council of Forest Industries (COFI) Convention	Apr. 8 - 10	Vancouver, BC	www.cofi.org
2026 BC First Nations Forestry Conference	May 12 - 24	Kelowna, BC	www.forestrycouncil.ca
2026 BCFSC Interior Safety Conference	Apr. 30	Kamloops, BC	www.bcforestsafe.org/news-events/safety-conferences/
68th Annual Interior Logging (ILA) Conference	Apr. 30 - May 2	Kamloops, BC	www.interiorlogging.org
10th Annual Indigenous Resource Opportunities Conference	June 3 - 5	Nanaimo, BC	www.bciroc.ca
2026 Vancouver Island Safety Conference	Oct. 17	Nanaimo, BC	www.bcforestsafe.org/news-events/safety-conferences/

Drones, Done Safely: Practical Ways RPAS Reduce Risk in B.C. Forestry

By Taylor Alexander, Stinson Aerial Services Inc., Community Development & Digital Media Specialist

Forestry is full of places where people would rather not traverse: steep, broken slopes; active cable corridors; fire-damaged blocks where snags and ash pits wait underfoot. Small uncrewed aircraft, also known as drones or RPAS, are already shifting who needs to be there and for how long. When they're integrated with solid procedures and flown in compliance with Transport Canada's aviation rules, drones are proving to be a simple, practical way to cut exposure and improve decision-making on forestry blocks.

The clearest safety win is during line work and layout on steep ground. Instead of sending a crew across gullies and bluffs to pull light messenger line, a drone can lift and place a quarter-inch rope along a planned corridor in minutes. That reduces the time people spend traversing hazardous terrain and keeps them out of the fall line. The drone doesn't replace a qualified crew though; it minimizes where the riskiest minutes happen. Operators stage from stable ground with clear egress, while the aircraft effortlessly does the scrambling.

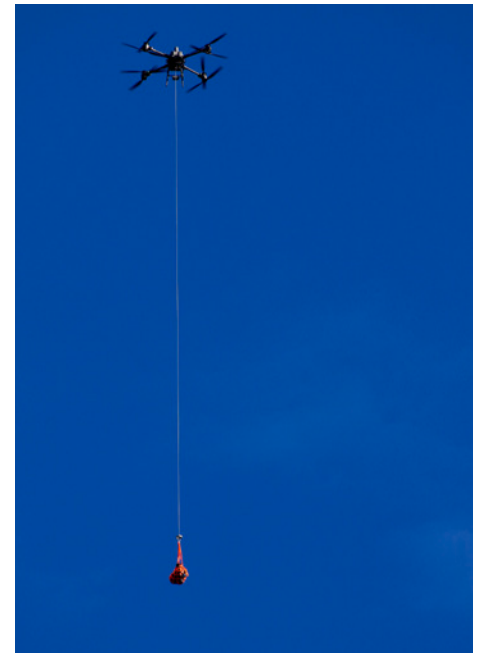
Post-fire and windthrow salvage is another area where Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) make a measurable difference. Overhead imagery and low-level video help supervisors see snag clusters, root-plate instability and unburned fuel pockets before anyone steps foot. Thermal cameras can spot residual heat, guiding where crews should and should not work. Even a quick, low altitude scouting flight can refine the day's plan: where to park, where to punch in, where to start and where to

set up exclusion zones. That sort of decision-support is safety in practice—less wandering and fewer surprises.

Compliance matters, because “safe” and “legal” are inseparable. In Canada, forestry drone operations are governed by Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs) Part IX. Most field tasks happen within visual line of sight, which means the pilot (and, ideally, an assistant visual observer) keep the aircraft in continuous unaided view while managing air and ground risks. Beyond visual line of sight requires special authorization and additional mitigations. Crews should treat flight planning like any other critical risk control: confirm airspace and altitude limits; identify nearby helipad, floatplane or rotary-wing activity; set geofences and lost-link actions; and anchor operations to a written safe work procedure that fits the site.

Bringing drones into existing safety systems is straightforward if you use the roles and checklists people already understand. A pilot in command is responsible for the aircraft and the decision to launch or abort. A visual observer watches airspace, keeps the crew honest about distance and altitude and helps with radio calls. The project lead ties drone tasks to the job hazard assessment: why the flight is needed, what risk it reduces, where the no-go areas are and how information will be shared with the crew. A five-minute tailgate discussing weather, winds, terrain traps, air traffic, abort criteria turns a handy gadget into a controlled activity.

Good habits prevent common incidents. Batteries lose performance in cold and heat; keep them conditioned and set conservative



reserves for climbs and headwinds. Propellers are consumables; inspect and replace them before they demand to be replaced. Forestry sites are RF-noisy—trucks, radios, metal and trees—so choose launch points with solid GPS and link quality and avoid flying behind ridges or dense stems that can shadow the control link. Smoke, ash and precipitation degrade both sensors and human judgement; if visibility would stop a manned aircraft, it should stop a small one too.

Drones also change how we communicate risk. Live video to a tablet lets supervisors and fallers look at the same hazard from the same angle before anyone moves. Quick orthomosaics produced between coffee and lunch can mark danger trees and travel lanes on a map that every crew leader carries. Simple photos taken as-built guyline anchors, blocks, anchors and crossings become reliable records for close-out and



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future audits. None of this is about collecting “cool data.” It’s about removing debate when time and terrain are working against you.



Finally, success comes from keeping drone work humble and useful. Start with a short list of high-value tasks—line placement, hazard scouting, landing-zone checks, water-source recon—and build repeatable routines around them. Choose aircraft that are simple to maintain and easy to see against the canopy. Train more than one person so vacations and wildfire season don’t halt the program. And measure what matters: minutes averted on slope, fewer slips and trips during layout, fewer unplanned entries into high-risk pockets. If the numbers move, the culture follows.

Forestry will never be risk-free, but it can be smarter about where risks live. Drones, used within the rules and inside a strong safety system, are one more way to keep feet out of bad ground and eyes on the right problems. That’s a practical definition of safer work and one crew’s can feel by the end of the shift. 🌲

18th Annual Vancouver Island Safety Conference Highlights

The 18th Annual Vancouver Island Safety Conference (VISC) took place on Saturday, November 1, 2025, in Nanaimo, BC, welcoming 300 forestry professionals from across the province. This year’s theme, **“Facing the Future Together: The Human Side of Safety”** featured three keynote speakers and several industry presentations that were aimed at enhancing and improving safety practices in the forestry sector to help us all meet our collective goal of **every forestry worker goes home safe. Every day.**

Steve Howe was the first keynote speaker delivering a raw and inspiring message about the real-life consequences of workplace safety decisions. In his presentation, “Workplace Safety: What’s Your Why,” Steve shared his personal story of surviving a catastrophic logging accident and walked us through the physical, emotional and personal impacts that not only affected him but also his family and friends. Through vulnerability and powerful storytelling, Steve challenged leaders to recognise their influence, encouraged workers to find their personal “why,” and urged everyone to believe that working injury-free is possible.

His message was clear: safety isn’t just about compliance; it’s about protecting what matters most. He reminded us that every choice we make creates ripples and we all have the power to choose the right path. We just need to trust our instincts and have the courage to act on them.

The next keynote speaker was **Sylvia Marusyk** who delivered a lively and insightful keynote called “Surviving the Thriving: A Guide to Self-health” which explored how mental health directly impacts workplace safety.



With humor and science, she explained how chronic stress affects brain function, decision-making and hazard awareness and if it goes unaddressed, it can put workers at great risk of injury.

Her core message was “your issues live in your tissues” meaning mental and physical health are deeply connected and if stress is allowed to build up, it won’t just affect performance, it will directly impact safety. Sylvia shared practical tools for calming the nervous system and gave us tools on how to build empathy in workplace teams to help create safer and healthier workplaces.

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Her talk offered a fresh perspective on safety, reminding us that when we take care of our mental health, we protect ourselves and those around us.

Justin Brien closed the conference with a powerful and emotional keynote, sharing his personal journey through depression, addiction and recovery. From years of struggling in silence to finding purpose and rebuilding his life, Justin's story highlighted the importance of asking for help, finding your "why," and doing the inner work to heal.

He spoke openly about the impact of untreated mental health and substance use and how small daily choices, like journaling, gratitude and self-compassion, can lead to big changes. His message was clear: recovery is possible and no one has to go through it alone.

Throughout the day, additional presentations reinforced how leadership, inclusion and collaboration are essential to building safer, stronger workplaces in forestry. **Chief Councillor John Jack, from the Huu-ay-aht First Nations**, spoke about integrating Indigenous values, respect, interconnectedness and care for future generations into safety and business practices to support long-term community resilience and economic sustainability. **D'Arcy Henderson of Mosaic Forest Management** called for a shift from reactive safety to a proactive culture where safety is a shared value across all levels of an organization. **Elise Kobylanski and Colleen Skinner from WorkSafeBC** offered practical guidance on return-to-work obligations, emphasizing the importance of early communication and collaboration. **Marla Guldbransen (BCFSC) and Nicole Arkle (Gorman Group)** highlighted how diversity, equity and inclusion are not just values, they're smart workforce strategies that strengthen teams and improve safety. Together, these insights reminded us that safety, respect and resilience must be at the heart of how we work and grow as an industry.

The VISC Steering Committee extends its thanks to all volunteers and sponsors who made this conference possible. A comprehensive conference wrap-up will be available on the BCFSC website in early December. 🌲



SAVE THE DATE:

VISC 2026

Saturday, October 17th

**at the Vancouver Island
Conference Centre**

Celebrating the 2025 Leadership in Safety Award Winners

Each year, the BC Forest Safety Council honours individuals who go above and beyond to make forestry safer for everyone. Since 2008, the Leadership in Safety Awards have recognised outstanding contributions in three key areas: harvesting, manufacturing and lifetime achievement.

These awards honour people who lead by example—those who bring fresh ideas, foster a strong safety culture and consistently put the well-being of others first. This year's recipients carry on that tradition with inspiring dedication, hands-on leadership and a deep commitment to safety across BC's forest sector.

Award Categories

- **Cary White Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award**

Presented to someone who has shown a long-standing commitment to improving safety awareness, expanding safety knowledge and building a lasting culture of safety in the forestry industry.

- **Forest Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP)**

Recognizes an individual or group who has made a significant contribution to safety in forest harvesting operations—whether through innovative ideas, strong leadership or consistent efforts to improve workplace safety.

- **Manufacturing Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP)**

Honours an individual or team who has made a notable impact on safety in wood products manufacturing, demonstrating leadership and initiative in creating safer work environments.

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2025 Award Recipients

Cary White Memorial Lifetime Achievement Award

Recipient: Bjarne Nielsen – Bear Safety Services Ltd.

Bjarne Nielsen has spent more than 25 years improving safety in BC's forestry industry, including 18 years as a WorkSafeBC Prevention Officer. As a Canadian Registered Safety Professional (CRSP), Bjarne has worked tirelessly to prevent workplace accidents, mentor others and build a culture of safety that's grounded in respect and collaboration.

He's served as an instructor, auditor and programme developer and his influence has reached across the province. Known for his warmth, integrity and unwavering commitment, Bjarne has helped countless individuals and organisations elevate their safety practices. His legacy is one of compassion, knowledge and action—and this award is a tribute to the lives he's impacted and the future he's helped shape.

Forest Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award

Recipient: Dale Jones – Operations Superintendent, Tolko Industries Ltd – Heffley Creek

Dale Jones is being recognised for more than 30 years of leadership in forest safety. As Operations Superintendent at Tolko's Heffley Creek division, Dale brings a practical, common-sense approach to safety that resonates with crews and colleagues alike.

He's known for his calm, honest communication and his ability to foster a culture where safety is part of everyday thinking. Dale's influence extends well beyond his own team, inspiring others across the company to take ownership of safety and continuously improve. This award celebrates his lasting impact and the example he sets for others in the industry.

Manufacturing Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award

Recipient: Shane Norbury – Red Seal Millwright, Western Forest Products – Chemainus Sawmill Division

Shane Norbury has been a driving force behind safety improvements at the Chemainus Sawmill. As a Red Seal Millwright and long-time member of the site's safety committee, Shane leads by example—always putting the well-being of his coworkers first.

From spearheading safety initiatives to ensuring workstations are safe and ergonomic, Shane's hands-on approach and attention to detail have made a real difference. His approachable nature and commitment to shared responsibility have helped build a strong safety culture at the mill. This award recognizes Shane's dedication and the positive impact he's had on his workplace.

Congratulations to all of this year's award recipients! Your leadership, care and commitment continue to make BC's forestry industry safer and stronger.

Want to recognise a safety leader in your organisation?

Nominations for the 2026 Leadership in Safety Awards open on January 12, 2026. Visit our website to learn more about how to nominate someone who's making a difference in forest safety. 🌲



WorkSafeBC Updates:

2026 Research Competitions Are Now Open

WorkSafeBC's Research Grants Program is now accepting applications for its 2026 research competitions. This program supports innovative research in occupational health and safety and work disability to provide insight and solutions for issues faced by workers, employers, the workplace and WorkSafeBC.

If you have a research idea that could help improve workplace health and safety, submit your idea for consideration through one of WorkSafeBC's research awards.

Visit [WorkSafeBC Research Services](#) to learn more. 📄

Ergonomics Day Webinar Recap

On October 16, 2025, WorkSafeBC hosted an *Ergonomics Day* webinar, highlighting innovative approaches to workplace health and safety. The event featured engaging presentations, including UBC's Journey to Success with Abby Overduin and Kate Allan, a session on Participatory Ergonomics at K-Line Trailers that explored the "challenges of your job" approach, and Ergonomics is Evolving: How Tech & AI Impact Practice with Will Thomas from the Manufacturing Safety Alliance.

To learn more about ergonomics in the workplace and access free resources, visit WorkSafeBC's [Ergonomics page](#) or contact WorkSafeBC's Human Factors team at humanfactors@worksafebc.com. 📄

Employers in BC are required to support workers' injury claims

Under the *Workers Compensation Act*, employers must not discourage or prevent a worker from reporting a workplace injury or illness, filing or maintaining a compensation claim, or receiving compensation. [Understand your responsibilities as an employer](#) when workers are injured. 📄

Workplace Psychological Health and Safety

Managing psychological health and safety in the workplace is as important as managing physical health and safety.

Workplaces with a focus on both physical and psychological health and safety experience stronger employee engagement, greater productivity and decreased turnover. Workers experience less conflict and higher morale and are more committed to ensuring the health and safety of their workplace.

As an employer, it's your responsibility to address psychological health and safety and the factors that are within the control, responsibility or influence of the workplace.

Visit [WorkSafeBC's website](#) to learn how to spot, prevent and manage psychological hazards in the workplace. 📄

Manufacturing Safety and Serious Injury Reduction

October was Manufacturing month and WorkSafeBC focussed on drawing attention to manufacturing as a high-risk industry, and the need for employers to ensure health and safety systems are in place to protect workers. With a serious injury rate 44% higher than the BC average, manufacturing remains one of the province's higher-risk sectors.

"Preventing injuries in manufacturing requires more than awareness — employers need to proactively identify hazards and put controls in place to protect workers," said Todd McDonald, Head of Prevention Services at WorkSafeBC. "Involving workers in this process, and ensuring ongoing training and supervision, is also critical."

The most common types of incidents were overexertion, being struck by or against objects, falls on the same level and getting caught in machinery or equipment. Yet another key concern for manufacturers is combustible dust, which can pose serious explosion and fire hazards if not properly managed.

New occupational health and safety regulations for combustible dust are expected to take effect as early as 2026, and will require employers to test, assess and control dust hazards, reinforcing the importance of good housekeeping and hazard recognition.

WorkSafeBC Resources for Wood Products Manufacturing

[Sawmills](#)

[Shake and Shingle](#)

[Plywood and Panel Board](#)

[Value-added Wood Products](#) 📄

Policy Consultations and Public Hearings

Proposed Changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation

[Part 8, Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment — Respirators: Face seal](#)

Feedback Submission Deadline – Friday, December 12, 2025 by 4:30pm

For more information visit [WorkSafeBC Public Hearings and Consultations](#). 📄