

FOREST SAFETY

MARCH 2026 • Issue 1 / vol. 13 **NEWS**

Supporting Mental Health in BC's Forestry Sector with Connection to Care

For generations, the BC forestry sector has been characterized by unwavering resilience and grit. But over the past several years, that resilience has been tested. Communities across British Columbia continue to feel the impact of mill curtailments, shutdowns, workforce reductions, unstable production schedules and ongoing economic instability across the industry. Amid these pressures, one issue has become impossible to ignore: the urgent need to support the mental health of BC's forestry workers.

Mental health challenges are now the number one cause of disability claims in Canada, and more than 500,000 Canadians are currently unable to work due to mental health related concerns. Yet the gap between struggle and support remains wide. Over 50% of working Canadians experiencing mental health challenges are hesitant to speak up, often due to stigma, fear of job repercussions or the need to keep working through it for a steady paycheque. In forestry, those fears can be even more pronounced.

For workers in harvesting, silviculture, log hauling, manufacturing and wood pellet operations, the hidden demands of day-to-day life and the current state of the economic climate can take a deep emotional toll that is compounded by job insecurity and family stress, rapidly changing work conditions, long hours and physical fatigue, and reduced community health services in affected forestry towns.

These overlapping pressures create a perfect storm for mental health challenges, yet many workers continue to push through without realizing how much they're carrying. Feelings of anxiety, irritability, depression, sleep disruption and emotional exhaustion can indicate that workers may need support, even if they don't fully recognize it themselves. That's why now, more than ever, prioritizing mental health is critically important.

Welcome to the Spring 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@bcforestsafesafe.org or call 1-877-741-1060.

What's Inside:

- 1 - 11 **Harvesting Safety**
- 12 **Work-Related Deaths & Injuries**
- 13 **SAFE Companies**
- 14 **Falling**
- 15 - 17 **Transportation Safety**
- 18 - 19 **Manufacturing Safety**
- 20 - 23 **Training**
- 24 - 26 **Health & Wellness**
- 27 **Kid's Corner**

Continued on page 2...



MONDAY - FRIDAY 8AM - 8PM

778-247-2273 (CARE)

Connection to care is a **FREE phone service providing anonymous and confidential support** to BC Forestry workers.



A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN:

BC ASSOCIATION
of CLINICAL
COUNSELLORS

BC MUNICIPAL
SAFETY Association

BC Forest Safety



Your mental health and wellbeing matters.
ConnectionToCare.ca





Continued from page 1...

Connection to Care: Free, Confidential Help for Every BC Forestry Worker

Recognizing the growing need for accessible support, the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) has partnered with the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC) and the BC Municipal Safety Association (BCMSA) to introduce **Connection to Care**, a free, anonymous and confidential mental health call in program available to every forestry worker throughout British Columbia, regardless of their role, experience or sector. Whether someone is worried about job uncertainty, struggling with family pressures, feeling overwhelmed at work or just not feeling like themselves, **Connection to Care** can help.

Connection to Care provides:

- **Accessible support** - call **778-247-2273 (CARE)** to speak with a trained mental health professional. The service is available **Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 8:00pm (PST)**.
- **Immediate access to trained professionals** - support is provided by Registered Clinical Counsellors (RCCs) and graduate level counselling students under clinical supervision.
- **A safe, anonymous, stigma free space** where callers can talk through personal, family or work challenges without judgment with trained professionals.
- **Support before crisis happens** - you do not need to be in crisis to call—early conversations prevent issues from escalating. Sometimes a conversation is all it takes.
- **Guidance and resources** - counsellors can offer next step recommendations, tools and referrals when needed.

BC's forestry workers have always shown exceptional strength but mental health affects everything: decision making, focus, relationships, physical safety and the ability to work productively and safely. When workers feel supported, workplaces become safer, families become stronger and communities become more resilient. The Connection to Care program will ensure forestry workers receive the support they deserve.

You Don't Have to Carry This Alone

Reaching out is not a sign of weakness; it is an act of strength. A simple phone call can make all the difference. If you or someone you work with could benefit from support, please call:

Connection to Care at 778 247 2273 (CARE) | Monday–Friday, 8:00am–8:00pm

Connection to Care is proudly supported by the Truck Loggers Association, Western Forestry Contractors Association, Interior Logging Association, United Steelworkers, Wood Pellet Association of Canada and Council of Forest Industries. 🌲



Celebrating Leadership at BCFSC



Rob Moonen

The BC Forest Safety Council is marking an important moment in its commitment to BC's Forest sector as one chapter closes and another begins. With the upcoming retirement of long time CEO Rob Moonen and the appointment of Cherie Whelan as the organization's next CEO, we reflect on Rob's lasting contributions and look ahead with confidence as the organization moves forward under Cherie's capable leadership.

Rob Moonen will retire effective March 31, 2026, following 16 years of dedicated service to BCFSC, including the last 10 years as CEO. During his tenure, Rob guided the organization through significant growth and transformation. Under his leadership, BCFSC strengthened its role as a trusted voice for health and safety in British Columbia's forest sector, expanded its mandate to include forest products manufacturing and enhanced training and advisory services across the province.

Rob's deep knowledge of forestry, combined with his collaborative leadership style, helped build strong relationships with industry, workers, unions and government. His commitment to continuous improvement and prevention has supported meaningful progress toward eliminating fatalities and serious injuries. Rob leaves behind a solid foundation, a dedicated team and an organization well positioned to continue advancing safety across the sector.

"I extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors, staff, contractors, trainers and industry members for their unwavering support and dedication. It's been an honour to serve and lead this organization and our collective cause over the many years. Every person in our industry has a role to play in achieving our mission and together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of forestry workers across British Columbia. Together, we have made and will continue to make a significant difference in ensuring every worker goes home safe, every day."

On April 1, 2026, Cherie Whelan will join BCFSC as the new Chief Executive Officer. Cherie brings more than 20 years of experience in the safety sector and a strong connection to the organization, having previously served as Director of SAFE Companies at BCFSC. Most recently, she held the role of CEO with the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association.



Cherie Whelan

Rob shared his perspective, stating "Cherie is an exceptional leader and is well respected in our industry. She has a deep understanding of the opportunities and challenges in the forest sector and is well positioned to lead BCFSC into its next chapter."

Cherie is widely recognized for her strategic leadership, collaborative approach and commitment to strengthening safety culture. Her experience spans governance, operations, program development, stakeholder engagement and team leadership. She is known for empowering people, building strong partnerships and keeping safety efforts focused on what industry truly needs.

"I'm genuinely excited to be coming back to the BC Forest Safety Council as CEO," said Cherie. "I've worked with this team before and know how strong the relationships are, how committed the staff are, and how much insight the advisory groups bring to keeping the work focused on what industry really needs. I'm looking forward to working with D'Arcy Henderson and the Board to build on the solid foundation Rob Moonen has created, keep the momentum going, strengthen collaboration, and get after the work of improving safety across British Columbia...with a little energy and enthusiasm along the way!"

BCFSC thanks Rob Moonen for his years of service and leadership and looks forward to the next chapter under Cherie Whelan's guidance as the organization continues its mission to support forestry safety. 🌲



What's New

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

Connection to Care – This mental health assistance program is a FREE, anonymous and confidential phone service designed to support forestry workers across British Columbia. **Call 778-247-2273 (CARE), Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 8:00pm (PST)** to speak with a trained mental health professional.

New CEO - On April 1st, Cherie Whelan will join BCFSC as the new Chief Executive Officer. Cherie brings more than 20 years of experience in the safety sector. She was the previous Director of SAFE Companies and most recently, the CEO of the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association.

EMAP (Enhanced Maintenance Audit Protocol) – This is a new BASE maintenance audit tool designed for certain qualifying BASE sized companies to help improve Safety Management Systems and increase safety performance. Contact SAFE Companies for more information.

BCFSC Forestry Blasting Program – This program is now available and is designed for individuals involved in blasting operations within forestry environments. The program offers three courses at no cost. Visit our website to [learn more](#).

BCFSC Trainer Course Relaunch – Our FREE Trainer course has been updated with improved visuals and revised content to help supervisors and trainers conduct effective on-the-job and classroom-based training.

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 Laturus at blaturus@bcforestsafe.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 e-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.
- **Truck Loggers Association (TLA)** – a monthly newsletter and 1/4ly magazine (Truck Logger BC) offering stories from BC provincial forestry perspectives, information and updates.
- **Interior Logging Association** – the ILA insider is a 1/4ly newsletter featuring timber harvesting news, information and updates throughout BC.
- **The Cache - Western Forestry Contractors' Association** – The Cache - The Cache is an online space to share wisdom, experience, information, tools and resources generated by the silviculture community.
- **Wood Pellets 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 – check here for the latest information on WorkSafeBC policy and regulation updates, resource development, risk advisories and more. 📢

Save the Date for the Interior Safety Conference

Thursday, April 30, 2026, in Kamloops, BC

Mark your calendar for the **Interior Safety Conference (ISC)** taking place on Thursday, April 30th, 2026 at the Coast Kamloops Conference Centre, in Kamloops, BC. This annual event is a must-attend for BC forestry professionals, offering a unique opportunity to delve into safety-related issues and learn ways to enhance safety across industry.

The ISC is FREE for anyone who works in any phase of the forest industry from silviculture to harvesting to wood products manufacturing.

This year's theme, **Building Safety Through Shared Experiences**, promises to deliver powerful insights and practical knowledge through a series of compelling presentations by industry experts and speakers.

Featured Speakers

- **Katherine Jones** from Lariat HR Consulting: Katherine will be hosting a session on Mental Health as a Safety System, specifically aimed at supervisors and employers to recognize mental health **concerns and understand their roles in crisis management**.
- **Mike Kay**: A retired trauma paramedic will talk about the importance of understanding your equipment and the initial First Aid treatment for serious injury medivac in remote locations.
- **Chris Miller**: Chris is an Occupational Safety Officer with WorkSafeBC. He will share insights on Prime Contractor regulations in forestry.
- **Darcy Kulai**: A former mill worker will share his life-altering story of being seriously injured on the job while working on the green chain when he was only 20 years old.

Event Highlights

- **Engaging Presentations:** Hear real-life experiences that will help you think about transforming safety in your company.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with fellow professionals and industry leaders.
- **Relevant Safety Information:** Learn about the latest safety practices and innovations.

The ISC is held in conjunction with the Interior Logging Association (ILA) Conference, which is celebrating its **68th Annual AGM and Convention** from April 30 – May 2 in Kamloops, BC. This partnership enhances the value of attending, offering even more opportunities for learning and networking.

Early Bird Registration

Register before **April 1, 2026**, to be automatically entered to win a BCFSC Stanfield and Toque. Spaces are limited, so don't miss out—register early to secure your spot!

Register Online or scan the QR code to access the registration link.



Join us for a day of learning, sharing, and advancing safety in the forest industry. We look forward to seeing you there!

For sponsorship opportunities, contact the BCFSC at conferences@bcforestsafe.org or by phone at 1-877-741-1060. 🇨🇦



BCFSC Safety Awards: Celebrating Safety Leadership

Each year, the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) shines a spotlight on the people who go above and beyond to make forestry operations safer for everyone. The **BCFSC Leadership in Safety Awards** are more than just recognition—they're a celebration of the commitment, innovation and leadership that help shape a stronger safety culture across BC's Forest industry.

In 2008, BCFSC introduced the Leadership in Safety Awards to recognize individuals already driving meaningful safety improvements in the sector, and for more than 15 years these awards have continued to elevate safety leadership and inspire others across the industry.

These awards honour individuals who lead by example, showing that safety isn't just a policy—it's a core value of the work they do. Whether it's through advocacy, innovation or setting a high standard of safety day in and day out, these award winners truly make a difference in the lives of their coworkers and companies.

Nominate a Safety Leader Today

Nominations are open to anyone in forestry. BCFSC encourages peers, employers and workers to recognize those who are making a difference. Winners are announced each fall at the Vancouver Island Safety Conference.

How to Nominate

Simply email us your nomination to info@bcforestsafe.org and include:

- Nominee's name (first and last)
- Nominee's Job Title
- Nominee's location and employer
- Nomination Category (Cary White Award, Forest Safety MVP or Manufacturing Safety MVP)
- The reason for the nomination (please provide as much detail as possible)
- Your name and email address

The deadline for nominations is Tuesday, September 1, 2026.

Award Categories

• Cary White Memorial Award:

This award recognizes an individual who has shown outstanding safety leadership. Someone who consistently goes above and beyond - offering a helping hand, sharing their experience and using their knowledge to support others in reaching their safety goals. This prestigious award is named in memory of Cary White, a passionate safety advocate who left a lasting legacy in the industry.

• Forest Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award:

This award goes to someone who has shown exceptional commitment to safety in forestry harvesting operations, including silviculture, hand falling, mechanized harvesting, road building or log hauling. It could be a worker, supervisor, manager, safety committee member or company owner that has demonstrated strong leadership in making safety a core part of their daily work.

• Manufacturing Safety Most Valuable Player (MVP) Award:

This award recognizes an individual, team or company who show excellence in leadership, training, innovation and best practices in wood products manufacturing.

These awards remind us that safety is a shared responsibility—and that leadership can come from any level, in any role. By recognizing those who lead with integrity and care, we can continue to build a culture where safety is always front and centre. 🌲



2025 Safety Award Winners

Women in Forestry: Leadership, Experience and Impact

Forestry is a challenging and demanding industry with a strong commitment to safety. Today, more women than ever are building meaningful careers across all areas of the forest sector, from harvesting and manufacturing to leadership roles that shape policy and safety regulations, making important contributions at every level.

Women bring diverse perspectives and valuable experience to forestry, helping strengthen workplaces and drive positive change. Their influence can be seen in the field and at decision making tables across the province. As the industry continues to evolve the contributions of women remain essential to its long term success.

BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) is proud to recognize the women within our organization for their leadership, expertise and dedication to the forest industry. Their knowledge, commitment and passion play a key

role in strengthening safety culture and supporting workers across British Columbia. One example is Cherie Whelan, BCFSC's new CEO, who was featured in February 2022 as part of a Women in Forestry profile. In that interview, Cherie spoke about the value of strong relationships within the sector and the opportunity to make a meaningful difference by supporting worker safety and well being. Her career reflects a deep commitment to collaboration, leadership and advancing safety outcomes across the forest industry.

In March 2024, BCFSC Felling Manager Marla Guldbranson was also featured as a woman in forestry. Marla is widely recognized as an advocate for safe felling practices and worker safety. Her experience and knowledge have made her a trusted voice in the industry and a mentor to others working in this high risk field.

These examples highlight just some of the many women contributing to forestry in British Columbia and serve as a reminder that leadership comes in many forms and supporting women in forestry strengthens the entire industry.

BCFSC encourages you to register for the Women in Forestry 2026 Virtual Summit. This free event is designed to inspire real action and collaboration and will take place on March 5, 2026 at 11:00am EST and will bring together industry leaders and changemakers to exchange ideas, share stories and explore how inclusion drives innovation.

BCFSC encourages you to register for the [Women in Forestry 2026 Virtual Summit](#), taking place on March 5, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. EST. This free event will bring together industry leaders and changemakers to share insights, exchange stories and explore how inclusion fuels innovation. 🌱



WOMEN IN FORESTRY  **FEMMES EN FORESTERIE**

WOMEN IN FORESTRY

VIRTUAL SUMMIT

Join us March 5, 2026

[REGISTER NOW](#)

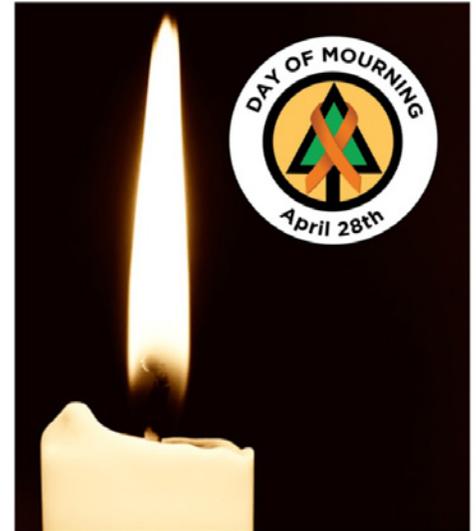
Day of Mourning: Remembering, Reflecting and Renewing Our Commitment to Safety

Every year on April 28, workers, families, employers and communities come together to observe the National Day of Mourning and remember those who have lost their lives to work-related incidents or occupational diseases.

In BC's Forest sector, the impact of serious incidents is felt deeply by families, coworkers and communities. In 2025, 138 BC workers died from a workplace injury or disease including seven fatalities in forestry. The Day of Mourning reminds us that behind every statistic is a person whose life was changed forever and loved ones who continue to carry that loss.

Preventing injuries and fatalities requires a shared commitment to working safely, even when pressures or distractions exist. On April 28th, take time to reflect, talk with your crew and stay committed to safe work practices. The most meaningful way to honour those we have lost is to ensure that every worker goes home safe – every day.

BC Forest Safety Council has several resources to help you observe this important day. Visit our [Day of Mourning resource page](#) to download materials and take part in this important day of remembrance. Or visit the [Day of Mourning website](#) to find a ceremony in your community. 📍



Membership with the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC)

All companies who pay for their BCFSC contribution through a special assessment collected by WorkSafeBC, can apply to become BCFSC members. By becoming a member, you can nominate Board Members and vote for nominated Board Members to fill vacant roles.

To be eligible for BCFSC membership, companies must belong to one of the following WorkSafeBC Classification Units (CU's):

Rate Group	Classification Unit	Description
DR	703002	Brushing and Weeding or Tree Thinning or Spacing
DR	703003	Cable or Hi-Lead Logging
DR	703004	Dry Land Sort
DR	703005	Forest Fire Fighting
DR	703006	Ground Skidding, Horse Logging, or Log Loading
DR	703008	Integrated Forest Management
DR	703009	Log Booming or Marine Log Salvage
DR	703011	Log Processing
DR	703012	Logging Road Construction or Maintenance
DR	703013	Manual Tree Falling and Bucking
DR	703014	Mechanized Tree Falling
DR	703015	Shake Block Cutting
12	703016	Tree Planting and Cone Picking
DR	703019	Helicopter Logging
16	732044	Log Hauling
IS	714022	Sawmill
09	714019	Pressed Board Manufacture (Wood Pellets and MDF)

Becoming a BCFSC member does not involve any additional effort on your part unless you choose to become more involved.

Board members will be nominated and elected by BCFSC members for two-year terms. Efforts will be made to ensure Board members are qualified to serve on the BCFSC Board of Directors by representing industry sectors and/or having industry skills and experience needed to participate on the Board.

As a BCFSC member in good standing, you will be entitled to attend, speak and vote at the Annual General Meeting, elect the Directors and serve on Board Committees. To apply for membership, email us at: membership@bcforestsafesafe.org 📧

Daylight Saving Time is Sunday, March 8, 2026

It's time to *spring forward*! At 2:00am on **Sunday, March 8, 2026**, set your clocks ahead by one hour for the start of Daylight Saving Time (DST). Although DST means more daylight in the evenings, it can also disrupt our sleep patterns and daily routines. Here are some tips to help you make a smooth transition.

How DST Affects Sleep

DST can have a significant impact on our sleep and overall health:

- **Disrupt Sleep Patterns:** The one-hour loss of sleep can throw off your circadian rhythm, leading to grogginess and reduced sleep quality.
- **Impact Health:** Studies have shown that DST can increase the risk of heart attacks, mood swings, and even car accidents due to sleep deprivation.
- **Require Time to Adjust:** It can take several days for your body to adjust to the new schedule, especially if you're a night owl. Give yourself time to adjust.

If Daylight Saving Time is leaving you feeling tired and out of sorts, here are some tips to help manage your fatigue:

1. **Gradual Adjustment:** Start shifting your bedtime and wake-up time by 10-15 minutes earlier a few days before the time change
2. **Morning Light Exposure:** Spend time outside in the morning light to help reset your circadian rhythm
3. **Consistent Sleep Schedule:** Stick to a regular sleep schedule, even on weekends, to help your body adjust more easily
4. **Limit Stimulants:** Avoid caffeine and heavy meals close to bedtime to improve sleep quality
5. **Short Naps:** If you feel very tired, take short naps (20-30 minutes) in the early afternoon to boost your energy without affecting nighttime sleep
6. **Exercise Regularly:** Engage in regular physical activity, but avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime
7. **Prioritize Sleep Hygiene:** Create a relaxing bedtime routine and keep your sleep environment cool, dark, and quiet
8. **Limit Evening Screen Time:** Reduce exposure to screens before bedtime to improve sleep quality.

Even though DST takes time to adjust to, there are also numerous benefits of having more daylight.

1. **Improved Mood and Mental Health:** Exposure to natural light boosts serotonin levels, which helps improve mood and reduce the risk of depression.
2. **Better Sleep:** Natural daylight helps regulate our circadian rhythms, leading to better sleep quality and overall health.
3. **Increased Productivity:** Natural light can enhance concentration and productivity, making it easier to stay focused and alert.
4. **Enhanced Vitamin D Production:** Sunlight is a natural source of vitamin D, which is essential for bone health and immune function.
5. **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Spending time in natural light can help lower stress levels and promote a sense of calm and well-being.

When you set your clocks ahead this year, take care of some important household tasks at the same time:

- **Change Batteries in Smoke Detectors:** Ensure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning properly by replacing their batteries.
- **Check Emergency Supplies:** Review your emergency kit and replace any expired items.
- **Test Home Safety Devices:** Test your home security systems and other safety devices to ensure they are in working order. 🚨



WorkSafeBC Updates:

WorkSafeBC's Average Base Premium Rate Unchanged in 2026

In 2026, WorkSafeBC is returning an estimated \$570 million of surplus funds to employers by pricing premium rates below system costs.

BC employers will see no change to the average base premium rate from WorkSafeBC in 2026. For the ninth consecutive year, WorkSafeBC has set the average base rate at \$1.55 per \$100 of assessable payroll.

Each year, the costs in some industries go up, some go down, and others stay the same. In 2026, 39% percent of employers in BC will experience a decrease in their industry base rate, 47% will see their industry base rate increase, and 14% will see no change.

Given the economic uncertainties facing the province, WorkSafeBC made changes to the maximum increases and decreases in 2026 rates for BC industries, which have normally been capped at 20%. For 2026, rate increases were capped at 10%, while rate decreases were allowed to reach up to approximately 40%. This change is intended to provide greater rate stability for BC employers during challenging economic times.

Read more details on the WorkSafeBC Website. [🔗](#)

WorkSafeBC Board of Directors Approve Amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and the Prevention Manual

At its November 2025 meeting, WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors approved amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and the *Prevention Manual*.

The amendments relate to [Combustible Dusts](#) and [Standards Updates](#). Strikethrough versions of the amendments with explanatory notes can be accessed below. Deletions in the regulatory amendments are identified with a and additions are in bold text and highlighted in yellow.

- Part 6, Substance Specific Requirements, Combustible Dusts; [Approved amendments with explanatory notes](#)

These amendments will come into effect on January 4, 2027.

- Parts 8 and 31, Standards Updates; [Approved amendments with explanatory notes](#)

These amendments will come into effect on April 1, 2026.

The above amendments were posted on WorkSafeBC's website for feedback during the public hearing process. Click on the links to review the feedback for [Combustible Dusts](#) and [Standards Updates](#). [🔗](#)

WorkSafeBC Board of Directors Decisions

On November 14, 2025, WorkSafeBC's Board of Directors revised policies relating to three key areas.

Mental disorders

The policy revisions change the definition of significant work-related stressor and provide guidance on the limits of the labour relations exclusion in the Rehabilitation Services & Claims Manual, Volume II concerning mental disorder claims under section 135 of the Workers Compensation Act.

The revised policies apply to all decisions, including appellate decisions, made on or after March 2, 2026.

Click on the links to review the complete [resolution](#) and a [summary of the key changes](#).

Duration of benefits (retirement age)

Concerning retirement date determinations under section 201 of the Workers Compensation Act, the policy revisions add a reference to the general evidence policies and reword the guidance for workers who are 63 years of age and older on the date of injury to more closely match the policy for workers under 63 in the Rehabilitation Services & Claims Manual, Volume II.

The revised policies apply to all decisions, including appellate decisions, made on or after February 1, 2026.

Click on the links to review the complete [resolution](#) and a [summary of the key changes](#).

Commutations

The primary change made to the revised policy on commutations in the Rehabilitation Services & Claims Manual, Volume II was to increase the monetary threshold for when periodic payments for permanent disability benefits can be automatically commuted to a lump sum payment from \$200 to \$350.

The revised policy applies to all decisions made on or after February 1, 2026.

Click on the link to review the complete [resolution](#). [🔗](#)

WorkSafeBC has Redesigned the Online Injury Reporting Experience

When someone is injured at work, the injury must be reported to WorkSafeBC. For many, reporting an injury marks their very first interaction with WorkSafeBC, often during one of the most stressful moments of their lives.

WorkSafeBC's new online reporting form is designed to support workers at the very beginning of a claim throughout the entire claim process. It makes injury reporting easier and more convenient and you can report your injury online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

[How to Report an Injury and What to Expect](#) will explain how it works. 🗣️

WorkSafeBC has Released Two New Videos that Animate the Claims Journey

Two new animated videos, one for employers and one for workers, outline what to expect after an injury occurs at work and the responsibility of employers and workers to collaborate for a safe return to work.

Watch, share and learn how staying connected to the workplace helps support recovery.

[Worker Video](#) | [Employer Video](#) 🗣️

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. 🗣️

Fast File & Pay - New Verification Options Added

Starting December 2025, new account verification options were added to the Fast File & Pay application to report payroll, including the option to select and answer a security question from a provided list.

If you only need to make a payment, you still need the WorkSafeBC account number.

Visit worksafebc.com/reportandpay to learn more and explore additional ways to report payroll and pay premiums. 🗣️

Payroll Reporting and Premium Payment Have Moved Online

In January 2026, WorkSafeBC's payroll reporting and premium payment forms moved online. With this change, you will no longer need to submit paper forms through the mail, and will be able to enjoy faster, more convenient service by reporting and paying through your online services account at worksafebc.com/onlineservices.

To help you stay on top of deadlines, you'll receive an email notification when it's time to report, so ensure your email address is up-to-date.

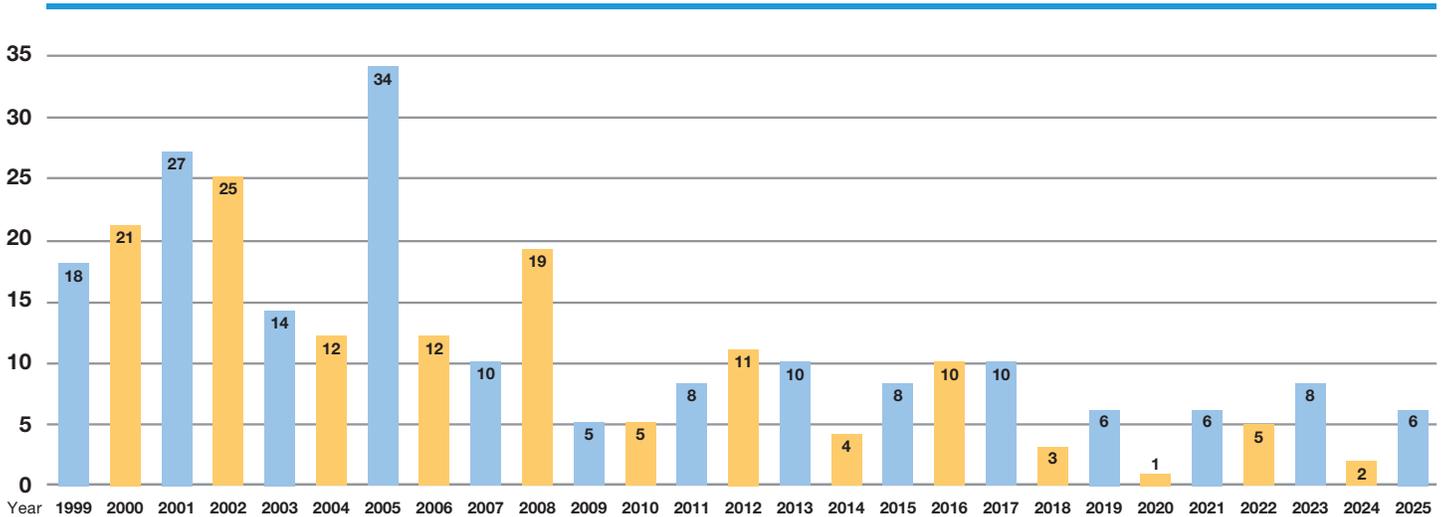
To learn more about the digital delivery of assessments-related documents, visit worksafebc.com/onlinedocuments. 🗣️



Work-Related Deaths & Injuries



WSBC Accepted Harvesting Work-related Death Claims



This information represents the number of harvesting work-related deaths by year in BC, up until February 2026.

Since our last publication, another work related fatality has occurred in the BC forestry industry, bringing the 2025 total to six. We extend our deepest condolences and sympathies to the family and friends of the deceased and to all those affected by this tragic loss.

FATALITIES

Injury: Fatal
Core Activity: Cable or hi-lead logging
Location: Northern BC
Date of Incident: Dec 2025
A worker at a cable yarding operation near Prince George was fatally injured on December 2 when they were struck by a tree being yarded to the roadside.

[Read the BCFSC Fatality Alert](#)

Recent work-related incidents reported to WorkSafeBC

The following sample of work-related incidents recently reported to WorkSafeBC may help prevent similar incidents in your workplace.

HARVESTING

Injury: Injuries to head
Core Activity: Integrated forest management
Location: Vancouver Island/Coastal BC
Date of Incident: Oct 2025
A worker was descending a mobile staircase when they fell, striking the edge of a vehicle service pit before landing in it.

MANUFACTURING

Injury: Close call
Core Activity: Sawmill
Location: BC
Date of Incident: Dec 2025
A fire started at a mill that had been shut down for the holiday season. A worker performing rounds observed smoke coming from a dry valve (fire suppression system) enclosure. The fire department extinguished the fire and no injuries were reported.

Injury: Injury to finger
Core Activity: Sawmill
Location: Interior BC
Date of Incident: Nov 2025
As a worker was stepping over a low-height conveyor, they placed a hand on its guard for balance. One of the worker's fingers went through a small hole in the guard and contacted the chain drive of the conveyor.

Injury: Close call
Core Activity: Pressed wood product manufacture
Location: Northern BC
Date of Incident: Nov 2025
A fire occurred in the blower stack at a pellet mill. The fire suppression system activated and extinguished the fire. The fire department attended the scene.

Injury: Injuries to hand
Core Activity: Veneer or plywood manufacture
Location: BC
Date of Incident: Nov 2025
A worker trying to clear the outfeed of a plywood patch-line activated a limit switch, causing a bundle of plywood (weighing about 2,000 pounds) to move toward the end of the outfeed conveyor. One of the worker's hands was caught between the plywood bundle and the conveyor end-stop.

Injury: Close call
Core Activity: Veneer or plywood manufacture
Location: Interior BC
Date of Incident: Nov 2025
A fire started in the planer at a sawmill. The mill's emergency response system was initiated, and workers controlled the spread of fire until fire departments arrived. No one was injured.

Injury: Close call
Core Activity: Pressed wood product manufacture
Location: Northern BC
Date of Incident: Oct 2025
A fire occurred at a pellet mill and resulted in a deflagration event. The employer's chemical suppression system extinguished the event. Workers later extinguished secondary smouldering. 🌱



New BASE Maintenance Audit Tool Launches in 2026

BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC), in collaboration with WorkSafeBC and the SAFE Companies Advisory Committee (SCAC), has introduced a new BASE maintenance audit tool called **EMAP (Enhanced Maintenance Audit Protocol)**. This new audit tool is designed for certain qualifying BASE sized companies to help improve Safety Management Systems and increase safety performance. For more information on EMAP, visit the BCFSC website. 📄

First Aid Regulation Updates

November 1, 2024 has long passed. This key date was when the updated First Aid regulations came into effect and they should now be fully implemented across all workplaces. While previously completed First Aid training remains valid until it expires, First Aid kits must be checked to ensure they meet the current regulatory requirements. This also applies to First Aid assessments.

Regularly reviewing your First Aid program and equipment, as well as conducting regular drills, helps ensure readiness and regulatory compliance. Use the WorkSafeBC First Aid assessment form to see if you are meeting the new requirements. 📄

Site Verification Audits and 2026 Targets

For 2026, BCFSC has once again set a target of 400 small company site verification visits. Site verification audits remain an important part of the SAFE Companies program, supporting smaller and growing companies by providing guidance and identifying opportunities for improvement.

BASE Gap Analysis audits will continue for growing companies, helping them strengthen their safety programs as they transition toward BASE certification. In addition, WorkSafeBC Initiated Verification Audits (WIVAs) will continue to be completed using external auditors. 📄

2025 Year End Results

In 2025, a total of 432 site verification and WIVA audits were completed, exceeding our target. An additional five BASE Gap Analysis audits were conducted, helping companies identify areas for improvement and close gaps as they grow.

There were 41 WorkSafeBC Initiated Verification Audits completed using external auditors. These audits, initiated by WorkSafeBC, play an important role in supporting compliance and maintaining strong safety standards. The use of external auditors adds valuable expertise and independent oversight to the audit process. 📄

SAFE Certification Snapshot

As of the end of 2025, there were 2,697 SAFE Certified companies, demonstrating the industry's continued commitment to building and maintaining strong safety programs. To see if your company is SAFE Certified, click here. 📄

SAFE Companies Program Results	SAFE Companies Target 2025	2025 Actuals
Small Employer Occupational Health & Safety (SEOHS) Initial Training	250	231
Individual Owner Operator (IOO) Initial Training	50	36
Small Employer Occupational Health & Safety (SEOHS) refresher	200	313
Individual Owner Operator (IOO) Refresher Training	50	72
Internal Auditor (Large) provided	17	20
External Auditor (Large) provided	1	1
New registrations	250	230
New certifications	250	251
Verification Audits	363	391
WIVA Audits	37	41



Falling



Falling Safety Advisor Activities

BCFSC Falling Safety Advisors and contractors completed the following activities in 2025:

- 3 Falling Supervisor Certifications
- 12 Faller Certifications
- 15 Trainer Quality Assurance Visits
- 23 Trainer & Trainee Quality Assurance Visits
- 14 Company Reviews
- 325 Faller Visits

For more information on the services offered by the BCFSC falling department, you can reach us toll-free 1-877-741-1060. Check out the [Falling Safety Advocacy Program pamphlet](#) for more information on what services are available, free of charge. 📄



BC Forest Safety

FALLING
Safety Advocacy
Program Information



We No Longer Want to See the Hidden Costs of “Being Strong”

The traditional expectation that fallers should always “be strong” often comes with significant hidden costs. Many forestry workers feel pressure to maintain a stoic exterior, facing challenges alone while suppressing emotions such as fear, sadness, or vulnerability. Over time, this silence can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and even depression.

But strength in our industry has never been about standing alone.

Forestry has always been built on teamwork — watching out for one another in tough conditions, relying on each other for safety, and knowing that no one succeeds on their own. That same mindset must carry over into our mental health. We are in this together and supporting one another is a vital part of doing this work well and going home safe.

One in five Canadians will experience mental health challenges in any given year. Take a moment to consider whether you or someone you work with right now might benefit from the **Connection to Care** supports available. Sometimes the strongest thing we can do is reach out — or notice when someone else might need support and have the courage to check in.

Having the Courage to Care

Caring for yourself or your crew takes courage. It means choosing honesty over silence, connection over isolation, and people over outdated expectations of toughness. Looking out for one another — asking a simple “How are you really doing?” — can make the difference between someone struggling alone and someone getting the help they need.

Let’s be clear: **seeking help is not weakness.** Supporting a teammate, using counselling supports, or talking openly about mental health is an act of strength and professionalism. When one of us has the courage to care, it gives others permission to do the same.

We don’t need to fake tough.
We need to **get real help.**

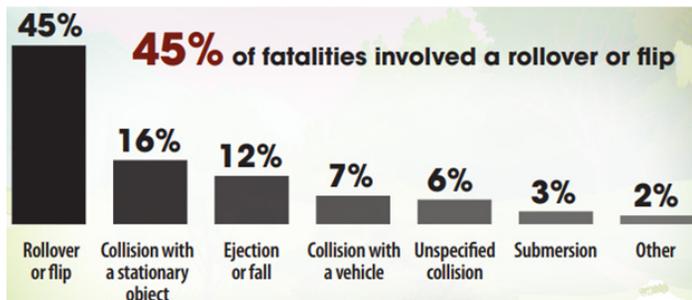
Talking openly about mental health, using available supports, and standing beside each other through difficult moments makes us safer, healthier, and stronger as a crew and as an industry. Being strong means knowing when to lean on others — and being willing to lend a hand when someone else needs it. **No one should carry this alone. We are stronger together.** 📄



Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Operator Safety Training

Summer field activities in the forest sector often require the use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) to access remote worksites over a variety of challenging and rugged terrain. While the versatility ORVs offer can greatly enhance operational efficiencies, they pose inherent risks when not operated safely and responsibly. Both All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) and Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs) require specific training to ensure operators are adequately prepared to meet operational challenges and eliminate hazards.

Training to address these dangers has increased greatly in recent years, however, incidents continue to occur, sometimes with tragic outcomes. Data from Statistics Canada reveals that from 2013 – 2019, on average, 100 ATV related fatalities occur every year across the country. Almost half (45%) of the incidents involved rollover events, and nearly one-third were attributed to not wearing a helmet (33%). Though BC-specific data on forestry worksites is difficult to verify, these trends are relevant based on inherent risks.



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Coroner and Medical Examiner Database

To help industry address the challenges associated with reducing ORV incidents, BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) has collaborated with industry specialists to develop training that specifically addresses high-risk activities commonly found in forestry workplace settings. The training is a mix of theory and practical lessons to help establish the fundamental skills and knowledge required to safely operate ORV's, while also emphasizing accident prevention and risk management that can be applied in real-world forestry work settings. This allows participants to build a thorough knowledge of safe operating principles, while also providing an understanding of their own capabilities.



Training course options:

- Off-Road Vehicle Knowledge Unit

BCFSC's **FREE** online training course provides foundational knowledge for the safe operation of Off-Road Vehicles in industrial forestry settings. It can be completed as stand-alone training to supplement your own in-house training program, or as a prerequisite to BCFSC's in-person ORV training options.

For course details and enrollment information, go to [BCFSC's Learning Centre](#) to login or create a new account. Once logged in, click the "Enroll Me" button to start your training.

Off-Road Vehicle Safety Training

A one-day, in-person field course that provides essential skills training for safe operation of ORVs in industrial forestry settings.

- Off-Road Vehicle Operator Training

This course is a two-day, in-person field training comprehensive course that focusses on critically important knowledge and skills for high-risk conditions that operators may encounter in industrial forestry settings.

- **In-person Session Scheduling & Enrollment**

These one and two-day courses are typically delivered on request by the external provider Tirion Safety Ltd. (formerly Overland Training Canada). Each session can accommodate up to eight participants.

To register for public sessions (when scheduled) or to learn more about a private group session, contact [Tirion Safety Ltd.](#) 📞

Spring Training Programs for Silviculture Workers

As the winter season comes to an end and breakup approaches, traffic on resource roads throughout the province will be reduced significantly. However, shortly after the snow disappears, silviculture crews will head out to the field to begin reforestation activities. WorkSafeBC's [young or new worker orientation and training regulation](#) (s 3.22-3.25) details an employer's requirements to provide appropriate orientation and training before workers begin work. Returning silviculture workers are likely to come back to workplaces where the hazards have changed and workers new to the industry will be exposed to hazards that they have never experienced before. The BC Forest Safety Council offers training resources specifically designed for silviculture worksites that help to reduce risks and improve worker safety.

Resource Road Driver Training

Spring weather conditions can be extremely hard on resource road infrastructure, subjecting workers to hazards and risks that are unique to this time of the year. Road conditions can be highly variable as the frost driven into the subgrade by winter traffic begins to slowly thaw often resulting in large sinkholes, numerous potholes, and excessive rutting. These conditions can test the skills of even the most experienced drivers, let alone those who are new to driving on resource roads.

As the season progresses, large industrial traffic such as logging trucks and lowbeds will commence operating, adding new hazards that silviculture crews need to be aware of. Resource roads are not constructed and maintained to the same standards as public highways. They are commonly single lane roads with gravel running surfaces and reduced lines of sight.

The BC Forest Safety Council's [Resource Road Driver Training Program](#) has been designed with a focus on developing the skills and knowledge required to safely operate light trucks on resource roads. The program has several options available that provide flexibility to suit the requirements of employers and their workers.

- [Resource Road Driver Knowledge Unit](#)
 - » **Free** online learning module that prepares participants for field training activities. Also suitable as a stand-alone course to introduce workers to resource road hazards or support employers established internal driver training programs.
- [Resource Road Safety Training \(1 day\)](#)
 - » One-day field training course with focus on basic safety and decision-making skills required for resource road driving.
- [Resource Road Driver Training \(2 day\)](#)
 - » Two-day enhanced field training that included more comprehensive



lessons and techniques that participants can use when driving on resource roads.

- [Resource Road Driver Internal Training/Train-the-Trainer](#)
 - » Three-day training option that allows employers to develop internal training capacity and expertise.

For more information, please contact our Transportation and Northern Safety Program at 1-250-562-3215 or email at transport.admin@bcforestsafes.org.

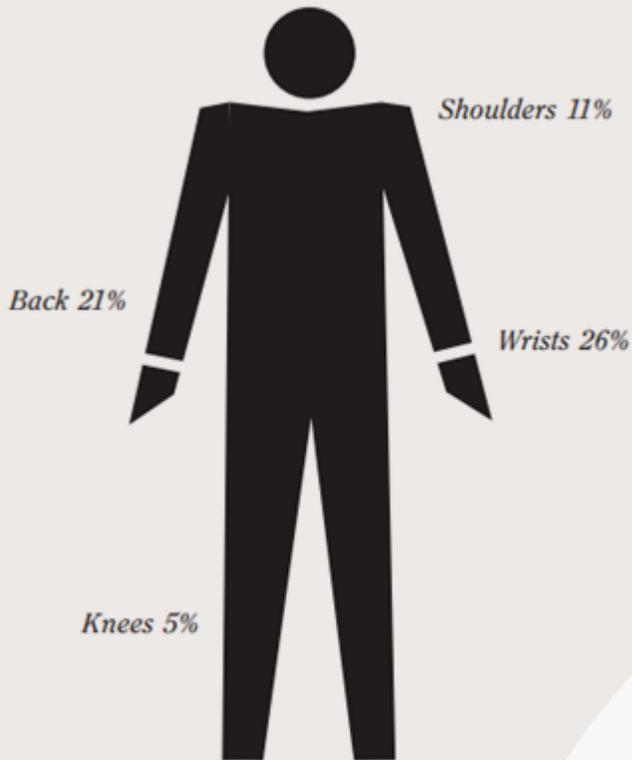
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Tree Planter Fitness & Injury Prevention

Tree planting is an extremely physically and mentally demanding job. Soft tissue and repetitive strain injuries to muscles, tendons and ligaments are very common, particularly at the beginning of the planting season.



Most frequent injured body parts for tree planters
(Source: WorkSafeBC).

Avoiding injury is possible if managed correctly. Arriving for work in good physical condition and maintaining a balanced diet is a great start. Setting realistic targets for the initial pace of work and expected productivity outcomes will also help. Don't try to hit the ground running, but rather increase the pace slowly as your body adapts.

The BC Forest Safety Council has worked with subject matter experts to develop a series of videos that focus on [Tree Planter Fitness and Injury Prevention](#). The videos describe common causes of injuries as well as preventative measures, techniques and best practices workers can use to reduce the potential for injury. For example, biomechanical imperatives required for planting such as:

Choosing the correct shovel length, or



Using the correct shovel grip.



The videos are a great resource for new and returning planters to review prior to arriving at work as part of preparation for the physical challenges of the job. The videos are available on the Council's website, and free of charge. 📺



MAG Members Participate in Safety Consultation Workshop and Carrier Lumber Facility Tour in Prince George

In November, MAG met in Prince George for its quarterly meeting, which included a private tour of Carrier Lumber’s facility. Participants observed advanced milling technology and learned that the company’s two Western Canadian mills collectively produce approximately 500 million board feet of lumber each year. During the tour, Carrier shared details of its comprehensive safety training program and demonstrated its innovative safety protocols. MAG thanks Carrier for the opportunity to visit the facility and learn more about its operations. 🌱



November MAG Workshop Overview: Strengthening JOHSC Consultation

Presented by the British Columbia Federation of Labour (BCFED)

The British Columbia Federation of Labour (BCFED) hosted a workshop that focused on boosting the effectiveness of Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (JOHSCs). The session covered the core purpose of a JOHS Committee, the importance of due diligence and the legal requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) and the Workers Compensation Act (WCA).



During the workshop, MAG members learned how to conduct meaningful consultations, use committee mechanisms to support compliance and build consensus in the workplace. The workshop also addressed safety issues relating to combustible dust, chemical emergencies, investigations and strategic planning. Through interactive group breakout sessions, participants left better prepared to enhance workplace safety and improve JOHS Committee performance. 🌱

WorkSafeBC’s New Amendments to the Combustible Dust Regulation

WorkSafeBC’s revised Combustible Dust Regulation will come into effect on January 4, 2027. These amendments will replace the existing policies relating to wood dust and expand the scope to include all types of dust generated or handled in the workplace. The changes are intended to improve the effectiveness of dust hazard management and further strengthen a strong workplace safety culture.

Employers will be required to implement a systematic, long-term approaches to controlling and managing combustible dust hazards, including the development and ongoing maintenance of a combustible dust management program.

- Part 6, Substance Specific Requirements, Combustible Dusts | [Approved amendments with explanatory notes](#)
- [WorkSafeBC Combustible Dust Resource Toolbox](#)

BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) is currently updating its [online Combustible Dust training modules](#) to reflect these regulatory changes. Module updates are expected to be completed by the end of Q1.

BCFSC is committed to supporting industry throughout this transition. For assistance, please contact Bill Laturnus, Senior Safety Advisor, Manufacturing, via email at blaturnus@bcforestsafesafe.org. 🌱

MAG 2026-2028 Workplan Now Available

The MAG 2026–2028 Workplan outlines the committee’s priorities and planned activities to support continuous safety improvement in forest products manufacturing. The key focus areas include:

1. Leadership Training Development
2. Hazard ID and Control Program
3. Significant Incident Failure Potential (SIFp)
4. BCFSC/HSA Foundational Activities
 - MAG-Safe Audit Development and Oversight
 - MAG Share/Build Resources Program



In addition to the 2026–2028 workplan, the Manufacturing Advisory Group page provides a range of resources specific to forest products manufacturing. These include links to manufacturing-specific safety training, risk reduction reports, information on the MAG SAFE audit program, previous MAG workplans, safety innovations and workplace and worker resources such as safety alerts and crew talks. 🌱

Boost Your Safety Culture with Weekly Updates

Every Tuesday, BCFSC sends out a Crew Talk filled with practical safety tips to support your crew meetings. On Thursdays, we send out Manufacturing Safety Alerts that highlight recent incidents and share best practices to help avoid similar incidents in forest products manufacturing.

If you are not already receiving these free resources, you can subscribe to the weekly Manufacturing Safety Crew Talk and Safety Alert emails by visiting the BCFSC website.

Crew Talks and Manufacturing Safety Alerts are also available for download at any time on the BCFSC website. 🌱

HOW WE HELP
EASY ACCESS TO SAFETY RESOURCES.

The BCFSC Crew Talk helps support a short (five minutes or less) safety conversation at the beginning of meetings, pre-job/shift meetings and/or JOHSC meetings.

- To subscribe to the Crew Talk of the week visit: bcforestsafe.org/resource/bcfsc-crew-talks/

The BCFSC Manufacturing Safety Alerts provides information on recent incidents and industry best practices in forest products manufacturing.

- To subscribe to the Safety Alert of the week, visit: bcforestsafe.org/safety-alerts/

SHARE WITH US
BCFSC welcomes all incident or near miss submissions. If you have an incident you'd like to share, please forward to: Bill.Laturnus@bcforestsafe.org
BCFSC will review and remove all identifying information to protect the worker, company and your privacy.

RIGHT TO REFUSE
SAFETY ALERT

bcforestsafe.org

CREW TALKS **SAFETY ALERTS**

Share Incidents and Near Misses

BCFSC encourages the sharing of incidents and near misses to support learning across the industry. If you have an incident you would like to share, please forward the details to blaturnus@bcforestsafe.org.

All submissions are reviewed and identifying information is removed to protect the privacy of both the worker and the company. 🌱



BCFSC Forestry Blasting Program: Building Safer Operations Through Training

“Industry members identified that there were limited training and self-assessment options for forest industry blasters, so we worked with subject matter experts to develop three online blasting courses which are free and easy to access”

— Gerard Messier - Manager, Program Development, BCFSC

Forestry blasting is a critical operation that demands precision, safety, and compliance. To address industry concerns and improve access to training, the **BCFSC Online Forestry Blasting Program** was developed in collaboration with industry experts. This program is designed for individuals involved in blasting operations within forestry environments and offers three courses at no cost, each providing a record of completion. Participants have the option of taking one or all three of the courses in the program.



Courses:

- **Blasting Hazards and Safety – 1 hour**

Learn to identify hazards before, during, and after a blast, including flyrock, overhead hazards, ground hazards, and environmental risks.

- **Legal Requirements for Forestry Blasting – 2 hours**

Understand the regulatory framework and compliance obligations for forestry blasting operations. The focus is on knowledge of the legal requirements related to the storage, transportation and use of explosives

- **Blasting Techniques – 5.5 hours**

Participants will learn pre- and post-blast procedures, how to develop detailed blasting plans, and essential safety measures. The course also covers the types

of explosives, initiation systems, and their proper use to ensure controlled and efficient forestry blasting operations.

Total Blasting Program duration:: 8.5 hours for all three courses.

Certification Requirements

In BC, anyone working as a blaster **MUST** be certified by **WorkSafeBC**, and all blasting work must fall within the scope of their certificate. To become certified, blasters must:

- Provide documentation of knowledge, qualifications, and experience, including a minimum of **8 hours of training** related to safe handling of explosives.
- Pass a written exam.

For more details, visit WorkSafeBC.

How Our Training Helps

Our program helps new forestry blasters prepare for certification and is an excellent option for meeting the **6 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)** required for certified blasters.

It also benefits **contract managers and supervisors** who want a deeper understanding of blasting operations and safety requirements.

Enrollment information is available on our website: [Forestry Blasting Program](#) 📄



Trainer Course Relaunch: Enhanced and Ready for Enrollment!

The BC Forest Safety Council's (BCFSC) free Trainer Course is back, and it's better than ever. This updated course features improved visuals and revised content that includes forestry-specific examples that will help supervisors and trainers conduct effective on-the-job and classroom-based training. It is highly recommended for companies using BCFSC's competency-based system for worker assessment and training.

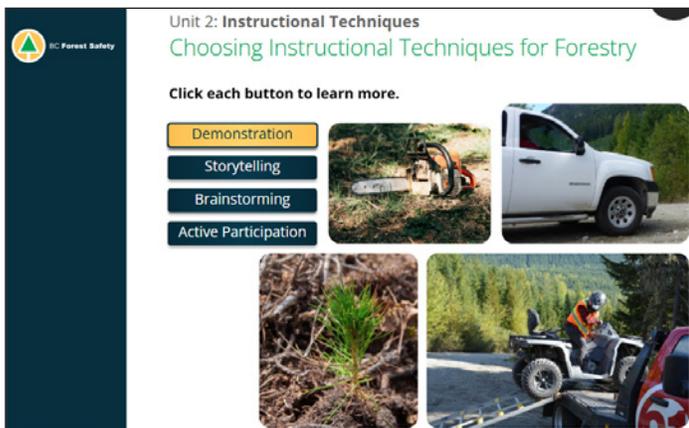
The course now includes practical guidance for instructing key forestry activities such as:

- **Chainsaw use**
- **Tree falling**
- **Equipment operation**
- **Driving on resource roads**

It also aligns with the Resource Road Train-the-Trainer and Qualified Faller Trainer programs, making it an invaluable resource for anyone involved in those training initiatives.

Who should enroll?

- Anyone involved in training forestry workers within their operations.
- Supervisors who plan to use BCFSC's Worker Assessments to help train and assess their workers on-the-job with resources for the following roles:
 - » Basic Forest Worker
 - » Light Truck Driver
 - » Yarding
 - » Mechanized Harvesting
 - » Road Building
 - » Silviculture
 - » Marine
- Individuals aiming to advance into a trainer role within their forestry operation
- Participants enrolled in the BCFSC Resource Road Train-the-Trainer course or Qualified Faller Trainer program



Check out the latest updates and take the next step toward safer, more effective training in forestry. 🌲

Safety Matters More Than Ever in Uncertain Times

Submitted by: Richard King, Director Programs and Training BC Forest Safety Council

In times of economic uncertainty, maintaining a strong commitment to safety is essential. Curtailments, temporary shutdowns and reduced crew sizes can place added pressure on operations, making it even more important to ensure workers stay focused, informed and protected. Prioritizing safety when challenges arise helps safeguard workers, prevents incidents and supports stable operations.

Uncertainty can affect how people work. Concerns about job security, financial pressure and changing operational demands can make it harder for workers to concentrate on the tasks at hand. Reinforcing safe work practices and maintaining clear expectations helps crews stay grounded when external pressures rise.

Operational changes can also introduce new risks. Smaller crews, adjusted roles or added responsibilities may require workers to take on tasks outside their usual scope. Without proper preparation, these shifts can affect both personal safety and the safety of the entire team. Ensuring workers have the right knowledge, guidance and support is critical to managing these risks effectively.

While safety is a broad and shared responsibility, training plays an important role in helping workers and supervisors stay sharp and confident. The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) offers a wide range of training options to strengthen safety skills and support safer workplaces. Many courses and resources are available at no cost, including several online programs and on-the-job assessment tools, making it easier for individuals and employers to continue developing safety competencies during tight financial times.

Some highlights: Our new, online [Trainer Course](#) helps supervisors learn how to train their workers effectively on the job and support consistent practices across crews. BCFSC also offers in-person courses such as [Basics of Incident Investigation](#) and [Joint Health and Safety Committee](#) training to support organizations improve their safety programs, build stronger systems, and reinforce positive safety cultures.

Even when the industry is faced with challenges, safety cannot take a back seat. Investing in safe work practices and ensuring workers have the skills and support they need sends a clear message that safety remains a top priority.

To learn more or explore available training opportunities, visit the training section on the [BCFSC website](#). If you have any questions or ideas about our options, feel free to contact our team at training@bcforestsafe.org. 🌱





BC Forest Safety Training Solutions

BCFSC Training Options for You and Your Team

Empower your workforce with trusted training from the BC Forest Safety Council. Whether you're looking to build skills, stay compliant or enhance safety culture ... BCFSC has you covered.

We Offer:



[In-Person Training](#)

Plan ahead with our 2026 Course Schedule.



[Requested Training](#)

Can't make it to an in-person session? We can come to you. Email us at training@bcforestsafe.org or call 1.877.741.1060



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Browse our wide range of downloadable materials to help you do your job safely – in all areas of forestry.





What Happens When Anger Takes Over and What We Can Do Instead

Republished from the February 2026 edition of *Vancouver Island Counselling's newsletter Choices*.

When communities experience loss, betrayal, or sudden change, anger is a natural response. When businesses close it's not just an economic event; it is an emotional one. For many families, it meant lost livelihoods, broken routines, and a sense that decisions were made far away by people who would never feel the consequences. In moments like these, the urge for revenge, blame, or "getting even" can feel justified. But science tells us something important: revenge rarely heals what anger breaks.

Why Revenge Is Addictive

Revenge doesn't just feel emotional — it's chemical. When we imagine or act on revenge, the brain releases dopamine, the same neurotransmitter involved in addiction, gambling, and social media engagement. That surge creates a temporary sense of power, control, and relief.

But like any addictive loop, the effect fades quickly. The brain then seeks another "hit," which often means more outrage, more blame, more conflict. Over

time, this conditions the mind to crave anger as stimulation, trapping people and communities in cycles of resentment and escalation.

In simple terms: revenge rewards the brain short-term and drains the soul long-term.

Anger Is Not the Enemy — Suppression Is

Anger itself isn't bad. It's a signal that something matters. What harms us is either exploding outward or stuffing it down until it turns into bitterness, burnout, or depression.

Psychologists describe healthy anger processing as having three stages:

1. Acknowledge it – "This hurts. I feel angry."
2. Understand it – What value was violated? Security? Fairness? Respect?
3. Redirect it – Channel that energy toward something constructive.

From Closure to Collective Healing

Anger often turns inward or sideways, toward neighbors, institutions, or social media arguments. That fragmentation benefits no one. What actually rebuilds resilience is shared meaning and forward momentum.

This can look like:

- Supporting retraining and local job initiatives
- Preserving community identity through storytelling and history
- Advocating for fair transition policies instead of personal retaliation
- Turning frustration into civic action rather than personal attacks

How to Deal with Dark Thoughts When They Show Up

When revenge fantasies or intense anger surface, try this science-backed approach:

- Pause the body first – Slow breathing (4 seconds in, 6 seconds out) calms the nervous system.
- Name the emotion – Simply labeling "anger" or "grief" reduces intensity.
- Ask the better question – Instead of "Who's to blame?" try "What would actually help me heal?"
- Limit outrage fuel – Doom scrolling and rage-based content amplify stress and distort reality.

Choosing Strength Over Satisfaction

True strength isn't found in retaliation — it's found in refusing to let loss define our future. Communities that recover best aren't the ones that suppress anger, they are the ones that transform it into purpose.

Anger can burn bridges. Or it can light the way forward. The choice, collectively and individually, still belongs to us. 🌱





Protecting Your Knees

By Dr. Delia Roberts

The knee is an amazing and essential joint. Its ability to fully bend and extend under high loads makes walking and running, stepping up onto and off of stairs, and the ability to get down onto the floor and back up again possible. But while its shallow design enables this wide range of movement, it also leaves the knee vulnerable to injury. Workers in the many jobs in forestry require walking through uneven terrain with many hazards are especially susceptible to strains and sprains of the knee. The high level of risk is reflected in that knee injuries account for 12% of all WorkSafeBC claims in the forestry sector, and most of us have had sore knees at one time or another. Unfortunately, once an injury has occurred many of the structures in the knee joint do not repair well. Ligaments, tendons and cartilage are not directly supplied with blood, which means that once they are damaged, they have a very limited ability to repair themselves. This makes prevention key to pain free movement.

A quick look at the anatomy of the knee shows how the joint depends on the ligaments (attach bone to bone) and tendons (attach muscle to bone) to hold the joint together. The ligaments have very high tensile strength in the direction of their fibres, but they are passive

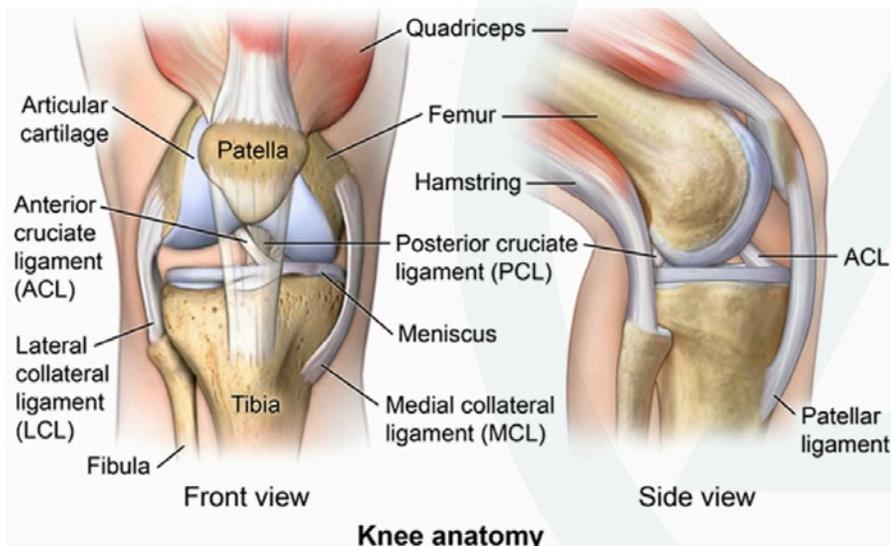
structures. In contrast, the muscles that are attached to the tendons can contract to provide additional stability to the joint. Sensory neurons in the surrounding tissues and joint capsule provide feedback on tension and pressure within the joint, connecting directly back to the adjacent muscles. When the system is healthy, as soon as the forces experienced by the joint change, the surrounding muscles respond within milliseconds to minimize the stress on the joint. Unfortunately, these reflexes can become impaired, and when they do, the risk of injury goes up. Without a strong framework of surrounding muscle, the joint is subject to much higher forces and can result in damage to ligament and cartilage.

Maintaining healthy knees starts with movement. If your job is largely sedentary, the fluid inside the joint (called synovial fluid) doesn't circulate because it requires cycles of compression and unloading to refresh tissues like cartilage and ligament that do not have a blood supply. It's another reason to get up from your desk or out of your machine regularly for short movement breaks.

Another basic element that can have a big impact on the health of your knees is your posture. When habit or culture leaves us slouching, it changes where the center of gravity falls and hence the loading on all our joints. Tissues like ligament and cartilage are designed for force to be distributed in specific directions, and when posture shifts the axis of load it can damage joint structures. Ligaments are not as strong when faced with shear forces, and cartilage requires mechanical force in a specific axis to maintain its biochemical health. Taking a few minutes to stand tall and make sure that your shoulders are over your hips and your pelvis is not tipped forward or back can go a long way towards maintaining knee health. Do it every time you stand up, come to the end of a row, or pause during a task that requires and awkward posture. Your knees (and your back) will thank you.

Increased stress on the knees can also be caused by weak muscles or altered muscle recruitment patterns. This can happen from disuse, or a previous injury where the body tries to protect a weaker muscle and ends up transferring the work onto a muscle that isn't designed for that movement. The following exercises strengthen the important muscles that determine the way load is distributed on the knee joint, but another important benefit from them is that they help to re-establish the reflexes that engage the muscles when load is applied to the joint. Do them at least twice a week, choosing 3 - 4 of the exercises each time. Rotate through the different exercises so that eventually you do all of them.

Begin each session by standing tall, making sure your shoulders are over your hips and your pelvis is level. It's important to make sure that you maintain good posture throughout because you are practicing loading the knee joint in a safe position. Start with 10 repetitions on each side, working up to 20, and if you want to make them harder consider wearing a weighted pack or vest, or doing them in your heavy boots. You don't have to do your chosen 4 all at once, you can spread them out over your day, they work just as well if you do them in short bursts.



Continued on page 26...

Continued from page 25...

1. Step ups: Step up onto a sturdy surface beginning with a shin high step and working up to above the knee height. Step straight up, do not pump the knee of the free leg for upward momentum as is done in CrossFit. Instead control the movement up and down.
2. Walking lunges: Step out in the forward direction and lower down until your knees are at 90 degrees. Keep the front knee aligned with your foot and hip, don't let the knee fall in towards the middle. Make it harder by carrying a heavy object in one hand or rotating the upper body to the side. Pull the back leg through and step out again with the other leg.
3. Squats: Drop your butt down backwards as through you are going to sit down, making sure that your hips, knees and feet are all in a line. If you can't get down very low try placing a small lift under your heels. If this is too easy, do one leg at a time
4. Side steps; From your squat position, step out to the side, staying low the whole time. Make it harder by using a loop of elastic banding or a bungee cord around your ankles.
5. Step downs: Face outward on a step and lower your heel to just touch the ground. Make sure to keep your hips level, don't let the hip of the free leg drop. It's also important to make sure that the knee of the supporting leg stays aligned with your hip and foot, do not let it drop into the middle. Use the railing for balance until you can maintain your form.
6. Star touch: Stand on one leg with good posture and reach the toe of the free leg out to the side, barely touch the ground before bringing the free leg back in and reaching out to the front, then to the back, and finally the corners so that you complete a star shape. If you're wobbling, touch a finger to a solid structure to provide a little support until you build up the strength and balance needed.
7. Skater's slides: Skate from side to side in socks on a slippery floor. Push down into the floor and out to the side before bringing the leg back to center and switching sides.
8. Single leg RDL: With your weight on one leg raise the other leg up to the back. Imagine that your body and the lifted leg are a solid unit so that your upper body has to tip forward as your leg rises to the back. Hips stay square facing the front and the hinge point is the hip of the supporting leg. Use a hand on the wall for support until your balance is good enough to let you stand free.
9. Bulgarian squat: With one foot supported on a chair behind you and the other foot a full leg length out in front lower down into a split squat position. Keep your hips forward and square, your weight should shift down between your legs as you lower and then back up onto the front leg as you rise back up.
10. Resisted side leg raises: Use an elastic band, bungee cord or inner tube to anchor your ankle to a solid support. Step away from the support until there is a little tension on the band and then try to raise the tethered leg out to the side away from the support, then resist the elastic as it pulls your leg back to center. If you are sitting inside your machine, you can make this an isometric exercise by pushing your foot outward against the sides of the foot well.
11. Resisted hamstring curls: With the same elastic tether as for the resisted side leg raises (exercise # 10) turn and face toward the tether. Step back until there is tension on the banding, keeping it below your ankle bones. Bend your knee as you pull your heel backwards, then resist the elastic as it pulls your leg forward to your starting position.
12. Inner thigh squeezes: These are best done with something like a soccer ball, but anything will work. If you're using something rigid, wrap it in a sweater to soften the margins. Place the ball between your knees and squeeze inward for 30 seconds.
13. Heel raises: Stand facing inward on a stair so that your heels hang off the edge. Use the railing for balance as needed. Raise up on your tippy toes and then lower down to past the horizontal so that your heels drop down as low as possible. Then push up through your feet back to your tippy toes. Make it harder by doing them one leg at a time.
14. Toe raises: Lean back against a wall with your legs straight. Your feet should be about 1 foot length out away from the wall. Lift your toes and then lower them back down to the ground.

For more information: [Desperate Planter's Knee Maintenance Program](#) 🌱

Good knee position



Best, knee is stacked over toe and low back is in neutral

Poor knee position



Poor posture causing knee and back problems



Kid's Corner



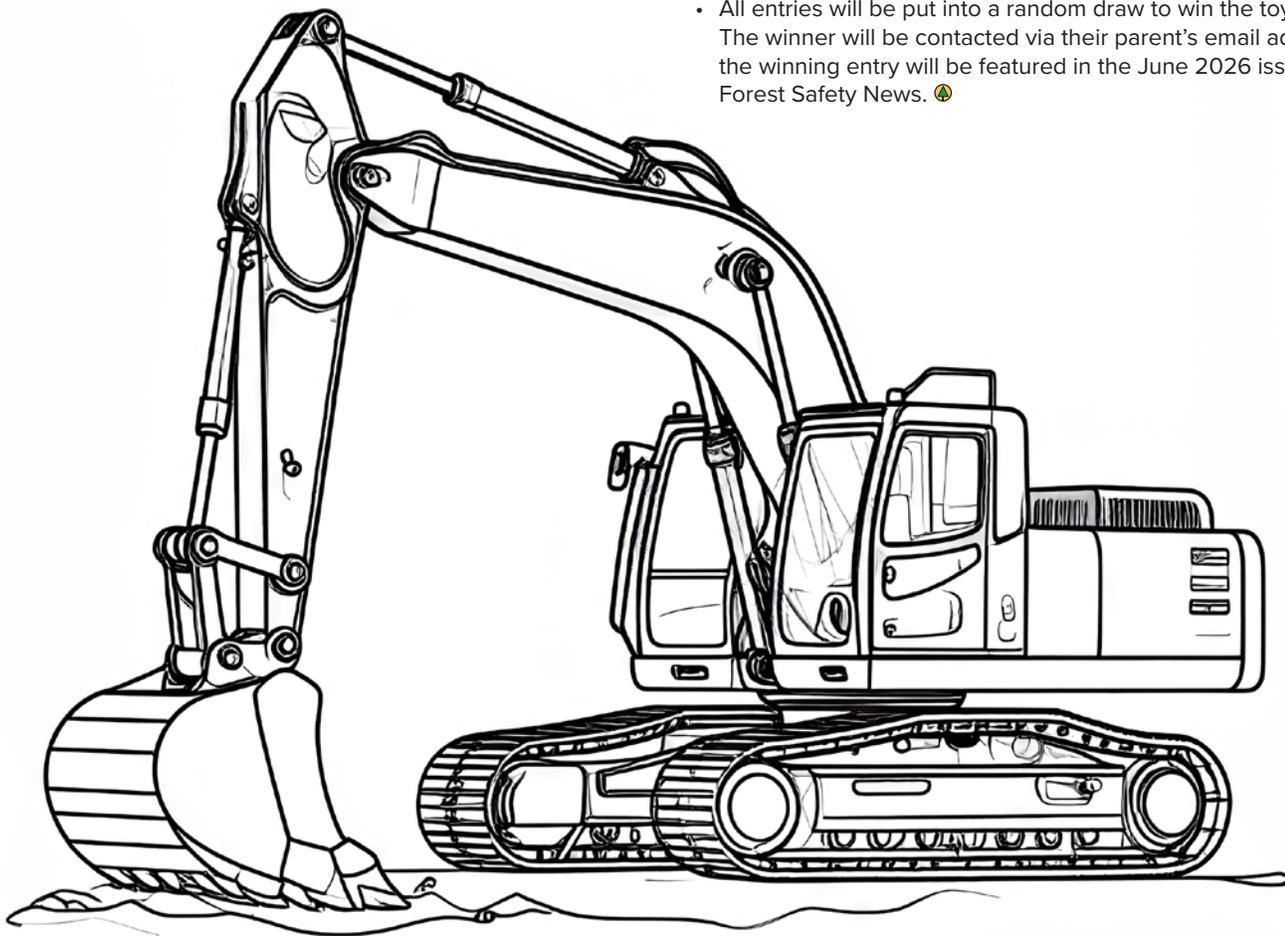
Thanks to everyone who entered our December Colouring Contest. Congratulations to **Colton Age 9**, who was picked from our random draw. Colton wins a toy chainsaw and we will be sending a special gift to everyone else just for entering!



For our spring issue, colour the excavator or send us a picture of your own artwork and enter to win a toy chainsaw. Ask an adult to email us a photo of your artwork with your first name and age and we'll put your name into the draw.

How to Enter:

- Colour the picture or send us your own drawing.
- Have an adult take a picture of your artwork and email it with your name, age and your mom/dad's email address to editor@bcforestsafe.org
- Submit your entry by 4pm, Friday, May 1, 2026.
- Kids aged 3 – 12 are eligible.
- All entries will be put into a random draw to win the toy chainsaw. The winner will be contacted via their parent's email address, and the winning entry will be featured in the June 2026 issue of the Forest Safety News. 🌲



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Forest Safety News Editor
Unit 8C - 2220 Bowen Road, Nanaimo, BC V9S 1H9

Call 1-877-741-1060 or email editor@bcforestsafe.org



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