

FATALITY ALERT

– PRELIMINARY INFORMATION –

BCFSC #2019-04-28

On April 28, 2019 a faller was fatally injured when he was struck by a tree on a logging operation located near Holberg on Vancouver Island.

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

This is the third harvesting fatality in 2019 and the second faller fatality in the month of April.

While this incident is still under investigation and details are still to be determined, please review the following safety information:

- 1) Falling and bucking are both high risk activities. Bucking timber has its own unique hazards such as unplanned movement of the log and rolling rocks, stumps or other debris. When bucking, give yourself enough room to avoid being pinned and have a planned escape route or a safe zone with cover in case something unexpected happens.
- 2) Each tree that's felled makes changes to the worksite. Rocks and stumps can be shaken loose or root systems of adjacent trees can be weakened. Do ongoing assessments of those risks identifying what new hazards have been created by the falling activity.
- 3) Brushing trees can create hazards such as broken branches and tops or damaged root systems. It may weaken the tree enough that it falls unexpectedly. Hazards created by excessive brushing must be dealt with before performing work in the area. These hazards may not cause an incident right away but may later when a faller does not expect it.

Brushing means the striking of a standing tree by a tree being felled if the strike is a direct blow or a glancing blow of sufficient force to cause one or more branches to break at or near the stem of the standing tree. From the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 26.23 (1).

- 4) Root systems, downed trees, rocks and ground debris can be interconnected. Movement of one of these can cause the others to be unstable, especially on steep ground.
- 5) The stability of root systems can be affected by soil conditions such as shallow soils over rock, high water tables or excessively dry soils. Consider root and soil strength as part of the overall risk assessment of a tree before falling work begins. Watch for uprooted trees which may have compromised the root systems of nearby standing trees.