

Forest Industry Hazard Alert

Working in burned forest areas

Location: British Columbia

Date: September 21, 2017

(This is an Addition/Amendment to the [BC Timber Sales Sept 17, 2010 Safety Alert](#))

Details: The 2017 fire season was very active with intense fire behavior in all types of stands and regions. There are numerous hazards field workers need to be made aware of prior to entering these stands.

Hazards:

- 1) Weak trees with burned out roots susceptible to falling over with little or no wind.
- 2) Unstable materials on slopes with the potential to roll downhill.
- 3) Slippery fire retardant.
- 4) Overhead hazards from weak branches.
- 5) Burn pits. These may be in open view or hidden under a thin crust of ash/duff/soil.
- 6) Spooked wildlife.



Above: Ravaged hillside near Ashcroft, BC

(Photo courtesy of CFJC Today, Kamloops)

Actions:

- 1) Always use RADAR when working in the field.
- 2) Have a tailgate meeting prior to each field day to discuss these and other hazards. Make notes of hazards during the day and pass them on to fellow workers/stake holders in the area.
- 3) Avoid entering burn areas during windy conditions. Leave the bush immediately if windy conditions occur.
- 4) Plan/Map out your safe areas.
- 5) Always have the required PPE and see that it is in good working condition, this should include reliable two-way communication.
- 6) Consider more frequent check-ins while working in these areas.
- 7) Staff should work in pairs when entering these high hazard areas
- 8) Areas requiring extensive work or activity in the burn area, should be assessed for danger trees by a certified person and suitable no work zone established.

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