

Forest Industry Safety Alert

Log loader boom cuts overhead power line

Location: Near Pritchard, B.C.

Date of Incident / Close Call: May 13, 2014

Details of Incident / Close Call: A log loader (2954 John Deere loader with clam, rear-entry high cab) had finished piling on a block and was travelling down the road, beside and under a 25 Kv Hydro line, to the next block.

When the loader entered onto the main road from a spur road, the operator lowered the boom, went under the power line and travelled down the road alongside the line for approximately 50 metres. The loader again passed under the line, this time contacting the lower neutral line and cutting it.

The operator was not aware that he had hit the line and carried on to the next block. Minutes later the supervisor discovered the line lying beside the road. BC Hydro was contacted and the line was repaired within 2 ½ hours.

Investigation findings: It was just turning dusk at the time the loader was travelling down the road. The operator was aware of the hydro line and had focussed on getting under the line where the spur road met the main road. The supervisor that was escorting the loader down the road had just confirmed with the operator to stretch out and lower the boom prior and was putting tires on a cattle guard just around the corner. The operator and supervisor were also concerned with traffic and this may have distracted the two from the overhead hazard.

Learnings and Suggestions:

- Conduct a tailgate meeting with the operator before moving equipment under line
- Use a spotter when the equipment is going under line
- Place proper signage for the overhead hazard
- Add overhead hazard precaution bullet to SWP

For more information on this submitted alert: Dan Todd, Bill Todd Ltd. (250) 851-6544