

Forest Industry Safety Alert



Close Call: Unsuitable parking and assessment results in pickup truck rolling down hill and leaving roadway

Location: Thunder River (North of Blue River, BC)

Date of Incident / Close Call: June 2, 2014

Details of Incident / Close Call: A summer student driving a light truck had stopped the vehicle on a hill on the Thunder River Road to leave the vehicle momentarily. The pickup was equipped with a manual transmission and the worker had sufficient experience driving a manual.

The parking brake recently failed and was due to be replaced within the next two days.

The worker shifted the truck to reverse after parking and exited the vehicle. The gradient of the road was 14% and proved too steep for the truck to hold its position. The truck slowly rolled down the grade unattended, left the roadway and came to a stop off the road below the fill slope.

The worker was clear of the vehicle when it was in motion and no other individuals were in the immediate area at the time. This incident was a close call as there was potential for the moving vehicle to cause injury or serious damage.

Fortunately the worker was unharmed and the truck sustained little damage.

Learnings and Suggestions:

- Wherever possible park on a flat location.
- The parking brake should be functioning. In the case of parking brake failure, ensure extra measures are taken to avoid movement until repairs can be made.
- Identify and prepare for hazards. Vehicles parked on slopes should always have their parking brake fully engaged and wheels blocked before being left by the operator.

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NOTE: Forest Industry Safety Alerts are voluntarily submitted by workers or companies. The BC Forest Safety Council is not responsible for accuracy of content. Please contact the contributing source regarding incident details. We encourage the sharing of information that can help improve safety for all workers in forestry.