



**KINESHANKO LOGGING LTD.**

# Forest Industry Safety Alert

## Charging batteries can be explosive

**Location:** Monashee Area, east of Lumby, BC

**Date:** February 2, 2017

**Details of Close Call / Serious Incident:** It was a very cold morning (-28 at the machine) and the D7H would not start on its own, as it had been sitting for a while. A 324 DLL loader was also on site, being moved to a new block and was sitting on a lowbed.

Worker hooked up the jumper cables from the batteries on the loader to the batteries on the D7H. He normally would hook from starter to starter, but with the loader being on the lowbed, the cables were not long enough to do so.

After leaving the cables hooked up for approximately 10-15 minutes to charge, worker climbed back up on the D7H and looked into the battery box. As he did this, he could hear the battery closest to him making a high pitched sound and then it exploded.

There was debris blown everywhere along with battery acid on the side of the worker's face/neck area, arm and clothing. A nearby co-worker also noticed his clothing was sprayed with battery acid.

Thankfully no serious injuries occurred during this incident, although a slight burn was taken to the neck. Fatigue and sore muscles were experienced that evening, possibly caused from the force of the explosion.

The company had previously installed a thick piece of rubber that covered over the battery box which most likely prevented serious injuries, as this contained and deflected a lot of the debris of the explosion.

## **Learnings and Suggestions:**

- When charging a battery that fast you are essentially producing a hydrogen bomb. The jumper cables must have become hot and created a spark or created a significant enough heat source causing the ignition. This was not normal company procedure for jump starting equipment, but the upset conditions posed the feeling of having to rush. Employee had loaderman and trucks waiting to get loads to town.
- Company has longer jumper cables but they were not at that particular site. Longer cables would have allowed proper procedure to take place.
- Time should have been taken to ensure the appropriate tools were used despite the fact that employees were waiting. Lives are worth more than logs to the mill.

**For more information on this submitted alert:** Jeff Kineshanko [4shanks@telus.net](mailto:4shanks@telus.net)