

Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

March 2019

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

Slips, Trips and Falls

Working in BC's forests means working in uneven and slippery terrain. A slip, trip or fall has the potential for serious injury; resulting in lost time from work, a trip to hospital or the end to your favourite after work activity.

Recent incidents reported to WorkSafeBC include:

Injury: Fractured vertebrae

The operator of a log loader fell while stepping onto the log loader's track. The operator landed on the asphalt surface below. The operator was treated on site by a Level 3 first aid attendant, and then was transported to hospital by ETV.

Injury: Soft-tissue injuries, bruising

In bad weather, a young worker climbed a bow ladder on a log barge in a remote heli-water-drop forestry operation. The worker fell off the ladder and landed on boom sticks about 10 feet (3 m) below. The worker received first aid on site, and then was transported to hospital by helicopter.

Understanding Slips, Trips and Falls

Slips, trips and falls are the second most common injury on forest industry worksites. These incidents can have serious consequences such as long-term damage to our bodies and negatively affecting our ability to make a living.

- Slips happen with poor traction on the walking surface whether caused by uneven footing, moisture including ice or snow or greasy / oily spills.
- Trips occur when you catch your foot on an object and lose your balance, and are generally caused by uneven walking surfaces, poor lighting or housekeeping and obstructed views.
- A fall can happen from height or from the same level, whether climbing in and out of a truck or piece of equipment or stepping off slash or debris.



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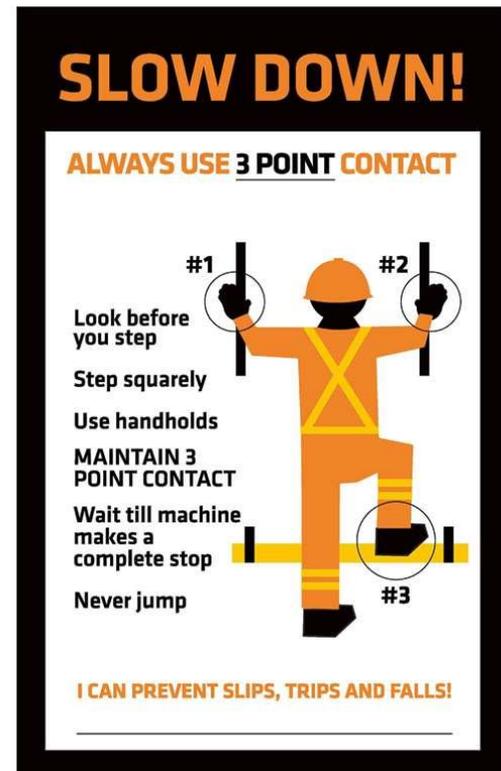
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Recommended Preventative Actions

- **Report and Eliminate Hazards** - Once you identify the hazards that exist on the job site and assess the risk to workers, it's easier to address them.

For example: Report missing or damaged handholds and steps so they can be repaired. Consider adding high traction surfaces to steps or other areas that can get slippery. Inspect footwear for adequate tread and traction and replace when worn.

- **3 Point Contact** - Always have three secure points of contact when mounting or dismounting a vehicle or equipment. Put tools, phones and other objects on the floor/seat before you climb into the cab so that both hands are free for 3 point contact.
- **Be Physically Prepared** - Working in forestry is physically demanding. Walking through the bush, driving or operating equipment for long hours all exert strain on the body. Injury prevention starts with being physically fit, well nourished, hydrated and rested.
- **Train Workers About The Hazards** - Set up your crews to successfully avoid slip, trip and fall injuries. Make sure they fully understand the hazards and how to avoid injury.



Additional Resources

Three Point Contact Posters and Stickers: These posters and stickers (see above) are available for free. Visit this link to see how to order: <http://www.bcforestsafe.org/node/2485>

Slips, Trips & Falls Injury Prevention Resource Package: Includes tips and techniques to educate yourself and your workers, improve your safety management system and inspire practical solutions for preventing slips, trips and falls in your operations. Visit this link for details: <http://www.bcforestsafe.org/node/2142>

