

Safety Alert of THE MONTH

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

July 2019

Managing Stress in the Workplace

The economic downturn in the forest industry and news of recent mill closures are causing stress and worry among all workers in the industry, including logging and trucking contractors, and mill employees.

This Safety Alert will review information and good practices for managing stress.

About Stress

Stress is our body's mental and physical reaction to changing or challenging external pressures. While stress can be helpful, if it becomes prolonged or excessive it can lead to mental and physical health issues.

Excessive stress can cause physical symptoms such as headaches, an upset stomach, elevated blood pressure, chest pain and problems sleeping. Mental health problems can also result, including depression, panic attacks, or other forms of anxiety.

Stress also becomes harmful when people engage in the compulsive use of substances or other negative behaviors to try to relieve their stress.

Distraction and Safety Concerns

When dealing with stress, there is the potential to lose focus on tasks at work and incidents can occur. Managing stress effectively reduces the negative symptoms and allows us to pay attention to the critical safety aspects of our jobs.

Stress Relief

- Build good relationships with co-workers. Talk about stress and how it can be harmful. Watch out for each other and offer to help if someone is having problems with stress.
- Encourage co-workers to ask for help if they need it and provide them with positive support resources like Employee and Family Assistance Programs. See below for a list of other helpful resources.
- Exercise is also a great stress-buster.
- Be sure to make time for self-care and to set aside time for the things that bring you happiness.
- Getting enough good-quality sleep is also important for effective stress management. You can build healthy sleep habits by limiting your caffeine intake late in the day and minimizing stimulating activities at night, such as computer, cellphone and television use.



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Additional Resources

- Map showing mental health support and crisis phone numbers for BC – www.crisislines.bc.ca/mapcrisis-lines
- Mental Health and Substance Use Resources from HealthLinkBC – www.healthlinkbc.ca/mental-health-substance-use
- Stress Management Resources from HealthLinkBC – www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/r/xsk

