



SAFETY ALERT & BULLETIN OF THE MONTH

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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Programs

AOM: 2025-01-20

Although we shouldn't rely on PPE alone to protect us from injuries, it is an important part of safety programs. PPE should be chosen to make sure it offers the best protection available. This alert focuses on what supervisors and owners should consider when developing a PPE program.

Components of a good PPE Program:

- 1) **Regulation check** – The [Occupational Health and Safety Regulation Part 8: Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment](#) should be the first stop when planning a PPE program. There are sections in the Regulations relating to safety headgear, eye protection, footwear, high visibility apparel and respirators. Check the regulation to see what PPE an employer is required to provide. The regulations also reference the PPE Standards required such as CSA or ANSI.
- 2) **Planning** – A thorough hazard identification and risk assessment process is the next step. This will identify other ways of protecting workers in addition to using PPE. For example, a safety program with a system of identifying and removing overhead hazards is much more effective than just requiring workers to wear hard hats.
- 3) **Selection of appropriate PPE** –The people closest to the work have the most valuable feedback on which types of PPE work best for the tasks at hand. PPE manufacturers can also help narrow down the options. It's important to remember that PPE shouldn't create a hazard to the wearer. For example, if a respirator doesn't fit properly then it won't be able to mitigate the risk, and ill-fitting or the wrong safety glasses or gloves could impair a worker's senses.
- 4) **Fitting** –Have workers test a variety of equipment and get their opinions on what fits best for the work. With that feedback, you can consider purchasing larger amounts.
- 5) **Education and training** –Take the time to do regular training sessions on using PPE. More complex PPE, such as respirators, will require more time and effort compared to simpler items like gloves or safety glasses. An important part of PPE training is explaining its limitations.
- 6) **Supervisor and management support** – Make it easy for workers to wear PPE. Have it readily available and provide options to replace worn out or damaged items. Consider any barriers that may deter someone from





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wearing PPE and identify situations when someone may be tempted to take a shortcut and not use PPE correctly. Take all necessary steps to remove these barriers and situations.

- 7) **Inspection and maintenance** – Workers are responsible for inspecting their PPE before use and reporting any damage or malfunction to their supervisor or employer. Check the manufacturer's guidance on the type and frequency of maintenance.
- 8) **Auditing the program** – Regular checks of how PPE is being used is necessary to ensure it is protecting the workers as planned. If deficiencies are found, go back to planning step and work through the process again to find and implement better PPE.

Specific PPE Tips:

Footwear – Use different types of boots to match the conditions and ensure traction. For example, caulk boots for areas with blowdown, lighter footwear for driving, and boots with protective toes if there is a risk of crush injuries.

Hard hats – Chin straps or other effective means of retention must be used when workers are climbing or working from a height exceeding 3 m (10 ft) or are exposed to high winds or other conditions that may cause loss of the headgear.

High-vis clothing – There are lots of different types of high-vis out there that may not meet the requirements for the work that you do. [This poster](#) will help you determine if your PPE is adequate.

Ear protection – Hearing loss is a common injury claim for forestry workers. Make sure hearing protection is readily available. Implement training, noise testing, and hearing tests as required.

Gloves – Make sure that gloves have sufficient tactile dexterity for the work, otherwise people may be tempted to remove their gloves.

Respirators – Ensure that respirators are rated for the hazards present and that workers are properly fit tested. At a minimum, the fit testing must be completed with the individual worker before the first use and at least annually after that. Also, re-test the fit when there is a change to the respirator or the worker's facial features.

Resources

[PPE Resource Page](#)

[CCOHS - PPE Programs](#)

BCFSC crew talks:

- [PPE Inspections](#)
- [Hard Hats](#)
- [Eye Protection](#)
- [Hearing Protection](#)
- [Safety Footwear](#)
- [Hi-Vis](#)





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BCFSC Latest News & Resources

[New Course – Legal Requirements for Forestry Blasting](#) – This FREE two-hour course reviews legislation and regulations that govern blasting activities in the forest industry. Completion of this training helps certified blasters achieve the six-hour annual training requirement.

[Webinar: First Aid Regulatory Changes – A Forest Industry Perspective](#) – Watch this recorded webinar to learn about the rationale behind the updated First Aid regulations and review key amendments to help employers ensure compliance.

[December Forest Safety News](#) – read the latest issue of the FSN

[FIRS App](#) – The full version of the BCFSC FIRS App is now available to download from your App store. Use the FIRS App manage forms and documents for safety-related paperwork related to SAFE Companies and COR audit forms management.

BCFSC Training:

March 20 - 21 | [Forest Supervisor – Due Diligence for Supervisors – Campbell River](#)

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

March 21 | [Basic Incident Investigation – Kamloops](#)

This course provides a basic understanding of the methods, tools, and processes needed to conduct an incident investigation.

March 26 | [Basic Incident Investigation – Prince George](#)

This course provides a basic understanding of the methods, tools, and processes needed to conduct an incident investigation.

March 27 - 28 | [Forest Supervisor – Due Diligence for Supervisors – Prince George](#)

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

April 29 – May 2 | [Falling Supervisor – Nelson](#)

Participants will learn the roles and responsibilities of a falling supervisor and will become familiar with processes used by a falling supervisor to support their due diligence.

April 29 – May 2 | [Falling Supervisor – Prince George](#)

Participants will learn the roles and responsibilities of a falling supervisor and will become familiar with processes used by a falling supervisor to support their due diligence.

May 16 | [Basic Incident Investigation – Campbell River](#)

This course provides a basic understanding of the methods, tools, and processes needed to conduct an incident investigation.

May 22 - 23 | [Forest Supervisor – Due Diligence for Supervisors – Kamloops](#)

This two-day classroom workshop will equip supervisors with knowledge of their legal responsibilities and how to prove due diligence.

May 27 – 30 | [Falling Supervisor – Campbell River](#)

Participants will learn the roles and responsibilities of a falling supervisor and will become familiar with processes used by a falling supervisor to support their due diligence.



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The **2025 training dates are now up on our website**. Refer to the [Training section](#) for more information on upcoming classroom training and costs.

Worker Assessment and Training

Each forestry occupation requires different knowledge and skillsets to perform the job at hand. BCFSC worked with industry to develop competency-based standards, training, and assessment tools to help employers evaluate workers and complete on-the-job training.

Take a look at our [FREE online training and assessment forms](#) for Basic Forest Workers, Yarding, Mechanized Harvesting and Road Building.