



## Shawn Flynn – A Forester and Educator at Heart

Shawn Flynn, one of the original Board members of the BC Forest Safety Council, has dedicated his life to forestry. During his time with BCFSC, he represented woodlots providing a voice small tenure holders across the province. His career spanned four decades, working in various roles ranging from a faller, log truck driver, silviculture worker, specialized forestry trainer and forestry educator.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Shawn worked under contract with the provincial government, teaching forestry on both private and public lands. He implemented programs that focussed on forest management and education. A highlight of his career was training silviculture workers, particularly in First Nations communities, where he taught chainsaw operation, spacing, and business management for spacing contractors.

In 2008, Shawn worked with the Ministry of Education on a pilot project based in Port Alberni. The Alberni District Secondary School (ADSS) Project-Based Learning taught grade nine and ten students to explore natural resource management with academic instruction using fieldwork and outdoor learning as the classroom.



“We built a little one room school and used field work and notebooks to teach the grade nine and ten curriculum out in the field,” Shawn explains.

The students engaged in activities like tree planting, pruning, and road layout, integrating math, biology, and science into their outdoor education. Although the program ended in 2018, its impact



Welcome to the Spring edition of Forest Safety News, covering news about safety topics in forestry. This is YOUR safety newsletter. We look forward to your input and feedback! Email the editor at [editor@bcforestsafesafe.org](mailto:editor@bcforestsafesafe.org) or call 1-877-741-1060.

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continues with similar programs in other regions, including a sister project in Campbell River.

Now retired, Shawn runs *Stone Tree Farm*, a Christmas tree farm in Nanoose Bay. He also volunteers two days a week at Nanoose Bay Elementary School, teaching 45-minute classes that focus on forestry, nature and practical skills taught outdoors. He even hosts field trips twice a year where the kids spend the entire day outdoors.

Through his hands-on learning approach, he encourages students to engage with their environment and develop a love for science and the outdoors. Using a practical approach to learning, he wants kids to appreciate a deeper understanding of forestry and the natural world, inspiring the next generation of environmental stewards.

His lessons range from identifying tree species and bird watching to understanding the mechanics of chainsaws, and the importance

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# Harvesting Safety



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of safety gear. “The kids love to see the chainsaw. I never actually run it but we take it all apart so they can see how the mechanics work” says Shawn.

“ We spend hours underneath the trees next to the school all year long through every season. The trees shed different things every day. And when storms go through, we see branches and other parts of the tree we may not have been able to see if they hadn’t blown down. We pick up pinecones and learn about their cones, flowers and buds. It’s something new every lesson. But its not just the trees, it’s the animals, birds, sounds and smells, something the kids would never experience inside a classroom. My goal is to just get them outside and interested in the world around them.”

Shawn’s dedication to education and forestry has left a lasting legacy in the communities he has served. He often runs into his students who are now grown, with their own kids, who tell him how much his teaching gave them a lifelong love of nature, a deep respect for the environment and real-world skills with practical knowledge they use every day in real life. 🌲



## What’s New

Here is the latest on what we have to offer since December 2024. Find direct links to safety alerts, industry-specific resources, industry information and more to download and/or share with employees, industry and safety peers. And make sure to follow us on social media to stay up-to-date with the latest news. Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

### **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.

### **First Aid Requirements**

– Are you compliant with the new amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation relating to occupational first aid that took effect November 1, 2024? Visit WorkSafeBC and find information and resources to assist employers in implementing these new requirements.

### **BCFSC FIRS (Forest Industry Reporting System) App**

– Get the full version of the BCFSC FIRS App from your App store. Use the FIRS App to manage forms and documents for safety-related paperwork related to SAFE Companies Audit submissions.

### **Training Calendar**

– BCFSC’s in-person training calendar is now fully loaded on the BCSFC website. If there’s something you see that you might want delivered directly to your organization, we can help. [Contact the training department](#) to inquire about bringing courses directly to your preferred location at a convenient time that works for you.

### **Safety Alerts**

– Alerts provide timely information on incidents and issues which cause, or result in, serious or fatal injuries. The alerts we send by email and post on our website are intended to raise awareness and educate industry so we can learn from each other’s experience and effort. Here are the latest alerts from BCFSC and industry.

- **BCFSC Safety Alert of the Month** – Click on the link to see the latest monthly safety alert from BCFSC
- **Industry Alert** – Click on the link to see the latest industry provided safety alerts
- **Manufacturing Weekly Safety Alert** – Click on the link to see the latest weekly alert

To subscribe to our safety alert emails – [Click Here](#)

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## Industry News

Get the latest on industry news from:

- **WorkSafeBC Enews** – subscribe to Insight; WorkSafeBC’s policy, regulation and research division e-Newsletter, Health and Safety Enews, Young Worker Enews and more.
- **WorkSafe Magazine** – WorkSafeBC publishes *WorkSafe Magazine* six times a year to inform, inspire and provide practical tips on a range of topical occupational health and safety matters. It’s free to [subscribe](#) and available online.
- **Tree Frog Forestry News** – daily news with top stories and full news stories on the forest sector in North America and around the world.
- **Forest Enhancement Society of BC (FESBC)** – FESBC shares news and information about BC forestry.
- **Truck Loggers Association (TLA)** – a monthly newsletter and 1/4ly magazine (Truck Logger BC) offering stories from BC provincial forestry perspectives, information and updates.
- **Interior Logging Association** – the ILA insider is a 1/4ly newsletter featuring timber harvesting news, information and updates throughout BC.
- **Western Forestry Contractors’ Association** – The Cache - The Cache is an online space to share wisdom, experience, information, tools and resources generated by the silviculture community.
- **Wood Products Association of Canada (WPAC) News** – read the latest news from WPAC and subscribe to receive the WPAC newsletter.

## Industry Links

**Shift Into Winter** – winter is here. Make sure you know what your responsibilities are as an employer and employee when it comes to driving in winter road conditions.

**Road Safety at Work** – visit Road Safety at Work for resources, webinars, workshops and news relating to road safety for you and your employees.

**WorkSafeBC Announcements** – check here for the latest information on WorkSafeBC policy and regulation updates, resource development, risk advisories and more. 🚧



# Save the Date for the Interior Safety Conference

## Thursday, May 1st, 2025 in Kamloops, BC

Mark your calendar for the **Interior Safety Conference (ISC)** taking place on Thursday, May 1st, 2025 at the Coast Kamloops Conference Centre, in Kamloops, BC. This annual event is a must-attend for BC forestry professionals, offering a unique opportunity to delve into safety-related issues and learn ways to enhance safety across industry.

The ISC is FREE for anyone who works in any phase of the forest industry from silviculture to harvesting to wood products manufacturing.

This year’s theme, **Building Safety Through Shared Experiences**, promises to deliver powerful insights and practical knowledge through a series of compelling presentations by industry experts and speakers.

### Featured Speakers

- **Greg Hemminger:** From the Vancouver Island Construction Association, Greg will discuss the ripple effect of substance use in the workplace.
- **Jennifer Irwin:** Jennifer is a safety and mental health professional from WorkSafeBC. She will share a compelling presentation that focusses on Psychological Health and Safety in the workplace.

### Event Highlights

- **Engaging Presentations:** Hear real-life experiences that will help you think about transforming safety in your company.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with fellow professionals and industry leaders.
- **Relevant Safety Information:** Learn about the latest safety practices and innovations.

The ISC is held in conjunction with the Interior Logging Association (ILA) Conference, which is celebrating its **67th Annual AGM and Convention** from May 1 – 3 in Kamloops, BC. This partnership enhances the value of attending, offering even more opportunities for learning and networking.

### Early Bird Registration

Register before **April 1, 2025**, to be automatically entered to win a BCFSC Stanfield and Toque. Spaces are limited, so don’t miss out—register early to secure your spot!

Join us for a day of learning, sharing, and advancing safety in the forest industry. We look forward to seeing you there!

For sponsorship opportunities, contact Tammy Carruthers at [tcarruthers@bcforestsafesafe.org](mailto:tcarruthers@bcforestsafesafe.org) or by phone at 1-877-741-1060. 🚧

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Programs

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 article focusses 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 on safety headgear, eye protection, footwear, high visibility apparel and respirators. A list of required PPE supplied by both employers and workers should be included. 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 to help 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 and/or safety glasses. An important part of PPE training is explaining its limitations.

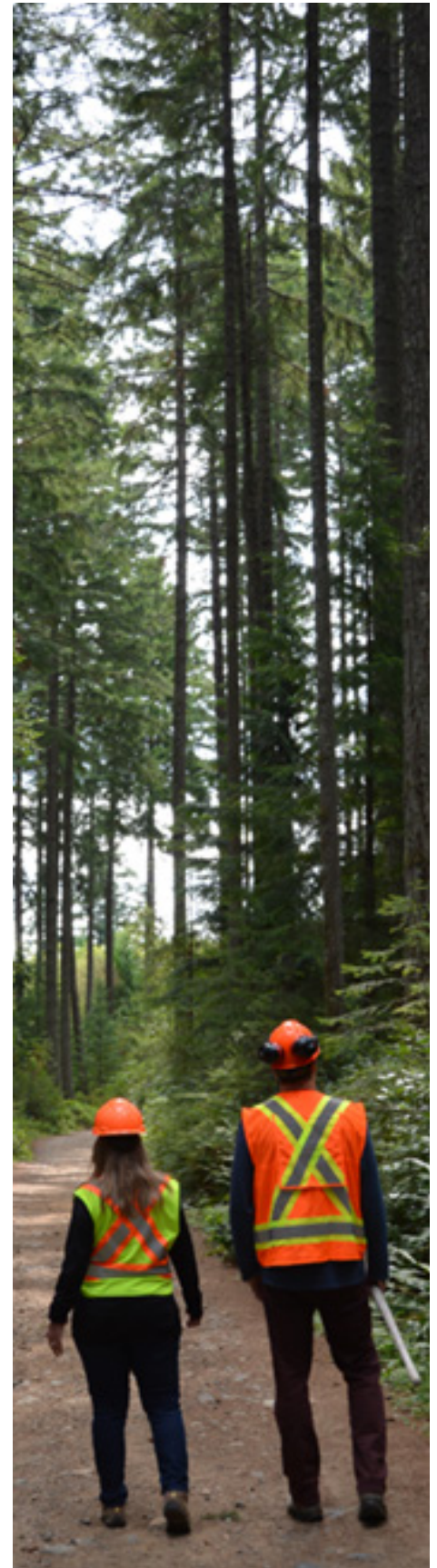
- 6. Supervisor and management support** – Make it easy for workers to wear PPE. Have it readily available and provide options to replace worn out or damaged items. Consider any barriers that may deter someone from wearing PPE and identify situations when someone may be tempted to take a shortcut and 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.



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**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 and is for hearing loss. 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](#) 🚧



## Membership with the BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC)

All companies who pay for their BCFSC contribution through a special assessment collected by WorkSafeBC, can apply to become BCFSC members. By becoming a member, you can nominate Board Members and vote for nominated Board Members to fill vacant roles.

To be eligible for BCFSC membership, companies must belong to one of the following WorkSafeBC Classification Units (CU's):

Rate Group	Classification Unit	Description
DR	703002	Brushing and Weeding or Tree Thinning or Spacing
DR	703003	Cable or Hi-Lead Logging
DR	703004	Dry Land Sort
DR	703005	Forest Fire Fighting
DR	703006	Ground Skidding, Horse Logging, or Log Loading
DR	703008	Integrated Forest Management
DR	703009	Log Booming or Marine Log Salvage
DR	703011	Log Processing
DR	703012	Logging Road Construction or Maintenance
DR	703013	Manual Tree Falling and Bucking
DR	703014	Mechanized Tree Falling
DR	703015	Shake Block Cutting
12	703016	Tree Planting and Cone Picking
DR	703019	Helicopter Logging
17	732044	Log Hauling
IS	714022	Sawmill
09	714019	Pressed Board Manufacture (Wood Pellets and MDF)

Becoming a BCFSC member does not involve any additional effort on your part unless you choose to become more involved.

Board members will be nominated and elected by BCFSC members for two-year terms. Efforts will be made to ensure Board members are qualified to serve on the BCFSC Board of Directors by representing industry sectors and/or having industry skills and experience needed to participate on the Board.

As a BCFSC member in good standing, you will be entitled to attend, speak and vote at the Annual General Meeting, elect the Directors and serve on Board Committees. To apply for membership, email us at: [membership@bcforestsafes.org](mailto:membership@bcforestsafes.org) 🚧



# Daylight Saving Time is Sunday, March 9, 2025

It's time to *spring forward!* At 2:00am on **Sunday, March 9, 2025**, set your clocks ahead by one hour for the start of Daylight Saving Time (DST). Although DST means more daylight in the evenings, it can also disrupt our sleep patterns and daily routines. We have some tips to help make a smooth transition.

## How DST Affects Sleep

The shift to DST can have a significant impact on our sleep and overall health. DST can:

- **Disrupt Sleep Patterns:** The one-hour loss of sleep can throw off your circadian rhythm, leading to grogginess and reduced sleep quality.
- **Impact Health:** Studies have shown that DST can increase the risk of heart attacks, mood swings, and even car accidents due to sleep deprivation.
- **Require Time to Adjust:** It can take several days for your body to adjust to the new schedule, especially if you're a night owl. Give yourself time to adjust.

If you find that Daylight Saving Time is leaving you feeling tired and out of sorts, here are some tips to help manage your fatigue:

1. **Gradual Adjustment:** Start shifting your bedtime and wake-up time by 10-15 minutes earlier a few days before the time change
2. **Morning Light Exposure:** Spend time outside in the morning light to help reset your circadian rhythm
3. **Consistent Sleep Schedule:** Stick to a regular sleep schedule, even on weekends, to help your body adjust more easily
4. **Limit Stimulants:** Avoid caffeine and heavy meals close to bedtime to improve sleep quality
5. **Short Naps:** If you feel very tired, take short naps (20-30 minutes) in the early afternoon to boost your energy without affecting nighttime sleep
6. **Exercise Regularly:** Engage in regular physical activity, but avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime
7. **Prioritize Sleep Hygiene:** Create a relaxing bedtime routine and keep your sleep environment cool, dark, and quiet
8. **Limit Evening Screen Time:** Reduce exposure to screens before bedtime to improve sleep quality.

Even though DST takes time for us to adjust to, it's also worth noting there are numerous benefits of having more daylight in our lives. So, once you're used to the time adjustment, you can enjoy:

1. **Improved Mood and Mental Health:** Exposure to natural light boosts serotonin levels, which helps improve mood and reduce the risk of depression.
2. **Better Sleep:** Natural daylight helps regulate our circadian rhythms, leading to better sleep quality and overall health.
3. **Increased Productivity:** Natural light can enhance concentration and productivity, making it easier to stay focused and alert.
4. **Enhanced Vitamin D Production:** Sunlight is a natural source of vitamin D, which is essential for bone health and immune function.
5. **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Spending time in natural light can help lower stress levels and promote a sense of calm and well-being.

Daylight Savings is also a great reminder to take care of some important household tasks:

- **Change Batteries in Smoke Detectors:** Ensure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are functioning properly by replacing their batteries.
- **Check Emergency Supplies:** Review your emergency kit and replace any expired items.
- **Test Home Safety Devices:** Test your home safety systems and other safety devices to ensure they are in working order. 🚨





# Spring is Near, But Winter Tires Are Still Here

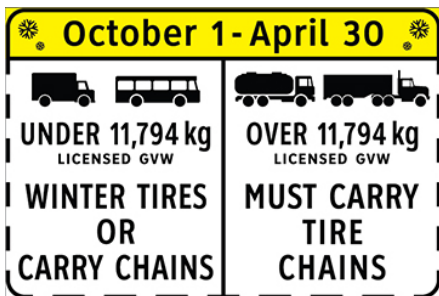
By Michele Fry, BCFSC Communications Director

As I sit here writing this in mid-February with snow still on the ground, I keep checking my weather app for a glimmer of hope that it will melt away and I can start wearing short sleeves again. But Old Man Winter looks like he may hang around for a bit longer and I'm stuck in this itchy sweater for a few more weeks at least.

Hopefully warm spring conditions are just around the corner. But spring doesn't mean sunny, dry conditions. It often brings unpredictable weather conditions that can quickly turn into wet, slick or even, (dare I say it) snowy roads in mere minutes.

## Look for signs

In BC, winter tires or chains are required on [designated BC highways](#) from October 1 to April 30. However, for select highways not located through mountain passes or high snowfall areas, the requirement ends on March 31. But even though some BC roads don't require winter tires, winter tires are still best for safety when temperatures regularly fall below 7°C.



If you drive for work, make sure you consider the weather conditions in your pre-trip inspection and take precautions to prepare yourself and your vehicle for changing road conditions. Road Safety at Work offers a comprehensive list of Safe Driving tips and resources for drivers as well as employers and supervisors.

[Safe Winter Driving](#)

[Employer and Supervisor Tools](#)

[Commercial Drivers](#)

[What Workers Need to Know](#)

[Shift Into Winter – Winter Driving Safety Alliance](#) 

# WorkSafeBC Updates:

## New Regulatory Changes to Emergency Procedures for Hazardous Substances Effective February 3, 2025

WorkSafeBC has updated regulations and guidelines for emergency procedures involving hazardous substances. These updates enhance clarity and further reduce risks to workers in incidents involving hazardous substances. Key focus areas include:

- Emergency Planning Requirements
- Worker Participation
- Inventory of Hazardous Substances
- Risk Assessments
- Emergency Response Plan, Procedures, and Notification
- Training and Drills

Take some time and read through the changes to ensure your safety program meets these new requirements and prepares you for emergencies involving hazardous substances, such as spills, fires caused by or containing hazardous materials, or natural disasters causing spills or other hazardous conditions.

### Available WorkSafeBC Resources:

- [Backgrounder: Emergency Procedures for Hazardous Substances](#)
- Updated Sections: [OHS Regulation 5.97 to 5.104](#) and the new [Guidelines](#)
- [Emergency Planning and Response](#) – how do the new requirements fit in your plans?
- [Emergency Planning for Hazardous Substances - Modifiable Templates](#)

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## OHS Guidelines

The following preliminary issue guidelines are important to February 3, 2025 regulatory amendments. These new and revised guidelines are posted on the WorkSafeBC website for a 60-day preliminary period during which time the stakeholder community can comment and request revisions. If you have questions or comments, please email [regpraconsult@worksafebc.com](mailto:regpraconsult@worksafebc.com).

### Emergency Planning Guidelines – April 4, 2025

- [G5.97-1 Application of emergency planning regulation](#)
- [G5.97-2 Reasonably foreseeable emergencies](#)
- [G5.99-1 Inventory of hazardous substances](#)
- [G5.100 Risk assessments hazardous substances](#)
- [G5.101-1 Emergency response plans](#)
- [G5.102-1 Emergency procedures — Protection and notification](#)
- [G5.102-2 Notifying emergency response agencies](#)
- [G5.103 Emergency procedures — Safe work](#)
- [G5.104 Training and drills](#) 🚧

## WorkSafeBC's average base premium rate unchanged in 2025

WorkSafeBC's sound financial position has enabled improvements in the workers' compensation system for injured workers, while keeping rates stable for employers.

In 2025, employers will see no change to the average base premium rate from WorkSafeBC. For the eighth consecutive year, WorkSafeBC has set the average base rate at 1.55 percent of assessable payroll (or \$1.55 per \$100 of payroll).

Read more by visiting [WorkSafeBC's website](#). 🚧

# OHS advisor: New support for employers and workers

WorkSafeBC has created a new occupational health and safety (OHS) advisor role to expand services for employers and workers.

OHS advisors will assist employers and workers in understanding their requirements under the *Workers Compensation Act* and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation and guide them to available tools and resources designed to assist in the development and maintenance of effective health and safety policies and programs.

An OHS advisor can offer guidance and advice on identifying hazards, assessing risks, and implementing compliant health and safety controls in your workplace. They can also help you prepare for new regulatory requirements. OHS advisors are there to provide support and guidance, and unlike WorkSafeBC prevention officers, they do not conduct workplace inspections or issue orders.

OHS advisors can also work with you on foundational health and safety management systems, including joint health and safety committees, health and safety programs, and worker training and orientation. They can also demonstrate how to use WorkSafeBC's health and safety online tools and resources.

After meeting with you, the OHS advisor will provide you with a summary of the engagement and links to key resources and services.

If you have any questions or would like to speak to an OHS advisor, call the WorkSafeBC [Prevention Information Line](#). 🚧



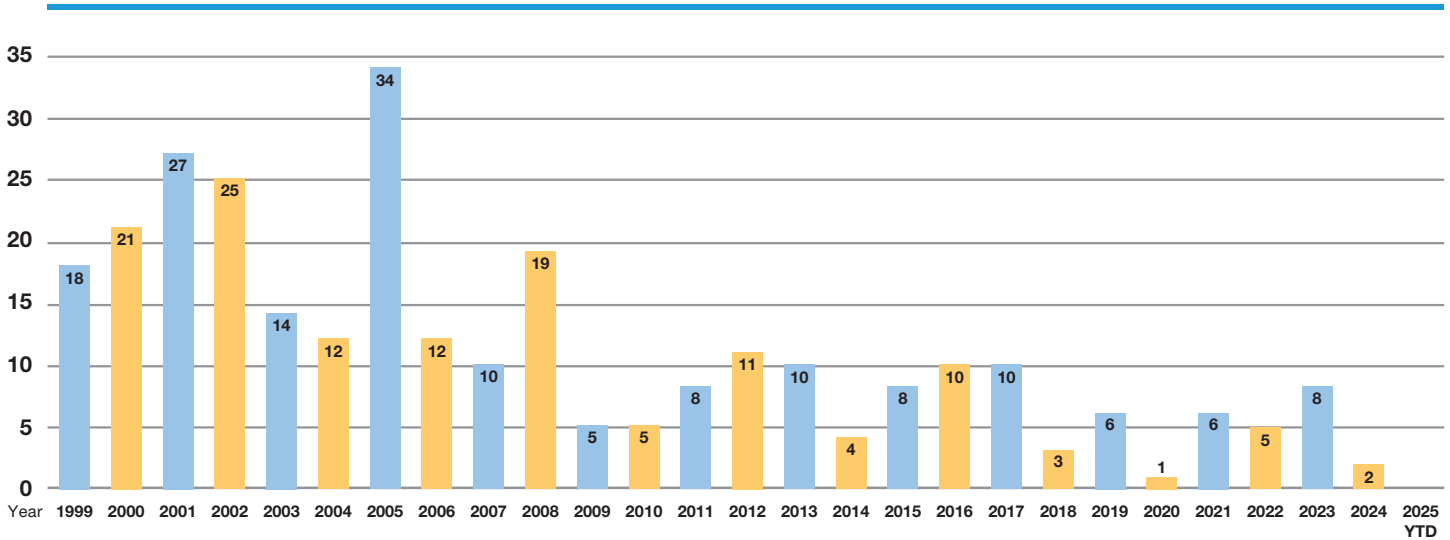




# Work-Related Deaths & Injuries



## WSBC Accepted Harvesting Work-related Death Claims



This information represents the number of work-related deaths by year in BC, up until February 2025.

Since our last publication, there has been two work-related deaths in the BC forestry industry. We extend our deepest condolences to the family and friends of the deceased and our sympathies to all those affected by these tragic incidents.

### FATALITIES

**Injury:** Fatal  
**Core Activity:** Medium Density Fibreboard and other Pressed Wood Manufacture  
**Location:** Interior BC  
**Date of Incident:** Jan 2025  
On January 17th, 2025, a young worker was conducting maintenance work inside a sawdust storage silo at a mill located in Quesnel, BC. when they were engulfed by wet sawdust. The contracted worker was fatally injured.

#### Read the BCFSC Fatality Alert

**Injury:** Fatal  
**Core Activity:** Integrated forest management  
**Location:** Interior BC  
**Date of Incident:** Dec 2024  
On December 16th 2025, a log truck driver was fatally injured during an attempt to tow a log truck that had spun out on an icy road. The log truck was unable to traverse a section of a resource road and became stuck. A second log truck manoeuvred around the stuck truck and was backing up to prepare to tow it. The driver of the stuck truck was caught between the two trucks and sustained fatal injuries.

#### Read the BCFSC Fatality Alert

### Recent work-related incidents reported to WorkSafeBC

The following sample of work-related incidents recently reported to WorkSafeBC may help prevent similar incidents in your workplace.

### HARVESTING

**Injury:** Injury to head  
**Core Activity:** Cable or hi-lead logging  
**Location:** Vancouver Island/Coastal BC  
**Date of Incident:** Nov 2024  
A young worker was positioned beside a guyline stump as the operator of a grapple yarder manoeuvred the guyline. The guyline was hooked under a 10-foot-long treetop. As guyline was tightened, the treetop slid down and struck the young worker. The guyline stump was below a road on a steep slope with accumulations of processor debris in the area.

**Injury:** Fractures, Injury to head  
**Core Activity:** Brushing and weeding or tree thinning or spacing  
**Location:** Vancouver Island/Coastal BC  
**Date of Incident:** Oct 2024  
A silviculture worker was crossing a creek when they slipped on wet rocks and fell about 20 feet to the creekbed below.

**Injury:** Fractures, Injury to chest  
**Core Activity:** Brushing and weeding or tree thinning or spacing  
**Location:** Vancouver Island/Coastal BC  
**Date of Incident:** July 2024

A worker was using a log loader to swing logs forward to the road when the log loader rolled onto its side. The worker, who was wearing their seatbelt, was able to get out of the cab unaided.

### MANUFACTURING

**Injury:** Laceration  
**Core Activity:** Veneer or plywood manufacture  
**Location:** Lower Mainland  
**Date of Incident:** Oct 2024  
A worker was injured when they dropped a 4-foot guarded blade while changing blades on a lathe.

**Injury:** Close call  
**Core Activity:** Sawmill  
**Location:** Northern BC  
**Date of Incident:** Oct 2024  
A fire started in the main line saw box. The fire department attended and extinguished the fire.

### INCIDENT FINDINGS

The summary of findings from a 2022 incident investigation into a serious injury involving a blaster assistant. The worker was struck by a fly rock (a rock propelled from the blasting area) sustaining serious injuries. The incident findings are posted on WorkSafeBC's website. 🚩



## Successful Year-End Audit Submissions

By Mike Sexton, SAFE Companies Manager

We are thrilled to report that the new November 30<sup>th</sup> year-end deadline was a tremendous success! An impressive 86.5% of audits met the new deadline and there were no companies that submitted their audits by November 30<sup>th</sup> who lost their Certificate of Recognition (COR) due to a failed submission. Thank you to everyone with a year-end audit who made this achievement possible. It demonstrates your commitment to maintaining high safety standards across the industry.

### How to Submit Your Audit

To ensure a smooth and efficient audit submission process, please use one of the following methods:

- 1. Email Submission:** Send your completed Submission form and all supporting documentation to [audit.safeco@bcforestsafef.org](mailto:audit.safeco@bcforestsafef.org). This method is straightforward and ensures your documents are received promptly.
- 2. Upload Site:** Utilize our secure upload site to submit your completed Submission form and supporting documentation: <http://app.bcforestsafef.org/upload/>. This option is convenient and allows for quick and easy submission of your files.
- 3. Online Audit Tool:** If you are highly proficient with computers and have thoroughly reviewed the “How to Use the Online Audit Tool” videos, you may use this method. However, please be aware that it is very easy to miss details and submit an incomplete audit. Ensure you double-check all entries before finalizing your submission.
- 4. Physical Submission:** As a last resort, you can submit completed paper forms. Please note that we do not return physical submissions. If you need to keep the paperwork, you can fax your submission to us at 250-741-1068. While this method is still accepted, we encourage digital submissions for faster processing and better record-keeping. 🌱

## 2024 Site Verification Audits

In 2024, the SAFE Companies team conducted 418 site verification audits across the province. These site visits provide valuable insights and feedback to help companies improve their safety practices. Additionally, we conducted 3 BASE Gap Analysis audits identifying areas for improvement and helping companies bridge any gaps in their safety programs as they grow to BASE size companies.

We also carried out 29 WorkSafe Initiated Verification Audits with External Auditors. These audits, initiated by WorkSafe, are crucial in maintaining high safety standards and ensuring that companies are compliant with regulatory requirements. The collaboration with external auditors brings an additional layer of expertise to the audit process. 🌱

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## Total SAFE Certified Companies in 2024

We are proud to announce at the end of 2024, there were 2,692 SAFE Certified companies. This milestone reflects the industry’s commitment to safety and continuous improvement. SAFE Certification shows a company’s willingness to maintain a safe and healthy work environment, and we applaud all SAFE Certified companies for their hard work, perseverance and continued commitment to safety. Let’s make 2025 another successful year, building on the achievements of 2024 and striving for even higher standards in safety and operational excellence. Together, we can create a safer and more sustainable industry for everyone. 🌱



## Underwater Egress Training

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) Falling Safety Advisors, Scott Rushton and David Adshead, frequently travel on floatplanes for work. The nature of their roles often takes them over remote areas where the only safe landing options during emergencies are lakes or other bodies of water. That's why they recently participated in underwater egress training provided by Pro Aviation Safety Training.

This training was eye-opening and an invaluable experience. It taught them the critical skills and muscle memory required to escape a submerged aircraft safely. The scenarios simulated high-stress conditions, such as disorientation and zero visibility, giving them the confidence to act decisively in a real emergency.

For anyone who travels by floatplane, whether for work or pleasure, we encourage you to consider taking underwater egress training. It's a life-saving skill that can make all the difference in a crisis. Being prepared means being ready to get out alive.

### Falling Safety Advisor Activities

BCFSC Falling Safety Advisors and contractors completed the following activities in 2024:

- 6 Falling Supervisor Certifications
- 15 Faller Certifications
- 14 Trainer Quality Assurance Visits
- 17 Trainer & Trainee Quality Assurance Visits
- 17 Company Reviews
- 225 Faller Visits

For more information on the services offered by the BCFSC falling department, you can reach us toll-free 1-877-741-1060. Check out the [Falling Safety Advocacy Program pamphlet](#) for more information on what services are available, free of charge.



**PROAVIATION**  
SAFETY TRAINING LTD  
EGRESS - EUBA - WILDERNESS  
Langley BC Canada

### TRAINING COURSES

**UNDERWATER EGRESS**  
This course is tailored to those in the aviation industry who regularly fly near or over water. We focus on skills for fixed wing and rotary wing craft with a focus on both pilot and passenger precautions



**EUBA - EMERGENCY BREATHING**  
The EUBA add-on package provides participants with the knowledge, understanding and skill to safety deploy and use the EUBA to increase underwater time in an emergency situation



**EQUIPMENT EGRESS**  
This course is tailored to those in the mining and heavy equipment industry who regularly work on or near bodies of water including tailing ponds, lakes, or ditches. We focus on prevention and preparation for equipment operators as accidents happen suddenly and unexpectedly






Tel: 604-575-8689 Toll Free: 1-855-55-ALIVE



info@proaviation.ca www.ProAviation.ca

### Approved Administrators Processes

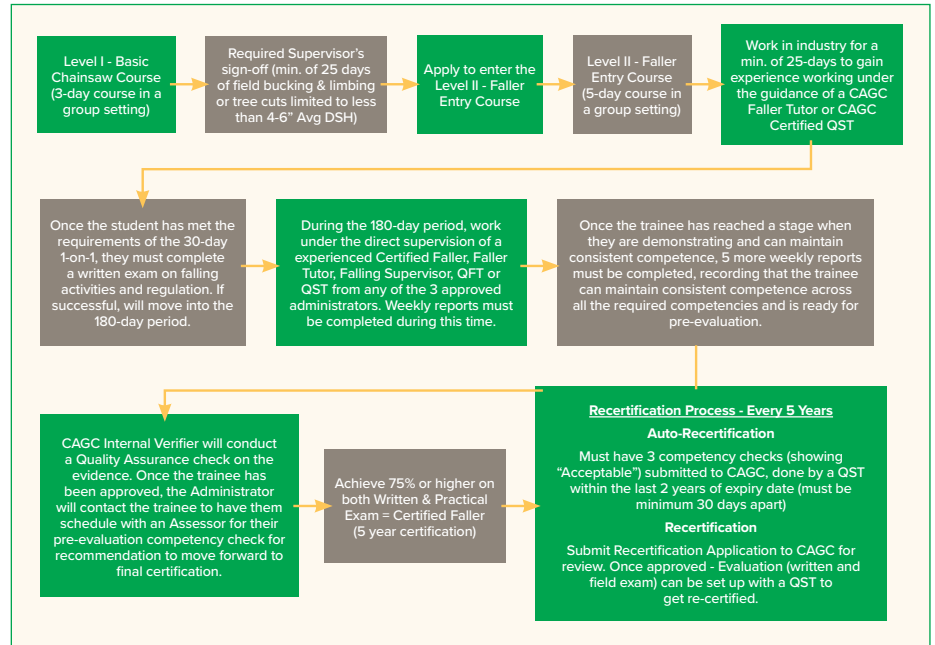
Over the past few years, the administrators of the BC Faller Training Standard, the BC Wildfire Service, the Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors and BCFSC, have been updating their faller training and certification programs. Each organization's Faller Program differs from the other, which can sometimes cause confusion throughout the industry.

Below are flow charts that detail the differences between each of the approved administrator's programs.

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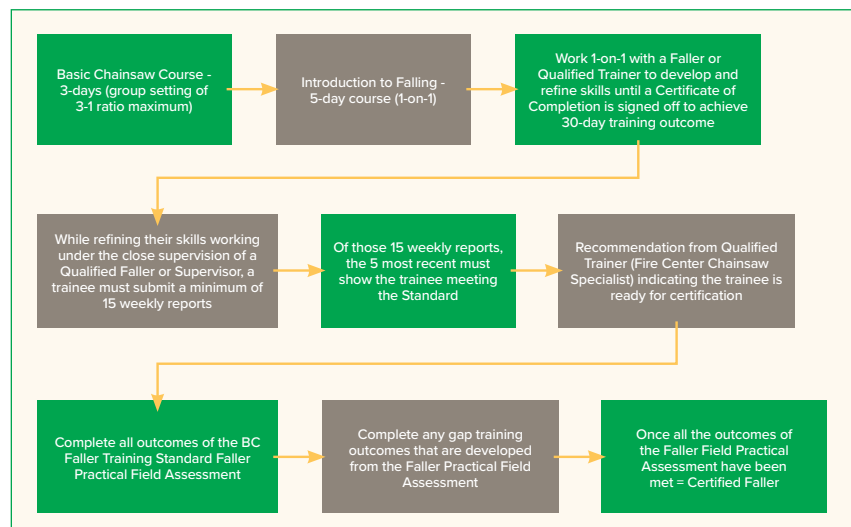


## Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors



## BC Wildfire Service

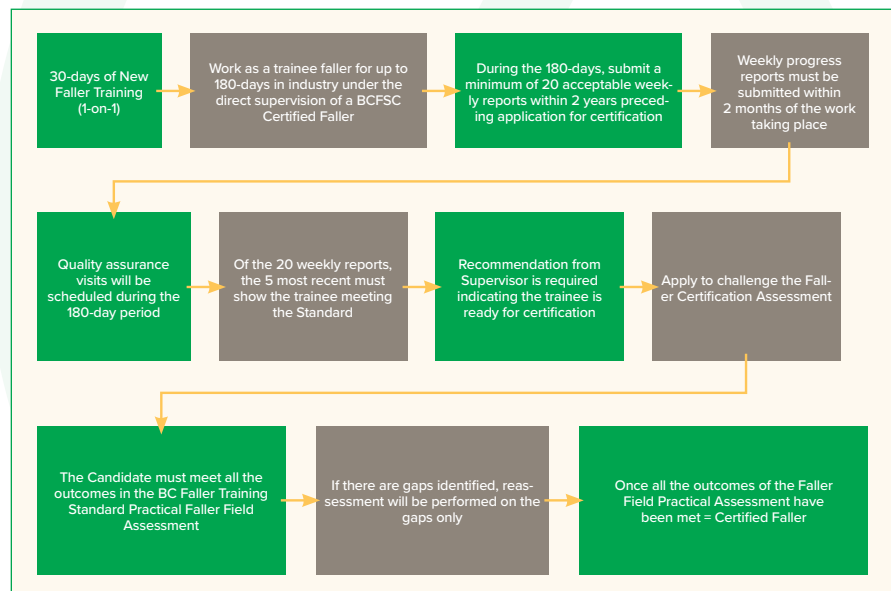
Note: You must be an employee of the BCWS to take their training.



## The BC Forest Safety Council

Note: Once an individual begins training in one stream, they are not permitted to jump to a different stream, mid-training to achieve certification. They may work in different industries; however, the work may not be eligible for their approved administrator's requirements.

If you have additional questions regarding the training and certification process, please contact the relevant administrator. 📞





# I Sure Hope Nobody Gets Hurt Today

By Scott Rushton

There is no question that the forest industry is a high hazard environment. With the work taking place in such a dynamic setting, putting controls in place for all of the hazards in order to mitigate the risk levels can be a significant challenge. A lot of responsibility is placed on falling supervisors to continually identify all of the reasonably foreseeable hazards at worksites.

One of the common and important responsibilities of a falling supervisor is to create and maintain a workable Emergency Response Plan (ERP). Due to evolving technology, it is becoming more and more common to have small falling crews spread out over large land areas. Examples would be two fallers working together on a right of way job or two fallers working together to finish small areas that were unable to be felled by a machine. Due to barriers such as worksite and worker locations, weather, and communication challenges, it can be very difficult to create and maintain a workable ERP. This can even be the case when there are many other workers readily available to assist in the event of an emergency. In some cases where there are only two fallers working, it can become almost impossible to create a workable ERP.

One of the bigger challenges of only two fallers working together in isolation can be creating a workable plan to move a seriously injured worker from the injury site to the designated emergency transportation site. For many years, supervisors and fallers have relied on helicopter support in their ERP's and, for the most part, have had the ability to utilize a support helicopter with a long line system to sling a seriously injured worker from the injury site to the road if needed. With the helicopter long line system now being strongly discouraged in industry as an acceptable practice as part of the ERP, it can be a real challenge to create a workable ERP in many falling situations. It is not always realistic to think it's possible to pack a seriously injured worker out on a stretcher. Challenging terrain and worker locations can make it all but impossible to create and maintain an emergency access trail that would support the ability to pack out an injured worker.

There are several industry groups that take this situation very seriously and are working hard to find a solution. For me, this topic needs to stay on the front burner and a solution cannot come fast enough! I'm really hoping that the safety organizations, landowners, companies, contractors, supervisors, and workers will continue to communicate openly and will collaboratively push forward to find a solution to this safety critical issue.

No worker should ever have to think "I sure hope nobody gets hurt today" because they are not 100% sure if the onsite ERP will work. 🙏

# FTAC's Journey: Achievements and Ongoing Efforts

By Doug Harrison & Dazy Weymer

The Falling Technical Advisory Committee (FTAC) has been steadfast in its mission to promote safety, collaboration, and innovation within the manual tree falling sector. Over the past few years, FTAC has made significant strides in improving workplace safety, enhancing training resources, and fostering a more inclusive industry.

Here's a look at what we've accomplished and what we're currently working on.

## Recent Achievements (2022–2025)

*Commitment to Safe Work Procedures (SWPs) development*

- **2022-2023:** Played a key role in developing SWPs for Fence Posting and Heavy Leaner Bore Cuts – Approved by WSBC April 2024
- **2023-2025:** Established a dedicated sub-committee of 11 volunteers who worked through four meetings to create & advance an SWP for backbarring - waiting for approval by WSBC.

*Collaboration with WorkSafeBC for Faller Safety*

- Examined the lack of hearing tests being done and made progress towards a levy-funded hearing test system for the forest industry.
- Engaged in meaningful discussions to clarify regulations, including updates to high-visibility clothing and the November 1, 2024, First Aid Regulation updates.
- Facilitated conversations on SWPs for steep slope falling and fall protection equipment.
- Shared innovative ideas to improve Emergency Response Planning (ERP), particularly for remote areas requiring helicopter extraction.

- Continued efforts to align the training programs of the 3 approved administrators with the current BC Faller Training Standard curriculum & competency-based certification assessment.

### *Diversity and Representation*

- **2023–2024:** Welcomed six new members, enhancing representation of First Nations and women within the falling community.

### *Support for Supervisors*

- Participated with the development of WorkSafeBC's "Supervision in Manual Falling" videos in 2022.
- Oversaw updates to the BCFSC Felling Supervisor Course in October 2023.
- Advanced projects like Supervisor InfoFlips and Tailgate Safety Talks to provide better resources for supervisors.

## Ongoing Initiatives

### *Mental Health and Wellness*

We've made recognition of mental health issues a priority by hosting targeted conversations and presentations, including:

- Guest speakers sharing personal experiences to inspire and educate.
- Discussions on resilience, human factors, and financial wellness.
- Highlights of initiatives from the BC Construction Association and Island Health.
- Ongoing dialogues to better address the mental health needs of both manual tree fallers and supervisors.

### *Additional Efforts -2024-2025*

- Added a First Nations Forestry (Interior) membership position

to complement the existing First Nations Forestry (Coast) representative.

- Maintained a focus on the Danger Tree Assessment Program to mitigate critical risks that have been identified.
- Advocated for stronger ERP strategies to ensure fallers' safety in the event of an injury.

## Looking Ahead

FTAC remains deeply committed to strengthening collaboration and communication around manual tree faller safety and wellness, so that they remain as key components of the manual tree falling profession. FTAC supports BC fallers with manual falling expertise from people who are currently working in the field, with caulk boots on the ground and saws in hand. The committee knows the implications of changes to regulations, SWP's and concerns of fallers because they do the work themselves.

FTAC provides a voice in these decisions to people who are going to be directly affected by them; the folks who are in the industry right now, falling timber and supervising fallers. The importance of FTAC can not be overstated. FTAC members are proud of what has been achieved in recent years and are excited about the continual improvement activities still to come.

Together, we are building a safer, more inclusive, and innovative future for everyone within the industry. FTAC is always looking for dedicated, passionate people with falling backgrounds to participate on the committee. Please contact the Falling Department at the BCFSC if you are interested in becoming an FTAC member. [faller@bcforestsafesafe.org](mailto:faller@bcforestsafesafe.org) 🌲





## Helicopter - ERP Drill/Demonstration

Is your company ready for an emergency? WorkSafeBC mandates that employers should be prepared for an emergency as part of their regulatory and legal compliance. Companies are required to plan, prepare and train employees for various types of potential emergencies related to their operations.

When it comes to Emergency Response Plans (ERPs), companies need to create site-specific ERPs. They need to consider and prepare for various emergency situations and conduct regular emergency and first aid drills as part of their annual drill requirements to ensure workers understand their roles and responsibilities.

As forestry operations in BC become more remote, emergency preparedness and accessibility could be a matter of life or death. Helicopter emergency services are a good option to include in an ERP. To help companies understand how to build an ERP to include and use helicopter services, the Coast Harvesting Advisory Group, 49 North Helicopters, BCFSC and TEAAM Aeromedical held two half-day training sessions in Campbell River on December 2, 2024.

Close to 100 people attended these sessions, which covered:

- Planning
- Scene assessment
- Reporting/calling for help
- Communication planning
- Equipment and personnel requirements
- Critical interventions to improve patient outcomes
- Helicopter response strengths and limitations
- Types of emergencies that helicopter emergency services can respond to
- Building a relationship and communicating with a helicopter provider
- Testing an ERP

The sessions included a live demonstration of manual loading and long-lining an injured worker. Feedback was very positive, with many participants witnessing helicopter extraction training for the first time. While helicopter extraction is a vital and viable option for first aid and ERP requirements, it can be complex. This type of demonstration and training is crucial for effective emergency response if and when its needed.

If you would like to learn more, visit the BCFSC website and look for [Emergency Response Planning](#) or contact BCFSC Transportation and Northern Safety by email at [transport.admin@bcforestsafe.org](mailto:transport.admin@bcforestsafe.org).



# Forestry Worker ORV Training Courses

Operating Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs), including ATVs and UTVs, is one of the highest-risk activities for forestry workers. Incidents involving these machines can lead to serious injuries or even fatalities.

To address these risks, BCFSC, in collaboration with Tirion Safety Ltd. (formerly Overland Training Canada), has developed a comprehensive training program focussed on the safe operation of ORVs.

There are two program options:

## 1. Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Safety Training

- **Duration:** One day, in-person
- **Focus:** Essential skills for safe ORV operation in industrial forestry settings
- **Learning Outcomes:**
  - » Understanding ORV safety features and PPE requirements
  - » Unloading, loading, and securing ORVs for transport

- » Conducting pre-trip inspections
- » Basic operation controls and starting procedures
- » Loading and securing cargo
- » Effective strategies for safe operation techniques and skills


- **Group Size:** Limited to 8 participants
- **More Information:** Available on the [BCFSC website](#)

## 2. Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Operator Training

- **Duration:** Two days, in-person
- **Focus:** More in-depth, comprehensive training for high-risk conditions in industrial forestry settings
- **Learning Outcomes:**
  - » All outcomes from the ORV Safety Training
  - » Effective route planning
  - » Navigating rough and complex terrain

- » Machine recovery techniques
- » Basics of trailer towing

- **Group Size:** Limited to 8 participants
- **More Information:** Available on the [BCFSC website](#)

General training, open to everyone, is also available through Tirion Safety Ltd. To register for a public session or to request a private group session, please contact Tirion Safety Ltd. at [info@tirionsafety.com](mailto:info@tirionsafety.com) or call 1-604-902-3331. 



# Resource Road Safety

It's that time of year again. Traffic on forest service and resource roads will be increasing in the coming months as the skies begin to brighten and people start heading out to work and play.

Resource roads are built to develop and protect BC's natural resources. They provide access for industrial and recreational users but are not constructed to the same standards as highways. All resource road users play a key role in ensuring safe passage on these roads. Always exercise caution and have an understanding of the risks.

Most resource roads have gravel surfaces and are often single lanes with limited visibility due to roadside brush and sharp, winding turns and curves. They often have soft shoulders, minimal ditches, steeper grades, changing road surfaces with loose or rough gravel and potholes.

Drivers should always read and understand the signs at the start of the road and along the way as they provide important information about the road, radio channel, restrictions, expected traffic and other hazards and obstacles you may encounter while driving.

*Continued on page 17...*





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## Rules of the Road

- Yield to industrial traffic.
- Drive on the right-hand side.
- Adjust your speed according to road and weather conditions.
- Obey the posted speed limit and never exceed 80 km/h.
- Keep headlights and taillights on.
- Stop in safe, visible locations, ideally in pullouts.
- Bridges are often single-lane.
- Do not overtake industrial vehicles unless the driver signals it is safe.

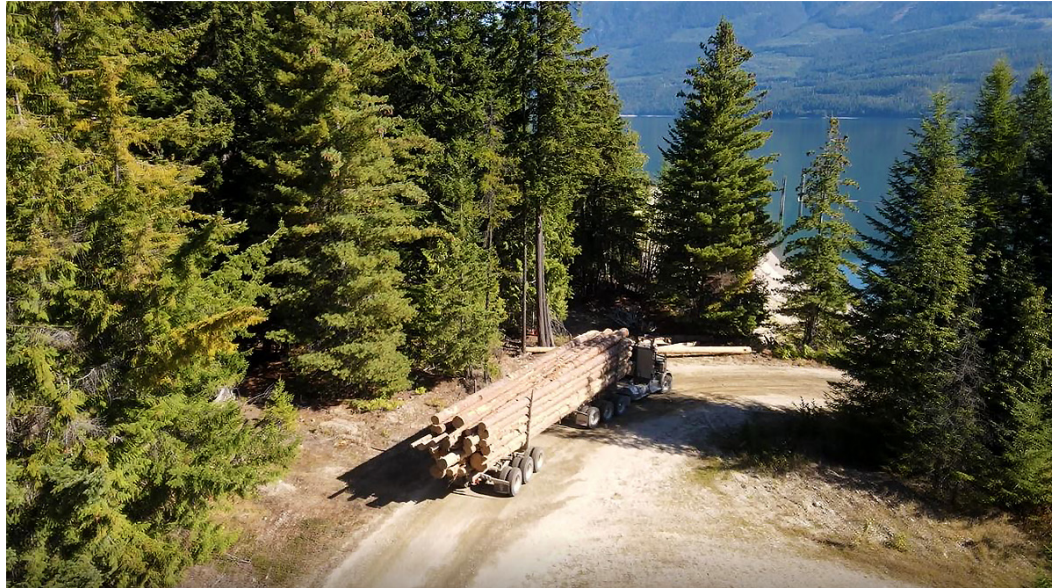
## Expect the Unexpected

- Always plan ahead. Complete a pre-trip plan and share it with a reliable person.
- Stay alert and focused on driving.
- Watch for wildlife.
- If you spot smoke or fire, extinguish it if safe to do so. Report forest fires.
- Dust indicates traffic; watch the road.
- If lost or stranded, stay with your vehicle for easier rescue.

## Mobile Radio Use

If you are using a mobile radio, know where you are travelling and use the posted channels and call protocols. If you are unaware of which channels to use, contact or visit a local mobile radio shop who can provide the correct channels for the area and even program your radio for you.

When you are travelling, you will find the radio and call protocols typically posted at the beginning of the resource road and in areas along the way. Use the following protocol instructions when using a mobile radio while travelling on resource roads:



1. Road Name
2. Kilometres Location
3. “Up” or “Down”
  - a. Calling “Up” when travelling in direction of increasing kilometres signs
  - b. Calling “Down” when travelling in direction of decreasing kilometres signs

*Example: “Sukunka, 10 kilometre, Up”*

If you don't have a two-way radio on an active haul road, wait at the beginning of the road and then follow a vehicle equipped with one. Mirror its actions: pull over when they do, drive when they drive and match their speed. If no vehicle with a radio arrives to escort you, then proceed with extreme caution.

Understanding how to communicate while travelling on a resource road could save your life and the lives of others. Stay safe and informed, and always expect the unexpected.

## Additional BCFSC Resources:

- [Resource Road Safety](#)
- [Resource Road Orientation YouTube Video](#)
- [Radio Use and Road Calling Procedures YouTube Video](#)
  - » [Radio Calling Safety Byte](#)
- [Resource Road Driver Knowledge Unit – Free Online Learning Course](#) to help you prepare for Resource Road driving 🚚







## Safety Innovation Helps with Debris Accumulation



Sharing safety innovations is vital for our industry because it encourages a spirit of continuous safety improvement. By exchanging ideas and solutions, we collectively make our workplaces safer by reducing risks, and prioritizing workers' well-being. Each Safety Innovation submission sent to the Manufacturing Advisory Group (MAG) reflects a commitment to industry-wide safety that helps us move forward together, ensuring safety remains a top priority. We would like to highlight a recent contribution from West Fraser Quesnel Plywood.

West Fraser's Safety Innovation tackled the recurring issue of debris accumulation at the lathe's step feeder, which was previously cleared manually with a long-handled rake. This task was physically demanding and required working in a confined space.

The difficult and challenging manual task was replaced with a **CONVEYOR SYSTEM** featuring a slow-moving drag chain to transport debris build-up to a waste conveyor, which then deposits it in the loader area. The conveyor solution is also movable, allowing the waste conveyor to be lifted out of the way, and also allows the cross conveyor to be easily removed.

During maintenance of the step feeder, the ramp can lay flat for easy access. As an added benefit, any major repairs required to the conveyors can be performed in the shop while production continues.

Employees identified this manual task as a hazard and shared their concerns with the lead team. The maintenance team then developed the conveyor system to effectively handle the debris. The entire system was designed and built by an in-house welder.

[Download a PDF of this Safety Innovation](#) to share with your company.

If you have a manufacturing safety innovation to share, submit your idea by email to Bill Laturnus at [blaturnus@bcforestsafesafe.org](mailto:blaturnus@bcforestsafesafe.org).



## MAG Q4 Workshop

MAG members participated in a workshop focussing on **Workplace Mental Health Skills for Managers**, led by Shirley Hogan from the Canadian Mental Health Association. The workshop addressed mental health and substance use disorders, which affect one in three Canadians, and the impact on employee well-being and performance.

During the workshop, participants enhanced their knowledge and skills through various activities to learn how to support employees facing mental health challenges. The activities included interactive discussions, where participants could share their experiences and learn from one another, and real-case scenarios that provided practical examples of how to handle different situations.

Highlights of the workshop included:

- Building mental health knowledge
- Navigating the language of stigma
- Utilizing the 4R Action Toolkit™ for effective results
- Cultivating approachable leadership practices
- Reviewing the Duty to Inquire and Accommodations
- Applying the 4Rs in urgent situations
- Recognizing healthy boundaries 🧠

## Sinclar Lakeland Sawmill Tour

In December, the MAG members met in Prince George, BC for their quarterly meeting and workshop. Following the meeting, the group toured the Sinclar Lakeland Sawmill. In 2014 the sawmill underwent a rebuild and since then has made significant strides in minimizing fugitive wood dust accumulations and mitigating wood dust hazards. MAG would like to thank Sinclar for sharing their on-site safety initiatives and providing a behind-the-scenes look at their lumber facility. 🧠

## Wood Dust Project Focusses on Retesting Wood Dust for Explosiveness

In late 2024, the BC sawmill industry initiated an important initiative that focussed on retesting wood dust for explosiveness and ignitability. The initiative compared the new results against a 2013 FP Innovations report that focussed is on burnt wood dust, process wood dust, and fugitive dust. Additional samples may be collected from associated wood product manufacturing operations if conditions permit to allow for further examination.

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) has engaged Jensen Hughes, based in Halifax, to lead this initiative, with Kayleigh Rayner Brown as the project lead. BCFSC will support her throughout the process.

Collected samples will undergo Explosion Severity and Ignition Sensitivity testing at Jensen Hughes' laboratory in Halifax. This initiative demonstrates a proactive approach to enhancing safety within the industry with samples gathered from across the country including all major operational and fibre supply throughout BC. The results will better address process dust hazards and prepare for future combustible dust regulations and addressing safety concerns and improving industry practices with dust hazards. 🌱

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## Recent Article Featured in Canadian Journal of Chemical Engineering and Chemical Institute of Canada News

The [Chemical Institute of Canada News](#), featured a research article on ***Integrating Process Safety Management into Canadian Wood Pellet Facilities that Generate Combustible Wood Dust***. João B. P. Soares, Editor-in-Chief of the [Canadian Journal of Chemical Engineering \(CJCE\)](#), also highlighted this article in the December issue.

The project aimed to develop a PSM integration tool for wood pellet production and forest products manufacturing, serving as a foundation for a long-term industry-led strategy. The tool includes a PSM survey for gap analysis, self-assessment worksheets, best practices identification, factsheets, and an implementation strategy. Key contributors were [Kayleigh Rayner Brown](#), [Bill Laturnus](#), [Gordon Murray](#), [Fahimeh Yazdanpanah](#), [Chris Cloney](#) and [Paul Amyotte](#). 🌱

## WPAC's Safety Committee: Helping Make the Industry Safer for Over a Decade

I can't believe it has been over a decade since the Wood Pellet Association of Canada's (WPAC's) Safety Committee was established. Our initial focus was combustible dust in response to tragic sawmill explosions in British Columbia. Over the years, activities have expanded to all health and safety matters.

The committee's mission is "to improve the wood pellet industry's collective safety performance, earn a reputation with regulatory authorities and the public as an industry that is highly effective at managing safety, and learn and share best practices regarding safety." As we enter 2025, I want to reflect on a few past successes and share our Work Plan for the year.

### Past initiatives

I am very proud of the WPAC Safety Committee's work over the past 10 years. We have developed an ongoing, open, collaborative relationship with WorkSafeBC and the BC Forest Safety Council—one that is built on trust. We have even taken our learnings here in Canada and shared them with customers in Japan, holding two safety sessions focused on safe biomass material handling and storage in 2023. Other successful initiatives included:

*Critical Control Management* was our first sustained Process Safety Management (PSM) initiative. It helped improve understanding of operational hazards and ensure the effectiveness of safeguards. It was also the first

*Continued on page 20...*

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initiative where Bowtie analyses were used in the industry. They are now developed for most plant processes.

The *Inherently Safer Design* project focused on the elimination of hazards and treatment of hazards at the source rather than relying on only add-on equipment and procedures.

*Deflagration Isolation* was designed to improve pellet industry practices regarding equipment isolation, with an eye on minimizing the impact of the potential of combustible dust fires, explosions and deflagrations within wood pellet plants.

The *Combustible Gas* report summarizes the key actions plan operators can take to manage the risk of combustible gas in drum dryers.

[wpaclearning.com](http://wpaclearning.com) is a free online operator training program developed by operations for operations to provide training and improve safety competency. I encourage everyone in wood pellet operations to use the program.

## Ongoing and future initiatives

WPAC's Safety Committee continues to listen to the Canadian wood pellet sector and focus on activities that reflect their needs. We have several ongoing initiatives planned for 2025 and a few new ones.

*Process Safety Management (PSM)* is a core focus for the WPAC Safety Committee over the next five to seven years. Around the world, PSM is becoming key to worker safety and managing risk. It protects personnel, equipment and production uptime and is associated with lower maintenance costs, insurance and capital.

THREE PHASE PROCESS		
The implementation of the PSM elements has been broken down into three phases so it is achievable for smaller organizations.		
PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accountability</li> <li>Process safety culture</li> <li>Process risk assessment and risk reduction</li> <li>Management of change (MOC)</li> <li>Investigation</li> <li>Key performance indicators (KPIs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct of operations – senior management responsibility</li> <li>Process knowledge and documentation</li> <li>Human factors</li> <li>Training and competency</li> <li>Process and equipment integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency management planning</li> <li>Project review and design procedures</li> <li>Audit process</li> <li>Regulations</li> <li>Standards and codes</li> <li>Enhancement of process safety knowledge</li> </ul>

*PSM is a three-phased process. In 2025, WPAC's Safety Committee will focus on implementing Phase 1 elements.*

The PSM initiative has been broken into three phases so it is more accessible and achievable. In 2025, the Committee will determine key performance indicators for the entire PSM implementation process to establish what success looks like. Focusing on Phase 1 implementation, we will roll out gap analysis worksheets to all operations.

Every workplace has unique hazards that can impact the safe operation of mobile equipment. These hazards must be identified, assessed and controlled to minimize the

risk of damage or injury. In 2025, the Committee will hold bow-tie analysis sessions and a symposium on *Mobile Equipment Safety* to understand the risks associated with mobile equipment in wood pellet plants.

Drum dryers present the risk of fires and explosions due to combustible dust and conditions that can lead to the generation and accumulation of combustible gas. A symposium held in 2024 initiated the *Rotary Drum Dryer Safety* project, which led to a dedicated Working Group reviewing past incidents and developing enhanced, safer operating procedures. The Group will publish a report and share its findings in 2025.



*The annual Wood Pellet and Biomass Safety Summit is a place to learn more about key safety issues and to network with others in the industry. Photo: BCFSC.*

WorkSafeBC has proposed amendments to part 6, Substance Specific Requirements of the Combustible Dusts section of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*. To help wood pellet companies understand these proposed changes, the Safety Committee will summarize and share them and prompt operations to assess their readiness to implement them.

We will continue to profile *Safety Heroes* every two months to acknowledge employees who support safety. You can submit nominations at [pellet.org](http://pellet.org).

The Safety Committee also plans to hold our annual *Wood Pellet and Biomass Safety Summit*, where we will dive deeper into many critical safety issues affecting the industry today. Stay tuned for an announcement of a location and dates.

New to 2025: Along with the continuing safety initiatives listed above, we will review the impacts of previous safety initiatives, take a closer look at mental health and *musculoskeletal injuries (MSI)* and update *winter fibre truck loading/unloading* standard operating procedures.

We warmly welcome new members to the WPAC Safety Committee. We meet on the second Wednesday of every month at 11 am (PST). Members include the BC Forest Safety Council, the wood pellet and biofuel industry and academic institutions. To read the Work Plan and sign up, please visit [pellet.org](http://pellet.org).



# WPAC's Latest Safety Hero: Brian Penney, Safety Manager at Drax Entwistle

Congratulations to Brian Penney, Safety Manager at Drax's Entwistle facility in Alberta, the latest Wood Pellet Association of Canada Safety Hero. Brian's outstanding contributions have made the workplace safer and better for his colleagues.

Brian continuously meets monthly safety objectives and supports the facility's 55 employees to ensure objectives are met. An example of his dedication was putting in extra time and energy during an 11-day shutdown to see to it that everyone went home safely at the end of every day.

"Brian invests tremendously into the safety of the Drax Entwistle team," said Houston Ukpabi, Plant Manager, who nominated Brian for the award. "He mentors every new hire to make certain they are onboarded and trained properly and guides employees who need support to ensure they can proficiently follow safety procedures. He is constantly fostering positive change at our plant."

We will continue to recognize the efforts of our colleagues who ensure we all go home safely every day. By acknowledging this work, we are reconfirming our commitment to safety and raising awareness of the actions we can all take—big or small—daily to make our sector safer.

Do you know a safety hero? Nominate someone today online [here](#). 🌱



Brian Penney, Safety Manager, Drax Entwistle.



## Empowering Supervisors in Wood Products Manufacturing

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC), offers a comprehensive online **Wood Products Manufacturing Supervisor Training Program**, tailored for the sawmill and wood pellet manufacturing in BC. Developed in collaboration with the Manufacturing Advisory Group (MAG), the program helps enhance a supervisor's skills and knowledge for safer, more efficient operations.

The training program contains six courses that cover key aspects of supervision in a manufacturing setting:

1. **Cornerstones of Effective Supervision**
2. **Due Diligence**
3. **Orientation, Training, and Skills Development**
4. **Hazard Identification, Inspection, and Incident Investigation**
5. **Effective Communication**
6. **Leadership and Professionalism**

Optional online courses including **Contractor Management, Serious Incident and Fatality Investigation, Identifying Hazards and Assessing Risk, and Combustible Dust Training for Managers and Employers** are also available to further enhance supervisory skills.

The program is free and accessible online through the BCFSC Learning Centre. Supervisors can self-enroll and learn at their own pace. For operations with their own learning management system, course materials are available for internal hosting, making it easier to track and manage worker training.

The BCFSC's Supervisor Training Program is a valuable resource for the wood products manufacturing industry, equipping supervisors with essential skills and knowledge for safer, more effective workplace practices.

For more information and to enroll, visit [the BCFSC website](#). 🌲

## Elevating Safety Standards Through Comprehensive Training

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) remains steadfast in its mission to enhance safety within the forestry industry. Our diverse training programs are designed to equip workers with the essential skills and knowledge to prioritize safety in every task.

### Classroom Training: Engaging and Interactive

Our classroom training sessions are highly valued for their interactive format allowing participants to engage directly with experienced instructors and peers. They enhance course material understanding and retention, ultimately contributing to a safer workplace. These sessions not only teach important safety knowledge but also foster a collaborative learning environment where participants can share experiences, discuss challenges, and develop practical solutions together.

Popular classroom courses include Forest Supervisor Due Diligence, Forest Supervisor Leadership & Communication, Incident Investigation, Falling Supervisor and Joint Health & Safety Committee training.

### Online Training: Flexible and Accessible

For those who prefer the flexibility of online learning, BCFSC offers around 40 courses that you can access anytime, anywhere. Our online training library includes essential courses such as Basic Forest Worker, Introduction to Dangerous Trees on Forestry Worksites, Phase Congestion, Serious Incident Investigation, and many more. Most of these courses are free which make them an excellent choice for continuous learning and professional development.

Make the most of our online learning opportunities to stay informed on the latest safety practices.

*Continued on page 23...*

## Blended Training: The Best of Both Worlds

Our blended training programs combine online learning with instructor-led virtual sessions, allowing participants to balance work and training without incurring travel expenses. This flexible approach ensures that you can gain valuable skills and knowledge at your convenience. Courses like BASE Internal Auditor Training and Basic Incident Investigation are prime examples of this effective training model, providing comprehensive training while accommodating your schedule.

## Requested Training Solutions

Understanding that each organization has unique needs, BCFSC offers customizable group training sessions. These sessions can be tailored to fit your team's schedule and location preferences, ensuring effective and convenient training. To secure your preferred date, be sure to book early.

## Commitment to Continuous Improvement

At BCFSC, we are dedicated to continuously improving our training programs to meet the evolving needs of the forestry industry. We highly value participant feedback, which helps us refine our courses to better serve our participants. By incorporating the latest advancements in technical training, we ensure our programs remain relevant, effective, and aligned with your needs. It's this dedication to improvement that promises our training stays at the forefront of industry standards and best practices.

## Join Us in Promoting a Culture of Safety

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For more information and to register for courses, visit our [Course Catalogue](#) or contact us at [training@bcforestsafesafe.org](mailto:training@bcforestsafesafe.org). Together, we can make safety an integral part of every action, process and decision. 🚧







## Pain Control

By Dr. Delia Roberts

Pain is a protective signal that can become overwhelming, especially if it becomes chronic. Pain can arise for different reasons and may not always indicate what is really going on in the body. We've all experienced pain and have all reached for pain medication hoping for relief, but some medications work better in certain situations than others. So, here's some information about how different medications act to block pain, their side effects and some alternative choices - because not all pain responds to all treatments, and not all people respond the same in each situation.

Discussing pain medication should begin with a distinction between opioid (also known as narcotics) and non-opioid based medications. For many years, opioids were the main treatment for moderate to severe pain because of their powerful effect of blocking pain signals. However, we now understand the dangers associated with developing dependence on opioid drugs and the recommendation is to now seek alternatives whenever possible.

### Opioid Medications:

Whether natural or synthetically derived, all opioids work by activating receptor proteins located on nerve cells in the brain and spinal column as well as on other cells in the body. Helpful effects include the blocking of pain signals and lowering of respiration to control coughing, but at higher doses this second effect can become life threatening. In addition, side effects include drowsiness, especially when combined with alcohol or other drugs. Some people also experience feelings of euphoria which may contribute to the development of a dependency. Other effects include constipation, which can be severe. Thus, increased dietary fibre, osmotic laxatives or stool softeners are recommended

when taking opioid medication for more than a few days. Some people also experience nausea and vomiting.

When opioid drugs enter the bloodstream they travel to the liver where they are converted to the active form. Between 23% and 28% of people either convert more or less than average to the active form, which helps to explain why some people experience different effects than others. Examples of opioid drugs include codeine, hydromorphone, tramadol, morphine, and oxycodone, fentanyl and heroin. Although codeine is one of the most prescribed opioid medications in British Columbia it is also one of the ones that has the widest range of genetic variance among individuals, which can make it difficult to adjust the effective dose.

Opioid medications are still most often the first prescribed for moderate to severe acute pain following surgery or an injury where the pain is expected to diminish within days. They are also widely used for chronic pain but because of the risk of developing an opioid use disorder, there has been a trend to move away from long term use other than in palliative and life-limiting diseases or injuries. Despite this, long term opioid use is not always effective for managing pain. There is a high risk of requiring increased doses due to developing a tolerance for the drug and subsequent physical dependence leading to opioid use disorder, with the risk of overdose and death.

When nearing the end of an opioid prescription it is wise to reduce the dose gradually to avoid any physical dependency withdrawal symptoms. These can range from mild to severe and include anxiety, muscle and bone pain, diarrhea, vomiting, poor appetite, restless sleep, chills (goose bumps), shakiness and twitching muscles.

### Non-opioid Medications:

Non-opioid medications, such as acetaminophen or NSAIDs like Ibuprofen, are generally available without a prescription as they are safer than opioid medications and do not produce physical dependency. There are, however, some health risks associated with extended use (more than one week). Furthermore, research indicates that between 30-50% of people do not achieve sufficient pain relief with acetaminophen or NSAIDs. These medications display a "ceiling effect" where increasing the dose above a maximum level does not increase their ability to block pain. Thus, if the recommended dose does not provide sufficient pain relief alternatives should be considered. Pain relief is important for healing and long-term use of these medications is associated with increased risk of complications so staying in touch with your health care team until your pain is resolved is highly recommended.

### Acetaminophen

After opium, acetaminophen is one of the oldest pain medications. It was first synthesized in 1878 and has been widely used to treat mild to moderate pain and fever since the 1950's. Acetaminophen is thought to act by inhibiting cyclooxygenase (COX) enzymes that are involved in signalling pain. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) also work by blocking these enzymes but while they act at the site of the pain production, acetaminophen is thought to block the enzyme in the brain. This is important because COX enzymes are involved in many other pathways including those that improve muscle strength and endurance after physical training. Thus, acetaminophen may be a better choice than NSAIDs for preventing pain during and immediately following physical exercise if the goal is to increase fitness.

At high doses and with chronic use there is a risk of liver damage. Extended use of more than one week is not recommended

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for seniors and those with kidney problems and/or who consume alcohol as these conditions increase the risk of acetaminophen causing liver problems.

## Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs):

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs including aspirin, ibuprofen and naproxen are used to treat mild to moderate musculoskeletal pain, inflammation and fever. As over-the-counter medications they are widely used, but because they act to inhibit COX enzymes throughout the body they not only suppress inflammation at the site of the injury they also have other effects. There are two types of COX enzymes (COX-1 and COX-2), most NSAIDs are non-selective and inhibit both forms of the enzymes. When they are used for more than one week, they can cause complications in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract and kidneys and increase the risk of cardiovascular events in those with other risk factors. Celecoxib is an NSAID that is selective for the COX-2 enzyme and seems to have less effect on the GI tract but may cause more cardiovascular problems.

As with acetaminophen, it is best to start with the lowest recommended dose and gradually increase the amount taken until pain relief is achieved. Exceeding the upper limit does not make the drug more effective but does raise the risk of complications.

## Combining Acetaminophen and NSAIDs:

When the use of acetaminophen or NSAIDs alone does not provide sufficient pain relief it is possible to use both at once because their mechanisms of action are different. This allows for more effective pain relief without increasing the risk of side effects. In addition, both can also be used to supplement opioid medications and hence lower the risk of complications including dependency, neurological and GI side effects. However, some opioid based medications already include acetaminophen so as with all medications it is wise to check with a pharmacist before combining drugs.

## Topical NSAIDs:

NSAIDs can be provided in cream form as well as orally. Topical application allows the drug to be directed to a specific location and in some people may be an effective alternative for pain relief from sprains, strains and overuse injuries. It can also be helpful for some chronic conditions such as osteoarthritis in shallower joints such as the hand where the medication can penetrate.

## Skeletal Muscle Relaxants:

Skeletal muscle relaxants include medications called antispasmodics that are used to treat muscle spasms. They are only available in Canada by prescription, some common examples are cyclobenzaprine and methocarbamol. These medications have several dangerous side effects including being very sedating and a dependency on these drugs can develop. As a result, they are only recommended for moderate to severe muscle pain lasting one to two weeks and are most often used for acute episodes of back or neck pain. Because they cause drowsiness and dizziness, they can increase the risk of falls and operation of a motor vehicle or heavy machinery is not recommended when using these medications. Alcohol and certain other medications can worsen these effects, so it is important to follow the recommended precautions when using them.

## Nerve Pain Inhibitors:

Nerve pain medications are more effective than some other drugs when the pain specifically arises due to nerve irritation or damage. This might occur as part of a musculoskeletal injury or due to illnesses like herpes, shingles or diabetic neuropathy. Some of these medications were developed for other purposes, for example as anti-epileptic medications (gabapentin) or as anti-depressants (amitriptyline, nortriptyline, or duloxetine), but they were found to be more effective at reducing nerve pain and are now prescribed for that purpose.

These medications can interact with other drugs to produce life threatening side effects, and their use should be closely monitored. At higher doses gabapentin can severely lower breathing and can be very sedating.



## Other Medications:

Suzetrigine is a new oral medication that was approved by the FDA for use in the United States for acute moderate to severe pain in adults in January 2025. Although not currently licensed in Canada the release of this drug is exciting because the mechanism of action is based on an entirely new approach. Rather than acting on the central nervous system as opiates do, Suzetrigine works by specifically blocking signal transmission by peripheral pain nerves in a manner not unlike novocaine, the medication used to numb your teeth or skin before a procedure.

Clinical trials have shown a moderate level of effectiveness and there is no risk of developing a dependency. However, the long-term effects are unknown, and some people experience itching, muscle spasms, rash and an increased blood level of an enzyme which is released from muscle (including the heart) with muscle damage. The drug can also decrease the effectiveness of oral contraceptives and may cause temporary infertility. Suzetrigine is metabolized in the liver by the enzyme CYP3A and thus should not be taken together with drugs that inhibit this enzyme including some anti-fungal, antibiotics and anti-viral medications as well as certain drugs used to decrease heart arrhythmias, as well as grapefruit juice.

## Injected medications:

Another approach to pain management is to inject a medication directly into a painful site or joint. In many cases injections can provide relief lasting several months in duration. There are risks associated with these procedures such as infection, or damage to adjacent tissues that can be serious. However, if

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performed appropriately the risks are low. For difficult locations, the physician may use an ultrasound imaging machine to guide the injection into the tissue.

There are many different types of injections. The material injected can range from a sugar solution (prolotherapy) to anti-inflammatory corticosteroids, to healing promoting platelet rich plasma (PRP) to pain blocking medications. Sites such as trigger points in muscle, bursae, and many joint injections can be performed in a physician or allied health professional's office, while other sites in and around the spine and more major nerve blocks are more complicated and should be done in an outpatient clinic set up for minor surgical procedures. If you suffer from chronic pain, it may be worth discussing these options with your healthcare provider.

## Other Modalities:

Although the focus of this article is on medications for pain management it is worth mentioning that there are other means of managing pain that are not chemically based. Some treatments may be more helpful for certain pain causing conditions than others, and different people respond differently, so it may take a bit of exploration to find a method and practitioner that works for you. Some of these alternative treatments are well known such as massage, topical stimulants including heat and

cold, physiotherapy with prescribed exercises, intramuscular stimulation (IMS) and ultrasound. Chiropractic adjustments and acupuncture, one of the oldest known methods of treating pain, are very effective for some people. Newer methods include light therapy, dry needling and shock wave therapy. In addition, professionals such as cognitive based therapy counselors, occupational therapists, podiatrists and osteopaths may provide different approaches to pain management that can be very helpful.

Unfortunately, many of these modalities are not publicly funded in BC and may not be available outside of large urban centres. However, there may be resources available to you through different organizations such as ICBC, WorkSafeBC and work disability services or private insurance. Your local healthcare team can help with navigating through the various ways to access appropriate care, so staying in touch with your primary healthcare provider is a good strategy to develop and execute a pain management plan that works for you.

Managing pain is an important part of healing, but some pain is inevitable, and it isn't always harmful. This makes acceptance an important part of every pain control plan. Successful pain management also includes focusing on improving function and quality of life rather than the absence of pain. Making use of several different resources and

modalities for restoration of movement and lifestyle following an injury or illness is often more effective than a more restricted approach. Whether its medication or other forms of pain relief, there is no one size fits all, and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of pain control is important.

## Resources:

- Government of BC Opioid Guidelines: [Information Sheet](#)
- Health Canada: [Opioid Pain Medications FAQs](#)
- [Self-Management BC](#): Provides free chronic pain guidance and self-management program options to BC residents. It is part of the University of Victoria's Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health.
- [Pain BC](#): Provides information, resources and support (including a helpline) for patients and caregivers for those living with chronic pain.
- HealthLink BC - [Pain Control Information Page](#)
- First Nations Health Authority – [Health through Wellness](#): Supports First Nations individuals, families and communities with health and wellness strategies including pain management resources and support. 🌱







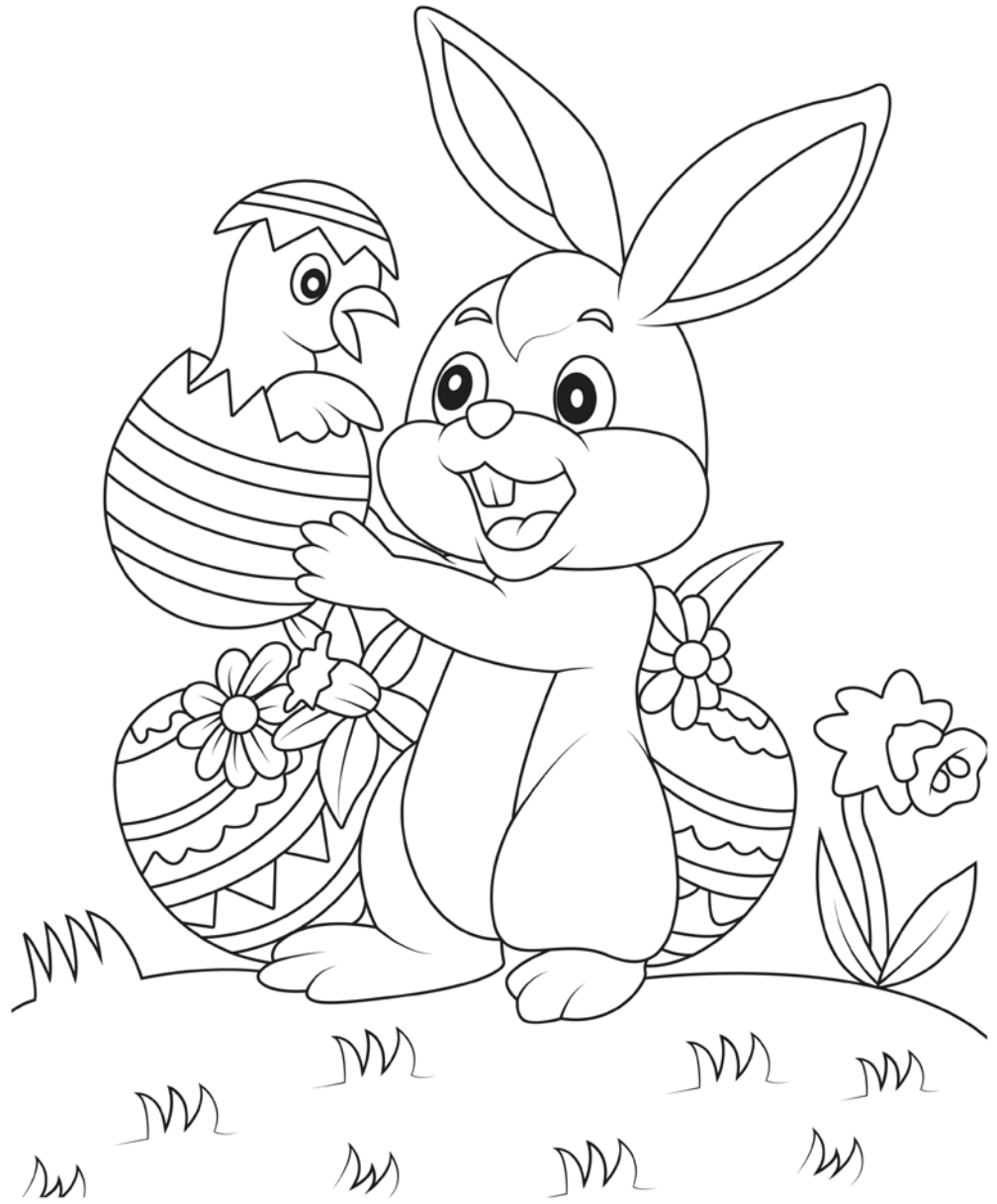
Thanks to everyone who entered our December Colouring Contest. Congratulations to **Andrew, age 4**, who was picked from our random draw. Andrew wins the DRIVEN Toy Logging Truck and we will be sending a special gift to everyone else just for entering!



For our spring issue, colour the Easter Bunny or send us a picture of your own spring artwork and enter to win a toy chainsaw. Ask an adult to email us a photo of your artwork with your first name and age and we'll put your name into the draw.

### How to Enter:

- Colour the picture or send us your own drawing.
- Have an adult take a picture of your artwork and email it with your name, age and your mom/dad's email address to [editor@bcforestsafe.org](mailto:editor@bcforestsafe.org)
- Submit your entry by 4pm, Wednesday, Friday, May 2, 2025.
- Kids aged 3 – 12 are eligible.
- All entries will be put into a random draw to win the toy chainsaw. The winner will be contacted via their parent's email address and the winning entry will be featured in the June 2025 issue of the Forest Safety News. 🌲



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