

Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

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

November 2016

Prevent Hazardous Roadside Debris

In January 2016, while a road crew was completing some blasting work, a piece of shot rock landed in the crown of a small hemlock tree, adjacent to the right-of-way. The shot rock was about 2 feet wide, and was roughly 60 feet up the tree. It would have been hard to see for the next phase of workers, and could have seriously injured someone.

The good news is that the supervisor wrote up a hazard report, took a photo of the shot rock, and handed the report off to the next phase. He discussed what would need to happen with the bunching supervisor, and they made a plan to protect future workers in the area, and to remove the rock.



The Issue

Hazardous roadside debris has been identified by many groups as a serious threat to their safety on the job. When material like shot rock, boulders, root wads, decked logs, road spoil, processor debris or pushed over trees are perched above a work area – usually on a steep roadside – all the workers who must work below or travel through are at risk.



Preventing Hazardous Roadside Debris

In 2015 and 2016 a group of road builders, fallers, contract supervisors and engineers worked on ways to prevent hazardous roadside debris. This group collected industry feedback through a survey ([see Forest Safety News, page 12](#)), and from this feedback, built the following recommendations. Please apply these recommendations if you are a *planner, contract supervisor, road builder, engineer, falling supervisor* or any other person involved with designing, building roads and logging on steep slopes.

- **Supervisors involved with falling, road building and logging discuss the right-of-way (R/W) strategy together.** By collaborating before work begins, supervisors can ensure each phase is setting up the next phase for success: e.g. fallers remove a R/W width that aligns with the loader's reach, additional spoil sites are established.
- **Road builders and supervisors discuss deviations from the planned centerline location beforehand,** because centerline location impacts: R/W falling, deflection for yarding crews, road alignment and stream crossings. Under certain circumstances road builders need the latitude to slightly modify the proposed centerline location, but this should only be done with effective coordination across phases.



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- Where fallers will be used to fell the R/W and the setting, **fallers manufacture (buck) R/W timber to manageable lengths.** This recommendation facilitates **loading out R/W wood prior to falling the setting.** When fallers manufacture (buck) the R/W timber, road builders or loaders have more flexibility for organized placement of logs in narrow situations, and more timely R/W removal prior to falling the setting. The loading equipment must be able to reach all R/W wood, and where feasible, loaders should remove hazards (e.g. knocking down remaining danger trees within their reach), and ensure they don't create new ones. Loading out wood first makes falling the setting safer, and removes the requirement for a picket fence of trees, which is not cost effective.
- **All phases provide hazard documentation to the following phase.** This standard industry practice must take place even when phases won't be on site together. Ideally, hazards are shared both verbally and with written documentation. Identifying a hazard and making a plan to control it can save someone's life.
- **Supervisors train workers to prevent roadside debris hazards.** Engineers, planners, fallers, road builders and loaders must all prevent hazardous roadside debris, as noted in the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. Supervisors must ensure their workers are minimizing these hazards, and should be on site enough to provide workers with feedback.

OHSR 26.80 Creating additional hazards

Road or skid trail construction, including any blasting activity, must be carried out in a manner that prevents hangups, hanging broken tops or limbs, leaners, sidebind of pushed trees, or similar hazards which could endanger fallers or other workers.

- **Contract/logging supervisors make phases accountable for hazards due to roadside debris.** Road builders should be provided with standards for road construction that include roadside debris management. And once these standards are in place, supervisors should hold back 'as-built certification of roads' where roadside debris is hazardous and doesn't meet contract standards.



Do your part to prevent hazardous roadside debris.

Additional Safety Resources:

Safety Meeting Slideshow: Watch the seven minute video and play it at your next tailgate or safety meeting to help your workers understand the problems of and solutions to hazardous roadside debris. Go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rANydIx-aA&feature=youtu.be>

Posters and Brochures: Request your free poster or brochure from the Council, or go to this site to print your own!

<http://www.bcforestsafesafe.org/node/2858>

