

Safety Alert of THE MONTH

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

September 2015

Growing Your Business Safely

Sometimes there are new opportunities for forestry contractors to increase production capacity or take on new endeavours. Contractors may find it challenging to start up a new operation while maintaining their safety program and injury free operations. Consider the following ideas to help you grow in the right direction.

Leadership:

- New employees and subcontractors won't be familiar with your safety culture; you need to show them. Make time to visit operations and confirm that they are qualified to do the work. Ask them how it's going, what they like, and what they think should change.
- When you see a problem, take action and get it fixed. Help your crew get it right so that unacceptable practices don't become part of the "way we do things around here".

Supervision:

- Delegate authority to an onsite supervisor you can rely on. Don't micro-manage and trust them to provide the appropriate leadership and guidance to the crew.
- Supervising the crew is not a talent most people gain simply because they're a great operator. Take time to coach new supervisors and enroll them in supervisor training.
- Ask supervisors to conduct regular inspections. Review them together during your regular meetings.
- Supervisors need ready access to information and answers. Share your network of reliable contacts and provide quality communication tools.
- Make sure supervisors understand the limits of their knowledge and authority, and when to seek guidance rather than charging forward on unsteady ground.



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Find the Right Expertise:

- The right operator – one that fits your organization – is worth their weight in gold. Confirm their credentials and references before they are hired.
- An employee who doesn't adhere to your processes will be a source of frustration and possibly a costly injury. Hold out for the employee you can be confident will deliver.



Integrating New Equipment:

If expansion involves new equipment, the learning curve can be steep.

- Take full advantage of supplier expertise. Many equipment dealers provide on-site operator training and follow-up. It's part of the purchase price, so view it as a *return* on your investment.
- Read the owner's manual. Have the operator read it. There's a wealth of information in there about the machine systems, especially safety features, and how they work. If the manual is missing, use the manufacturer's website to find one.
- If you know another contractor using the same equipment, ask them for a few pointers. Stop by their site and observe their operator in action.

Help is Available:

- Use your health and safety association. Advisors at the BC Forest Safety Council have worked with many organizations and have observed the safety programs that they use. They can help companies design and fine tune their program and procedures.
- Work with your Licensee. They have accountabilities as the owner of the work and they are interested in you delivering results. They often have operations in a few regions and probably know other companies that have overcome the same challenges you face.
- Talk to your peers. Getting folks home safely each night is not a competition. Build relationships with other contractors, share your good ideas, and find out what works for them.
- Ask your industry association. They have an overview of the technology and methods that are working for other contractors. Check with the Truck Loggers Association, the Interior Logging Association, North West Loggers Association, Western Silvicultural Contractors' Association, etc.

