

# Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

October 2011

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

## Heads Up for hazards

*The surveyor had just finished throwing her last plot of the day when the wind picked up. She marked the plot center and pocketed her marker. The cool fall wind, which had been consistent all day now suddenly picked up as the clouds moved in threatening rain or snow. 'Perfect timing' she thought as she turned and began picking her way through the block back to the truck. Now that it was late October, her boss wanted the crew to be off the bush roads before dark. At this time of year daylight faded quickly and the area was prone to sudden weather changes. The radio crackled to life "You planning on spending the night? Let's go!" From high on the block she could see her partner Sam was already back at the truck. "Yeah, yeah I'm coming. Looks like just in time too. I think it might snow." She replied. There was a brief pause then Sam was back on "Yeah, I couldn't hear any of that with the wind. Just hurry up"*

*She picked her way down the hill and headed towards where the truck was parked at the block entrance. Sam was sitting on the tailgate as she approached. She reached the top of the embankment and started down to the road when a sharp snap caught her attention. Turning to face the treeline she saw a spruce branch had broken free and was sailing towards her. She ducked instinctively as the branch swept past and landed heavily on the road between her and Sam. "Holy geez!" Sam exclaimed "Let's get out of here before the rest of the tree comes down too!"*

**Overhead hazards are an issue for all forestry workers - whether you are a field tech working alongside a retention patch, a log hauler removing wrappers from a load or an equipment operator leaving the cab to perform an inspection.**

### Potential overhead hazards to workers on the block



Hung up tree



Limbs from standing dead timber



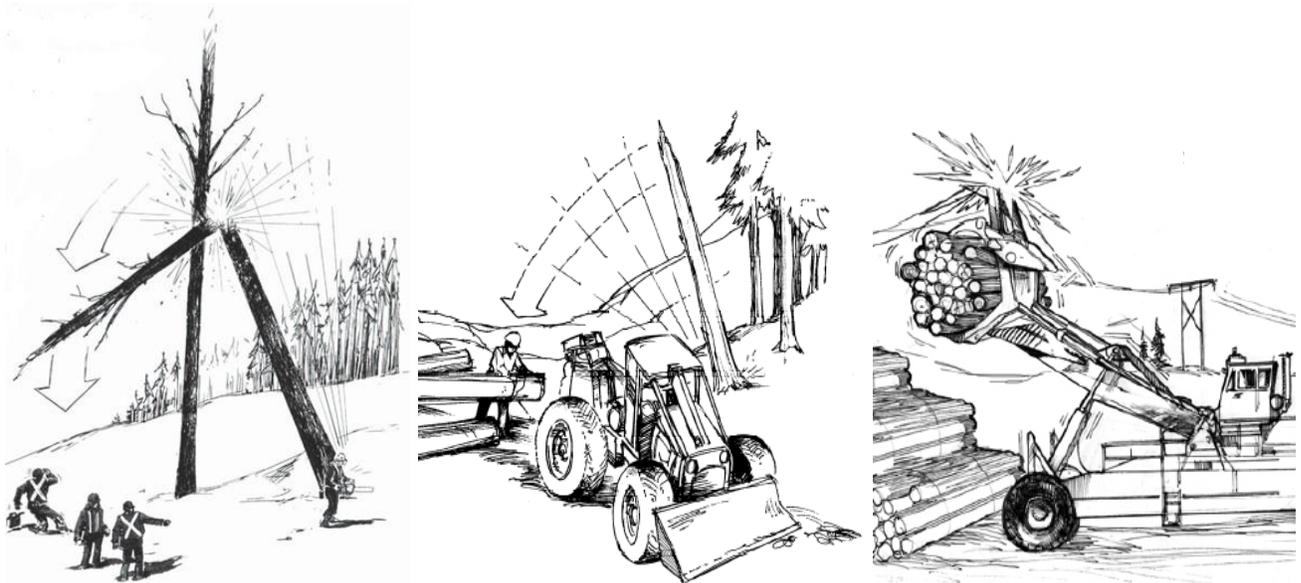
Snow load



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## Potential overhead hazards elsewhere in forestry work



For more information on these hazard bulletins click on the picture or visit <http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/hazardalerts.asp>

### Recommended Action

- **Worksites should be cleared of overhead and other hazards as possible. Identified hazards should be clearly marked and communicated to the crew.**
- **It may be helpful to familiarize workers and supervisors with the Beaufort wind scale (see attached example) to recognize hazard levels while in the field.**
- **Company policies around wind and weather events should be reviewed periodically and all workers should be aware of evacuation procedures.**
- **Companies may wish to add overhead hazards to their pre-work inspection or site inspection form.**
- **Supervisors may wish to encourage reporting from their crew, then act quickly to correct them once reported. Closing off with the crew by discussing how the hazard was dealt with shows workers the company is committed to the safety management system and will help to encourage future reporting.**
- **Where possible do not stop or park vehicles or mobile equipment where there is an obvious hazard.**
- **During orientations all workers should be made aware of potential hazards including those that seem 'common sense'**
- **It is recommended practice for field workers to check the weather forecast prior to heading into the bush for the day and prepare accordingly.**

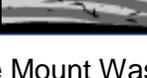


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## Additional Resources

### Beaufort Scale

Beaufort number	Wind Speed (mph)		Effects on Land
0	Under 1		Calm; smoke rises vertically.
1	1-3		Smoke drift indicates wind direction; vanes do not move.
2	4-7		Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; vanes begin to move.
3	8-12		Leaves, small twigs in constant motion; light flags extended.
4	13-18		Dust, leaves and loose paper raised up; small branches move.
5	19-24		Small trees begin to sway.
6	25-31		Large branches of trees in motion; whistling heard in wires.
7	32-38		Whole trees in motion; resistance felt in walking against the wind.
8	39-46		Twigs and small branches broken off trees.
9	47-54		Slight structural damage occurs; slate blown from roofs.
10	55-63		Seldom experienced on land; trees broken; structural damage occurs.
11	64-72		Very rarely experienced on land; usually with widespread damage.
12	73 or higher		Violence and destruction.

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[BC Forest Safety Council RADAR packages](#) – Sector specific information on recognizing risks.  
[Bcforestsafe.org/RADAR](http://Bcforestsafe.org/RADAR)

