

Safety Alert of THE MONTH

March 2012

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

Emergency Response – The Golden Hour or 6 hours?



Phil took a quick look at the skidder tires stacked on the side of the road. It had just finished snowing and the sun was coming out. Perfect, thought Phil, he had been working in the snow and cold all week. Some sun will be nice. The spot on the road was just wide enough to change the tires on the skidder without being in the way of passing trucks. Phil had just turned his back when the top tire slipped off the stack and started to roll down the road. Phil saw the movement and reacted quickly. The tire was rolling towards the shop truck but he felt he could easily reach it and knock it over before it hit.

However, as he ran towards the tire, he slipped on the snowy road and his legs went underneath it.

The first aid attendant arrived right away, assessed Phil and determined that he had two broken legs –an injury that required rapid transportation to the hospital.

The foreman didn't hesitate to call for medical help. There was no local cell coverage but he had his satellite phone to call 911. The 911 dispatcher obviously had no idea where they were located. The foreman spent 10 minutes just giving them driving directions to the block. "Forget that", he said, "send me a helicopter. Here are the GPS coordinates".



By the time Phil was packaged on the spine board and loaded into the ETV, the weather had closed in again and there was no sign of the helicopter. "We'll have to drive down the mountain and meet the ambulance at the highway", said the foreman.

Six hours later, Phil was finally at the hospital.

After a serious incident, your best chance of survival is to arrive at the hospital within "The Golden Hour". Practice emergency responses at your workplace to minimize the transportation time to hospital.



Safety Alert of THE MONTH

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

Recommended Preventative Actions:

- Always consider the effect of gravity on your workplace. What might fall, roll or shift and can that action hurt me?
- Slips, trips and falls are common incidents in forestry operations. A minor slip or fall can lead to a major injury, as shown in the example.
- Emergency response drills need to be conducted on a regular basis. Practice responding to different types of incidents and make it as realistic as possible.
- Consult local emergency service providers when you are developing and testing your Emergency Response Plan (ERP). Check with the local helicopter company regarding their procedures and limitations. Clarify requirements of ambulance responders. Include that info in your ERP.
- Emergency equipment should be checked on a regular basis. Spill kits, radio batteries, first aid supplies, Emergency Transport Vehicles (ETVs) all need to be in good shape.
- Emergency communications need to be checked at each new location. Find out how you are going to communicate if something does occur.
- Determine what information needs to be communicated to emergency dispatchers. For example: What is the best access road into the area? Will someone be able to guide the ambulance to the location? Will the ETV meet the ambulance?
- Ensure that the geographic coordinates (lats and longs or UTM's) for appropriate helicopter landing sites are part of your ERP.
- Post clear Emergency Response Procedures in each vehicle and machine.

Additional Resources:

Injury Management Webinar: Slips, Trips & Falls

These free sessions cover strategies for managing slip, trip and fall injuries. These webinars are designed for crew bosses, supervisors, safety coordinators, joint OH&S committee members and company managers.

More Information

http://www.bcforestsafe.org/Injury_Management_Webinar

