

Safety Alert of THE MONTH

April 2012

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

Break up – Now is not the time to be complacent

Break-up was finally here, it was time to shift gears and start thinking about the upcoming summer season. It was Dave's first day back after a month of working the night shift. Although he was tired, he had an easy day ahead of him- all he had to do was deliver some parts out to camp.

There was little traffic on the roads and Dave had driven to the camp at least a thousand times. He had to remind himself to pay attention as he drove on auto-pilot around the sharp curves. He took his eyes off the road to find his coffee and when he looked up - half the road was gone! He slammed on the brakes; stopping just in time to avoid driving into the hole. *Wow, he thought, I've seen culverts wash out before but nothing like this!*

He called the office to report the problem, radioed a warning to the other road users and marked the wash-out for other drivers to avoid.



com·pla·cen·cy

A feeling of contentment or self-satisfaction, especially when coupled with an unawareness of danger or trouble.

Working conditions in the forest environment can change very rapidly. Spring conditions can bring unpredictable road surfaces (dust, mud, or ice), changeable weather and new additions to the work environment (think bears or summer students).

Don't let down your guard now that break up is here- complacency can lead to serious incidents.



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Recommended Preventative Actions:

- Remain focused on your work. Fatigue and complacency are common after a long shift or season. Get out of your vehicle or machine to take a mental break and get some air. Have someone travel with you to help you watch for hazards and keep you alert.
- The change of seasons often creates new or different hazards. Focus your crew talks on identifying what changes may be happening; new employees need the proper safety orientation, training and follow-up.
- Driving into washouts can be fatal, either in a truck or an ATV. Slow down and give yourself extra time to make driving decisions. Keep your cab free of distractions and pull over for phone calls, major channel changes or to read the map.



- Spring is a good time to get your pickup stuck. Test road conditions before driving through questionable sections, carry chains or a winch if necessary and have a check in procedure so someone will come looking for you, if you do get stuck.
- Review your company's incidents from the previous season to avoid similar events this spring; update your program where necessary.
- Slippery conditions exist for vehicles and for workers on foot.

Trips, slips and falls are very common causes of injuries in the woods. Take some time to review prevention strategies for safe driving and discuss appropriate footwear at your next crew talk.

Additional Resources:

Injury Prevention 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_Prevention_Webinar

How do you deal with complacency where you work? Do you have photos to share of road washouts or other driving hazards? Join the conversation on the BC Forest Safety Council's forum: forum.bcforestsafe.org

