



Using the past to predict the future...



Courtesy Rob Moonen, BC Forest Safety Council CEO

One crucial feature of science is that it makes evidence-based predictions. This evidence comes from several sources. Data can be collected to characterize the current state of our industry and recordings over time can reveal short-term trends. In addition, various techniques can be used to evaluate what the forestry industry was like in the past and how and why it changed.

I think it's safe to conclude that applying science to predict the future of the perfect storm presently facing our industry is leaving many of us asking – What's next?

While there are many questions about the future of the forest industry, there is some value in learning from the past to predict the future.

For many employers, contractors and workers engaged in forestry, the present state of our industry brings back memories of the U.S. recession of 2007-2009 and the collapse of the U.S. housing market. During this time, BC's harvest volume dropped from 76.5 million m³ in 2007 to 51.7 million m³ in 2009. The future of the forest industry was in crisis and the employment prospects resulted in an exodus of experienced workers. Over time, industry activity resumed which saw workers returning to the job after time away, or new workers being hired. With the resumption of operations, industry's safety performance suffered. While the factors that contributed to the 2007-2009 economic collapse are different than they are today and the immediate future of our industry is still in question, we can take the opportunity to learn from our past to predict the future. With time, industry will see some recovery in activity for different reasons (collective bargaining, market improvements, etc.) and industry will be calling some people back to work.

Fortunately, the same principles of preventing injuries can be

Coming Events

April 6-7 *Western Conference on Safety, Vancouver BC*

May 7 *Interior Safety Conference, Kamloops BC*

COVID—19

Currently, the Public Health Agency of Canada has assessed the public health risk as low for Canada. As lead agencies for British Columbia, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and the BC Ministry of Health are closely monitoring the situation and continually reassessing the risk level as new information becomes available.

Following the advice from the Ministry of Health and the BCCDC, residents are reminded and encouraged to take the following steps to stay healthy and prevent the spread of infections by:

- washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds;
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands;
- avoiding close contact with people who are sick;
- cough or sneeze into your sleeve and not your hands;
- staying home if you are sick to avoid spreading illness to others;
- remembering that diseases can make anyone sick, regardless of their race or ethnicity.

applied in gearing an operation up, as managing in difficult times. In both cases, these principles help control total cost. The fundamental question that leadership of an operation should ask is, "Are we ready to do business well as we start the crews back up?"

Here's a basic check list:

Do we have a solid design and plan for our operation?

Do people know how to use the equipment the way we expect to operate reliably?

What training is needed to refresh or make sure people really work safely and effectively?

Are the right tools in place, ready to be used?

Do I as the supervisor have "walk around" times scheduled to check that the operation runs the way we expect and that people have the skills, knowledge and tools to operate in a way to avoid negative surprises.

After a period of down-time, a solid reliable start-up plan ensures good quality, cost control and injury prevention. A poorly-planned, rushed start-up costs money and can lead to surprises that can injure people and damage equipment.

While it's difficult to predict when operations will resume and to what extent, let's ensure we do our part to set your business and people up for success with a well-thought start-up plan that ensures:

Every forestry worker goes home safe. Everyday.



HAZARD ALERT

Injury: Fractures and lacerations (1 worker)

Industry: Forestry, Trucking

Core Activity: Log hauling

Location: Interior B.C.

Date of Incident: 2020-Jan

An empty log hauler was travelling on a forest service road to a logging operation. The log hauler failed to negotiate a corner and rolled over an embankment, injuring the driver. The prime contractor for the logging operation transported the driver to hospital.

Injury: Concussion

Industry: Manufacturing - Wood & Paper Products, Trucking

Core Activity: Chip hauling / Pulp and paper mill

Location: B.C.

Date of Incident: 2020-Feb

A wood chip truck driver was struck by the top swing door while unloading wood chips from the trailer. The driver, who temporarily lost consciousness, received first aid on site before being transported to hospital by ambulance.

Injury: Multiple fractures

Industry: Forestry

Core Activity: Manual tree falling and bucking

Location: Northern B.C.

Date of Incident: 2019-Nov

A worker was conducting manual tree falling activities. While walking the escape route, the worker fell and was injured. The worker was transported by air to meet an ambulance, which then transported the worker to hospital.

Injury: Injuries to arm

Industry: Manufacturing - Wood & Paper Products

Core Activity: Wood preserving

Location: Lower Mainland

Date of Incident: 2020-Jan

As a young worker was using a manual scraper to remove a foreign object from an end roll of a running conveyor, the worker's arm was pulled into the end roll.

Injury: Multiple fractures

Industry: Forestry

Core Activity: Cable or hi-lead logging

Location: Interior B.C.

Date of Incident: 2019-Nov

After setting chokers, a worker was struck by a log that was knocked loose by the yarder carriage. The worker received first aid on site and was transported to hospital by helicopter.

SAFER Council Meets in Kelowna



The SAFER Council recently held a meeting in Kelowna in conjunction with the USW Local 1-423 annual health and safety conference. SAFER Advisor, Ron Corbeil (above) used the opportunity to give the participants an overview on what SAFER has been doing and to seek suggestions on new opportunities. Ron discussed the new sawmill and logger orientation modules that are on the SAFER website (www.safer.ca) as well as reviewing the Mindfulness video collection.

Ron went over the serious injuries in the forest industry from 2010 to 2015 that SAFER compiled and reviewed the FP Innovations 3 Point Contact video that SAFER helped to fund. Ron gave an update on the WorkSafeBC research grant on reviewing the structural integrity of logging truck cab guards that SAFER along with the University of Oregon are working on. The participants reviewed statistics derived from the Redshirt Foundations research into sawmill violence and the Workplace Violence training that SAFER and the BC Federation of Labour's Health and Safety Centre developed. The participants reviewed a sawmill inspection video and discussed the need for more training videos. The participants reviewed the 2020 SAFER WorkSafeBC research grant proposal to research training opportunities to improve our ability to identify hazards in our workplaces.

If you have ideas for SAFER please discuss with one of the SAFER Council Board Members:

- Co-Chair-Pat McGregor – USW, Local 1-423
- Co-Chair-Grace Cox – Canadian Forest Products
- Al Biekse– USW, Local 2009
- Derek Nelson– Western Forest Products
- Glen Cheetham – USW, Local 1-1937
- David Murray – Gorman Brothers
- Doug Wood – USW, Local 1-405
- Steve Trommel - Teal Jones Group
- Ed Kent – USW, District 3

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