



Mark your calendar!

Ontario Forestry Safety Review Forums

Industry review of health and safety legislation and certification

Do you work in Ontario's conventional logging industry? Then Workplace Safety North (WSN) wants to talk to you. This spring, WSN is hosting a series of industry forums across Ontario in order to gain feedback from chainsaw-cutters and cable skidder operators with regard to health and safety training and ways to continually improve practices to prevent workplace injuries. This provincial initiative is in the early stages of gathering industry feedback for future updates to health and safety training, as well as the promotion of this training within the workplace.

Time for change

1. Industry trends - fatalities and injuries

At each forum, participants will learn about the latest hazard alerts, fatalities, and provincial injury trends for the Ontario forestry industry. The intent is to raise awareness of the types of incidents occurring and gather feedback with regard to prevention. Compared to all workers in all industries across the province of Ontario, at 39 per cent, forestry workers in conventional harvesting operations have the highest percentage of all lost-time injuries due to contact with objects or equipment. This speaks not only to the dangerous equipment and high exposure to workplace hazards, but also to the need for Ontario forestry workers to stay vigilant and maintain a strong safety culture.

2. Timely review of certification program

As 2014 marks the 25th anniversary of the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) health and safety certification program for forestry cutters and cable skidder operators, the forums represent a timely opportunity for program review. The MTCU cutter-skidder certification program is law for anyone operating the equipment in a logging operation in Ontario. Although overall injury trends within the logging industry continuing to decline, forestry firms continue to have one of the highest lost-time injury rates with 1.72 of every 100 workers injured in 2012. In addition, one fatality has occurred in each of the last three years in conventional logging operations. The industry is aware these injury and fatality rates are unacceptable, and through updated training and increased awareness within the workplace, the goal is to improve overall safety for this sector.

How you can contribute

Based on your own extensive and unique work experience, you can take this opportunity to propose and discuss changes, provide feedback, potentially join the volunteer advisory committee, and help shape the future certification requirements for your industry.

Once the forums have been completed, an advisory committee will be formed. Comprised of industry volunteers, WSN and provincial health and safety partners, the committee will meet following the forums to summarize the ideas and suggestions, and bring forward recommendations. This process will take some time and improvements will occur gradually – your contribution is vital to the success of this safety review.

Forestry Safety Review forums coming soon to an Ontario community near you – mark your calendar!

Looking forward to seeing you – forums are still in planning process, so please confirm dates and locations with your WSN consultant.

April 2, 2014: Legion Hall, Hanover, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

walterkoch@workplacesafetynorth.ca

April 3, 2014: Best Western, Simcoe, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

walterkoch@workplacesafetynorth.ca

April 2014: Bancroft brianlawrence@workplacesafetynorth.ca

April 2014: Magnetawan berniestockermans@workplacesafetynorth.ca

May 2014: Barry's Bay berniestockermans@workplacesafetynorth.ca

For more information, please contact your Workplace Safety North consultant.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

Take a moment and note your thoughts on the following questions, along with any additional information or feedback you'd like contribute.

1. What are specific areas in the cutter or cable skidder operator training or the certification standard that require more attention to make the system more relevant and meaningful to your operations? Are there any gaps?
2. What are some of your challenges in following the safety procedures and/or training standards?
3. What do you like about the existing training standards and certification?
4. What best practices do you find effective in ensuring safety procedures in your workplace?

Please share your responses either in person at your community's industry forum and/or by e-mail to WSN.

WHY ATTEND?

- Learn about industry trends, including recent fatalities and injuries.
- Access WSN consultants, industry information, and resources.
- Volunteer opportunity to sit on provincial advisory committee
- Update health and safety knowledge for your organization.
- Provide your input and recommendations on training and prevention measures to help reduce injuries.