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Ministry of Forests and Range
Association of BC Forest Professionals

FOREST PROFESSIONALS PROMOTE SAFE WORK PRACTICES

VICTORIA – New safety standard guidelines adopted by the Association of BC Forest Professionals will promote a culture of safety across British Columbia’s forest sector, Forests and Range Minister Pat Bell announced today.

“Encouraging safe work practices within our forest industry is a shared responsibility,” said Bell. “I applaud the association and its members for taking that obligation seriously and making safety an integral part of their daily work.”

The association’s Standards of Professional Practice and Code of Ethics were amended in January to include clear guidelines for interpreting its safety related bylaws. The new guidelines reinforce that safety must be considered at all stages of a member’s professional practice.

“Our guidelines for interpretation show leadership in recognizing that professional work contributes to safety. While the guidelines don’t suggest our members are safety experts, they do emphasize that forest professionals must incorporate safety into all aspects of their professional work,” said Mike Larock, ABCFP director of professional practice and forest stewardship. “Forest professionals are one of the keys to making sure all forest workers go home safely at the end of the day.”

The association and Ministry of Forests and Range worked collaboratively on the new guidelines, as well as the safety-related bylaws originally passed by the association in 2008. The changes address recommendations from the auditor general’s 2008 report on forest safety, aimed at reducing injuries and fatalities across the industry.

Since 2008, more than 2,400 forest companies have been certified as SAFE Companies, along with the BC Timber Sales component of the Ministry of Forests and Range, with another 4,679 working toward certification. More than 50 mills and manufacturing plants have also registered with the BC Forest Safety Council.

“Government is committed to the highest-possible standards for forest-sector safety and injury prevention,” said Bell. “We continue to work with the association, the BC Forest Safety Council and our industry partners to ensure every logger, truck driver and mill worker stays safe.”

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The ABCFP has more than 5,600 members, one-third of whom are employees of the Ministry of Forests and Range. Ninety-two per cent of members voted to support the new safety bylaws.

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