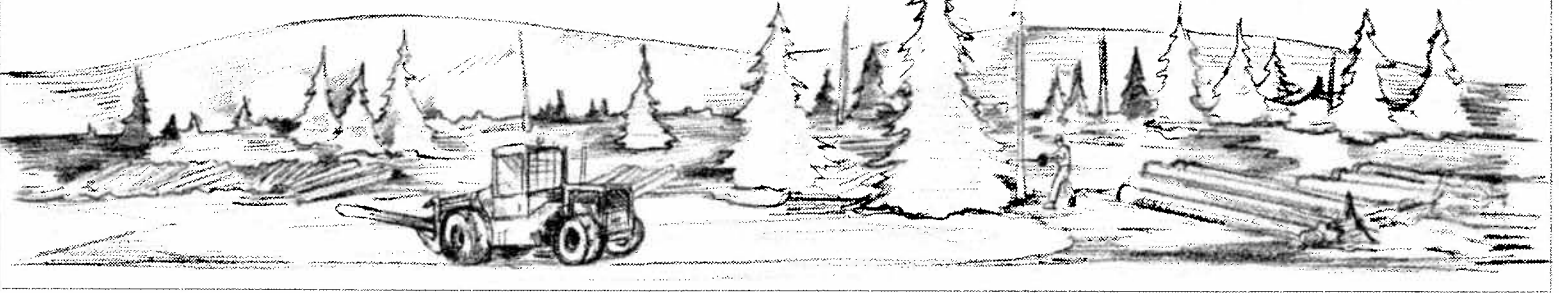


Northwest Forestland Worker Safety



• PACIFIC NORTHWEST AGRICULTURAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CENTER •
• SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY MEDICINE • UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON •

Issue 1

March 2002

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About this Newsletter...

Welcome to the first issue of the Northwest Forestland Worker Safety Newsletter!

What is the purpose of this newsletter?

To share current information between Northwest organizations promoting safety and health in the forest industry. This is a format we can use to pass along our successes, learn from each other and hear about activities and upcoming events.

Who is this newsletter being sent to?

This first mailing has been directed to the people who participated in the PNASH Center's project to develop the Occupational Research Agenda for NW Forestlands in 1999-2000. This will include many of the leaders and active folks in logging and forestry safety and health around the Northwest.

How frequently will the newsletter be published?

This is a pilot issue and there is currently no plan for a regularly scheduled publication. The PNASH Center anticipates producing issues at the beginning of each year or when there are few other networking opportunities.

Do you have any comments about the newsletter?

Please send your correspondence to:

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Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

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The PNASH Center was awarded NIOSH funding for continued activities from October 2001 to September 2006. Our Center is happy to welcome two new members. Dr. Mike Yost accepted the position of Director of the Center's Multidisciplinary Research Core. Dr. Yost is an associate professor in the Department of Environmental Health and has worked with our Center over the last four years heading the Vibration and Noise Exposure in Northwest Forestry Project. Dr. Patricia Boiko, who joins us as Director for Research-Outreach, has eighteen years of experience as a Family Practice physician and clinical researcher, as well as several years of experience in research and outreach activities.

Selected Center Forestry-Related Activities:

Noise and Vibration. Our key research project targeting the Northwest's forest industry is headed by Dr. Yost and Rick Neitzel and focuses on occupational vibration and noise exposure. The preliminary study results indicated that forestry workers performing selected tasks have high exposures to vibration and noise. In order to reduce worker's risk for hearing loss, Vibration White Finger and back disorders, investigators made the following recommendations:

- Hearing conservation program should be continued, including worker training on hearing protection, regular audiometric testing, and efforts to implement noise controls.
- Engineering and administrative controls, and personal protective equipment should be in place to help reduce hand-arm and whole-body vibration exposures.

In 2002, Dr. Yost will submit a proposal to NIOSH to continue research efforts in this area. This proposal will explore the use of task-based assessments to further understand the risk factors from noise, hand-arm vibration and whole body vibration, and to develop practical controls to reduce exposure levels.

Ergonomics. Dr. Peter Johnson, a new PNASH investigator, has received funding to develop and test a portable device to measure postural and vibrational exposures in the field. This device will be tested on loggers in the NW to determine its ability to simplify the collection of field measurements.

The International Mountain Logging and 11th Pacific Northwest Skyline Symposium 2001 – A Forest Engineering Odyssey, December 10-12, 2001. The Symposium gathered forest engineers to share information on new programs and research. This year, the PNASH Center joined the UW College of Forest Resources to organize a new session, Worker Safety. One purpose of the session was to reintroduce forest engineering professionals to a safety and health perspective and inspire these engineers to integrate worker safety objectives into their own research. The session was facilitated by our Center's Director, Dr. Richard Fenske, who opened the session with a review of the Occupational Research Agenda for Northwest Forestlands. Other topics in the session included: Helicopter Logging in Alaska – Surveillance and Prevention of Crashes; Occupational Vibration and Noise Exposures in Forestry Workers; Changes in Injury Rates Association with Use of Feller Bunchers in West Virginia; Prospects for Using Synthetic Rope in Logging: First Look and Future Research; Burns Creek Stewardship Project (evaluating production improvements after professional training).

Proceedings for the Symposium are available at, <http://depts.washington.edu/sky2001/proceedings/welcome.html>.

Wildland Firefighting Safety and Health. Marcy Harrington is completing her Master's in Public Affairs at the UW with a project identifying research opportunities to improve wildland fire fighter safety and health. The priority areas were developed through analysis of data from the Wildland Firefighter Safety Awareness Study, the National Interagency Fire Center's SAFENET (a reporting system for fieldworker safety concerns), and expert interviews. The report will be available in March 2002.



The Northwest Forestland Safety Newsletter is sponsored by the **Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (PNASH)** at the University of Washington. The Center conducts research, develops interventions, and provides professional education to improve the safety and health of workers in farming, fishing, and forestry. The PNASH Center is funded through CDC/NIOSH and the State of Washington.

<http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/>

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Your submissions are welcome.

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AKOSH, Alaska Department of Labor

Phil Oldering, 907-283-2956

AKOSH and federal OSHA are offering field training for timber falling on May 20 – 22, 2002 at Prince of Wales Island, Alaska. Timber specialists will conduct infield exercises on timber falling and bucking techniques using demonstration and hands-on instruction "in the woods."

This 2 1/2 Idaho day course aims to:

- Introduce open face cutting techniques for Alaska timber.
- Identify the common causes of falling and bucking accidents and fatalities.
- Identify safety techniques for falling timber.
- Identify common violations and understand specific federal and state regulations.

This course is available to timber industry workers of all experience ranges including cutters, hooktenders, siderods, operation superintendents, and any other interested parties. Training is provided at NO COST, however participants should register, arrange for their own travel and lodging, and provide their own personal protective equipment. For more information contact Phil Oldring at 907-283-2956.

NIOSH Alaska Field Station in Anchorage

Brad Husberg, 907-271-5259

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) established its Alaska Field Station in Anchorage, in 1991 after identifying Alaska as a high-risk state for traumatic worker injuries. Since this time the NIOSH Alaska Field Station has conducted surveillance and injury prevention efforts for work-related fatal and non-fatal injuries.

NIOSH uses the Alaska Trauma Registry (ATR) to study nonfatal work-related injuries. The ATR is a comprehensive database of hospitalized injuries in Alaska for the years 1991 through 1999. The ATR identified 319 injuries in the logging industry for this time period. After calculating an injury rate, the logging industry is found to have the highest rate of any industry for nonfatal hospitalized injuries (23/1,000 workers).

The most common causes of these injuries include being struck by an object (130), falling (46), and being cut by a powered hand tool (34). The most common types of injury include a fractured bone (160), open wound (46), and sprain/strain (23). Body regions most commonly injured are feet and legs (103), arms and hands (57), and head (50).

The NIOSH Alaska Field Station has been working with the logging industry, agencies, and individuals to help decrease the number of work-related injuries. Projects include collaboration with the University of Washington, Pacific Northwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center and the Alaska Department of Labor.

Idaho's First Aid & Safety Training Classes

Dave Kludt, 208-935-1216

This spring the Logging Safety Bureau and the Associated Logging Contractors is offering classes across Idaho on first aid, CPR and emergency rescue. There will also be information on the federal requirements relating to hazard communication, blood-borne pathogens, hearing conservation, and tagout-energy control. Please call ALC at 1-800-632-8743 to register.

DATES AND LOCATIONS

Potlatch (3/1), Bonner's Ferry (3/4), Sandpoint (3/5), Coeur d'Alene (3/6), St. Maries (3/11, 4/8), Orofino (3/12), Deary (3/13), Pierce (3/18), Grangeville (3/19), Donnelly (3/20), Kellogg (4/9), Emmett (4/15), St. Anthony (4/17), Salmon (4/18)

OSHA and Potlatch – ID Logging Partnership

Van A. Howell, 208-321-2960 or van.howell@osha.gov

Recognizing the hazards associated with logging, Potlatch Corporation approached OSHA with a proposal to improve logging safety. Both groups worked together to develop a partnership program between the timber owner/manager and OSHA. To date the Potlatch Corporation is the only partner under this program with OSHA in Idaho.

This program promotes partnerships between OSHA and timberland owners and their logging contractors. To become a partner, the timberland owner must provide contractor oversight to ensure contractors effectively manage site safety and health. OSHA verifies that partnership requirements and program goals are attained. Logging contractors under the partnership agreement will be inspected less frequently than non-partners. The goals of the project are to:

- Reduce logging injuries and illnesses in Idaho through effective partnerships with qualifying timberland owners.
- Improve employer safety and health programs.
- Reduce the need for on-site visits while achieving a higher level of worker safety and health.

Potlatch Corporation has done an outstanding job conducting oversight safety and health inspections. Last year, Potlatch Corporation had 36 active logging contractors, with an insurance experience modification rate (EMR) as low as 0.67 with only four contractors exceeding 1.0. An EMR of 1.0 is given to a company with an average claims rate. Companies with a rate less than 1.0 save a tremendous amount of money.

OSHA has also provided felling technique training for Potlatch Corporation and their contract loggers. In 2001, OSHA contracted with a professional logging instructor, Mike Thurlow, to demonstrate various cutting practices, including the open face cut. While this practice may not be appropriate for every cut, when used, the tree is controlled by the hinge wood all the way to the ground. The butt of the tree is easily cleaned up with a nice smooth surface, and as a result of a low stump, more board feet are obtained from the tree. In addition, the open face method eliminates the need for a raised back cut. According to Tom Smith, a Logging Safety Representative for Potlatch Corporation, many of the logging contractors now use the open face method as their preferred method of tree falling.



Oregon OSHA

Marilyn Schuster,

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Oregon OSHA is in the final stages of a multi-year project to evaluate and revise the OR-OSHA standards for Forest Activities. The standards are developed through the Forest Activities Advisory Committee. This Committee, which meets every month, involves representatives from industry, labor, academia, equipment manufacturers and government. In addition, subcommittees have met more frequently to work through the more difficult problems.

One of these subcommittees focused on equipment operator protection. They have worked closely with the equipment manufacturers, engineers, and national and international standards groups to achieve harmonization of standards. The subcommittee recommended a forestry equipment guarding approach based on the hazards workers face in the field. OR-OSHA's proposed standard will likely require guarding of equipment based on their use and the identified hazards. We plan to complete the committee work on the draft standard in March, with a proposal and hearings after that time.

In addition, we have found an emerging issue in Oregon; potential exposure to silica during the summer months. There were overexposures in at least one operation in eastern Oregon last summer. We will be working closely with the Forest Activities Advisory Committee to develop an approach to protect workers without imposing parts of the standards which require exposure evaluation. We will also be working with the industry on an outreach and education effort prior to next summer's dry season to help workers avoid potential exposures.

Other News in Oregon

Randy Ingraham, with the Association of Oregon Loggers, has accepted a new position, Loss Control Consultant for SW Oregon. As a licensed insurance agent for Oregon Workers' Compensation System, SAIF Corporation, he will be working with AOL members in the AOL/SAIF insurance program in Douglas, Josephine, Jackson, Klamath, Lake, Curry, and Coos counties to help companies with their safety programs and OSHA compliance. Congratulations Randy! AOL is in the process of hiring a replacement for Training Consultant.

A new Logger Training Seminar was offered at the Oregon Logging Conference on February 20, 2002. Oregon SIC (State Implementation Committee) sponsored the seminar, which provided information on:

- 2002 Oregon OSHA Logging Safety Rules Division Six Codes
- Fire Safety and Operator Requirements
- Ways to Find and Keep Good Employees

One professional logger credit was awarded for each seminar.

Synthetic Rope Research at OSU

Dr. John J. Garland, PE, John.Garland@orst.edu
Forest Engineering & Timber Harvesting Extension,
Oregon State University

OSU Forest Engineering continues its investigation on the use of synthetic rope to replace wire rope in some harvesting operations. This project is funded by the Worksite Redesign Grant through Oregon's Occupational Safety and Health Agency. Two years of research have been completed and two more are underway.

The synthetic rope is AMSTEEL 830 manufactured by Samson Rope Technologies of Ferndale, WA. It is composed of ultra high molecular density polyethylene fibers. Equally strong as steel at the same rope diameter but weighing only a tenth of the weight, synthetic rope is appealing to loggers for a variety of reasons:

- Pulling, carrying, climbing and rigging with synthetic rope is easier than with steel.
- There are no "jaggers" (broken wires on steel ropes that make handling dangerous).
- Earlier synthetic ropes tried in logging were found unsuitable due to excessive "stretch" and stored energy; plus, wear issues were never resolved. AMSTEEL has acceptable stretch characteristics and wear is now being evaluated.

Our research confirmed, by measuring heart rates in the OSU Student Logging Crew during a variety of tasks, that using synthetic rope versus steel wire rope is less difficult for crews. For example, one task conducted by male and female workers involved carrying a 111 pound steel wire rope up a 40% slope contrasted with the same activity carrying an 18 pound synthetic rope. Heart rates were lower in most tasks while using synthetic ropes compared to steel. Practical measures of worker preference for using synthetic ropes further confirmed workload reduction.

New research is currently directed at the engineering properties of the synthetic rope, especially the end connectors, and the use of synthetic ropes by loggers in trials to help understand applications and wear. A special effort is underway to test the rope for use as wrappers on log trucks. Log truck drivers throw wire rope wrappers over loads and suffer arm/shoulder injuries similar to professional baseball pitchers during their careers.

Economic trade-offs are also being measured so the additional cost of synthetic rope can be compared with productivity gains. Results so far are promising and more will be heard about synthetic rope in logging.

Pilkerton, S. Garland, J., Sessions, J., and B. Stringham. 2001. Prospects for using synthetic rope in logging: First look and future research. In Proceedings of the International Mountain Logging and 11th Pacific Northwest Skyline Symposium. 2001-A Forest Engineering Odyssey. Eds. P. Schiess and F. Krogstad, College of Forest Resources. U. Washington. Seattle, WA. Dec. 10-12, 2001. CD ROM Media. 289p.



UW CFR, Forest Engineering

Dr. Peter Schiess, schiess@u.washington.edu

As part of the University of Washington's Forest Engineering Senior Capstone Design course (FEE 450), FEE seniors will be spending Spring Quarter 2002 at UW's Pack Experimental Forest. They will analyze about 1,650 acres of land, located in north Forks, WA, to create a harvest and transportation plan for the Department of Natural Resources.

The seniors will spend their first three weeks at Pack Forest performing initial analysis and road location. Fieldwork will occupy the next four weeks in order to verify control points and survey critical road locations. During the final weeks, the seniors will produce the final analysis and design for the area, concluding with a presentation to DNR representatives. To see their progress, check out the class web page at <http://courses.washington.edu/fe450/>.

Washington Contract Loggers Association

Jerry Bonogofsky, 360-352-5033 or jerryb@loggers.com

The WCLA co-sponsored the 12th annual Washington Logging Safety Conference, held on February 2nd at St. Martins College in Olympia. The attendance continues to grow each year with 430 people attending this year's conference from across the Northwest. Topics included: Driving Safety, "In the Clear", Timber Cutting Safety, Guidelines for Selecting Reserve Trees and Helicopter Rescue.

In 2001, 225 logging contractors and employees attended the Accredited Logging Professional program training offered by WCLA. The program consisted of four days of training on forest silviculture and ecology, safety and worker's compensation, DNR Forest Practices, and business management.

In addition, WCLA members benefited from a number of safety and health programs:

- First aid training to approximately 1500 WA loggers.
- Safety and health audits on over 100 companies.
- Preparation and update assistance to member companies' current safety and health programs.
- Development of additional safety information for membership distribution.

WISHA, WA Depart of Labor and Industries

Tom Ford, 360-902-5428 or ford235@lni.wa.gov

WISHA Consultation Services has a new safety project to reach small logging contractors. We developed an informal partnership with landowners (Weyerhaeuser, Simpson, etc.) and the contractors, so we could all work together to reduce the number of injuries. Most contractors work for large landowners and this gave us a way to offer our services, free of charge, to those who most likely wouldn't contact us for

assistance.

(WISHA Continued...)

The project has been in operation for almost a year and the response has exceeded our expectations. There is still apprehension among some contractors, but once they find we offer practical help, it goes very well. The contractors and landowners we have worked with are very responsive to correcting the identified problems. Our program has expanded from our initial group of about 15 contractors to approximately 100. Now that the program is in the industry, we have interested people calling us.

Our preliminary data shows a decline in injuries, but the most impressive results are the dramatic reduction in claims costs. Although we haven't been in the project long enough to make any "hard" comparisons, it does show that we are headed in the right direction.

If there is one factor that makes this partnership successful, it is our approach. We tell everyone right up front that we are not there to tell people how to do their job—they know how to do that. We explain that our role is to help identify hazards and keep safety awareness up. Our two field people have over 20 years of logging experience each, which also adds to the credibility of the program.

Another strategy we have put in place to help break down some of the existing barriers, is to give the employers and employees safety glasses that don't fog up. Although there are lots of safety glasses on the market only a couple brands do not fog up when hard work is being done on the job. This gesture of good faith by WISHA has paid off with greater participation.

Our hopes are to expand the program to include two more landowners this year. With the support we have received, I think this is an achievable goal. As far as I know, this is the only program of it's kind in the nation and we think it is working well.

Woodworkers/Weyerhaeuser Co

Steve Fluke, badidaho@aol.com

The Woodworkers District 1 IAM currently represents approximately 1000 bargaining unit loggers and timberland employees who work for the Weyerhaeuser Company in the Pacific Northwest. In 1996, the Safety Incident Rate was around 18. Since then, there has been a concerted effort by both Weyerhaeuser, the Woodworkers Union, local logging camp managers, and most important, the employees, to put a much greater emphasis on safety. Currently, the 2001 Incident Rate is 2.4.

With this incident reduction, there has been a dramatic drop in severe injuries. For the first time, the incident rate for timberlands is lower than most of our sawmills. The Union believes that this significant change is the result of a new management format where incident reports do not result in disciplinary action. Of course, the ultimate goal is for all workers return home safe to their families every



Upcoming Safety and Health Events Around the Northwest

MARCH 12 - 13 CASCADE SAFETY, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE

Eugene, OR
Contact: 1-888-292-5247

MARCH 18 – 20 ALASKA GOVERNOR’S SAFETY AND HEALTH CONFERENCE

Anchorage, AK
www.labor.state.ak.us/lss/agsc/

MARCH 21 11TH ANNUAL LOGGERS WORKSHOP

Colville, WA
Contact: Stevens County Cooperative Extension at 509-684-2588

CANCELLED - ALASKA FOREST PRODUCTS SAFETY CONFERENCE

Due to declining forestry activity in Alaska, the Alaska Timber Exchange has cancelled it's annual safety conference.

APRIL 16 – 18 IDAHO JOINT SAFETY SUMMIT

Boise, ID
Governor’s Safety and Health Conf. and Boise State University Safety Awareness Days
Contact: 206-396-2300

CANCELLED - 66TH FOREST PRODUCTS SAFETY CONFERENCE

Due to low attendance and lack of volunteer leaders, the annual conference is suspended for year 2002. The committee will meet in September to discuss the long-term plan.
For your feedback on the future of the conference, contact: Joe_amgyus@toc.org

MAY 20 –22 AKOSH/OSHA FIELD TRAINING FOR TIMBER FALLING

(See page 3 for more information)
Prince of Wales Island, AK
Contact: Phil Oldring, 907-283-2956

SEPTEMBER 15 - 17 HEALTH AND SAFETY IN WESTERN AGRICULTURE: CULTIVATING COLLABORATIONS

Coeur d’Alene, ID
A PNASH Center event for agricultural safety and health research development.
http://depts.washington.edu/pnash/news/2-02_3.htm
Contact: 1-800-330-0827

SEPTEMBER 15 – 19 PACIFIC LOGGING CONGRESS

San Diego, CA
www.pacificloggingcongress.com/future_events.html

OCTOBER 30 - 31 WASHINGTON GOVERNOR’S SAFETY AND HEALTH CONFERENCE

Spokane, WA
www.lni.wa.gov/wisha/gov-conf/govconf2002.htm

Note: Additional events and courses are offered to members of state contract logging associations, please contact your association for more information.

