

Safety Protocols

Outcome 2.0 - Describe safety protocols and personal protective equipment (PPE) in common usage for forest sampling.

2.1 List some potential hazards of a forest workplace environment.

There are some hazards that occur in every occupation, and forestry is no exception. A lot of the safety concerns are with access (travel to the work s=area) concerns and working outdoors with the elements – cold, heat, mosquitoes, navigational mishaps, terrain, etc. The access concerns are while driving ATV's, riding in helicopters or fixed-wing planes, use of boats, trucks, loading trailers, Argos, snowmobiles, etc. Most plot locations require a variety of methods to get there and can pose a danger to the inexperienced or untrained.

2.2 Describe the means to mitigate these potential hazards within a forest workplace environment.

The access concerns for safety are usually treated by employers by providing training courses for their workers. Some of the training courses are for ATV's, aircraft safety, driver safety, boating, snowmobiling use, ice rescue, and loading trailers. Worthy of mention here is that chainsaws may be required on occasion for clearing wind-thrown trees felled across trails. There are also chainsaw safety seminars offered. As mentioned earlier, most companies will provide these short courses to their staff or request their staff to have these courses prior to starting work.

The means to mitigate the hazards of working outdoors are usually through awareness and again, training seminars. Field navigation, GPS use, wilderness survival, bear awareness, OHS, WHMIS, Transportation of Dangerous Good (TDG), health and nutrition, are a few that are often undertaken. Other courses are offered, and some may be taken along with some formal training. On most jobs that this author has undertaken, a briefing of the job is given as well as concerns of safety identified.

The topic of nourishment requirements is generally addressed at some briefings and can be summed up briefly as – “eat often, eat small amounts and have lots of water available”.

2.3 Identify the various PPE and their relevance

Most forestry works has PPE that functions as clothing or is functional when possible. A bright fluorescent cruiser vest (orange, yellow or red) usually has lots of pockets to carry a variety of gear such as GPS, bear spray or bear bangers, maps, aerial photographs, insect repellent, SPF lotion and water. Most operations require hard hats and steel toe boots, with steel toe boots having good ankle support and good grips. Chainsaw chaps are required for chainsaw users as well as a screen and ear protection. Other items of a survival nature such as a pocket knife and matches should travel with the vest as well. The PPE required for ATV's (helmets), helicopters (helmets) and boats (lifejacket) are often located with these means of transportation.

Question for Outcome 2

- a) What are the various transportation modes to a forest plot?
- b) What is the most common method of assuring a safe passage to a forest site?
- c) What is a good rule of thumb to employ when discussing nourishment requirements for a forestry worker?