

INDUSTRY ALERT

CRITICAL INJURY

Silviculture workers injured in two incidents on logging roads result in serious injuries

What happened?

Incident #1: An empty log-haul truck collided head-on with an oncoming pickup truck driven by a silviculture worker on a logging road in June. The driver of the pickup truck suffered a broken leg. The driver of the log-haul truck was not injured.

Incident #2: On an early morning in November, two silviculture workers were travelling to a slash-pile burning site in a one-tonne truck. The driver lost control of the truck on a downward sloping S-curve. The truck left the roadway and slid into the ditch. The vehicle rolled three or four times, ejecting the passenger who suffered head injuries and broken ribs. The driver suffered minor cuts and bruises.

Why did it happen?

Incident #1: The empty log-haul truck was on the wrong side of the road, cutting a corner, when the collision with the pickup truck occurred. There was no radio communication from the log-haul truck.

Incident #2: The one-tonne truck was travelling about 100 kilometres per hour in slippery frost conditions on a road that had a posted speed limit of 80 kilometres per hour. The driver and passenger were not wearing seatbelts.

How can it be prevented?

Incident #1: Pickup trucks and other vehicles are generally expected to yield the right of way to log-haul trucks, but that doesn't mean drivers of log-haul trucks have no responsibility to allow for oncoming traffic. Driver-to-driver radio communication between working vehicles is important, and so is the coordination of information among all companies that share the road. After this incident, the silviculture company introduced a procedure of posting signs whenever its employees were using a logging road, then removing the signs when their work was done. Because sideroads often intersect with logging roads, log-haul truckers cannot rely entirely on radio reports from the truck ahead of them that the road is clear of all other traffic.

Incident #2: Since most logging roads are narrow with soft shoulders, fairly rough surfaces and slippery conditions in winter, driver speed must always be appropriate to the conditions. Because of those conditions, wearing a seatbelt at all times is obviously also important.

OFSWA has produced *Safe Travel on Logging Roads*, an information booklet for silviculture workers who operate vehicles on logging roads. The material has also been packaged as a safety meeting topic. For more information, call OFSWA at (705) 474-7233.

www.ofswa.on.ca