



Ministry of Forests, Range



Wildlife Tree Committee of British Columbia

Advisory to WDT Assessors – July 2009 Requirement for Documentation

This advisory serves as a standard of practice reminder that Wildlife/Danger Tree (WDT) Assessors and Qualified Persons (QP) must document their pre-work site and dangerous tree assessments prior to the start-up of forestry activities. It is imperative that the full process of managing dangerous trees be diligently applied to forestry operations **before** workers commence activities and/or treatments at a worksite.

The WDT course handbook and the QP course materials can be referenced by visiting the WTC website (www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/values/wildlife/WLT/index). The standard of care in BC for completing dangerous tree assessments requires that the following four steps be completed¹.

- 1st. **Determine the level of ground disturbance/worker exposure and Conduct a site assessment overview;**
- 2nd. **Conduct tree assessments;**
- 3rd. **Make the appropriate safety decision** (Safe or Dangerous); and
- 4th. **Provide documentation and communicate safety procedures.**

The fourth step, “Documentation and Communication of Safety Procedures”, is a critical component to completing the necessary pre-work planning. To demonstrate that the pre-work assessments have been conducted, a qualified person must document what assessments were performed and how the site hazards (including dangerous trees) have been identified and controlled. The documented pre-work assessment is then used to prepare and communicate the site safety plan to workers upon their entering the work site, as required by OHS Regulation 26.2 (Planning and conducting) and 26.5 (Initial safety meeting).

The minimum standards for documentation are described in the course materials for certifying WDT assessors and also in QP course materials pertaining to LOD-1 activities. Sample field

¹ Wildlife/Danger Tree Assessor’s Course Workbook; Forest Harvesting and Silviculture Course Module (revised May 2008) page 36; and Managing Wildlife/Dangerous Trees – A safety guide for qualified persons (February 2008) page 13.



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cards are provided in the course materials. Although these samples are a useful format, it is not mandatory that these versions be used by everyone. As a minimum, documentation must include²:

- Assessor's name
- Date and location of field assessment
- Level of disturbance/type of work activity (include wind speed limits, weather constraints)
- Marking procedures (i.e., flagging or paint colors, tags) used for assessed trees, assessed areas and no-work zones
- Locations of assessed trees and areas where assessments were completed
- Locations of no-work zones
- Use field cards if necessary to provide documentation on individual tree assessments

The documentation should also provide a summary of pertinent site assessment overview factors used to guide tree assessment and site safety planning. Regardless of the format used to document the pre-work assessments, this document must be communicated to workers as part of pre-work job site orientation and a copy retained on site.

For further information on this or other safety matters pertaining to managing wildlife/dangerous trees, contact the Wildlife Tree Committee or your local WorkSafe BC safety officer.

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² Minimum documentation criteria are described in the workbook for the WDTAC-Forest Harvesting and Silviculture Course Module on page 66 and in the QP safety guide on page 30.