



Ministry of Forests, Range



Wildlife Tree Committee of British Columbia

Bulletin to WDT Assessors – July 2008 Significant Hazard Indicators for LOD-1

This bulletin further clarifies the descriptions of the significant hazard indicators that assessors should be using when conducting tree assessments for LOD-1 activities. In February 2007 the Wildlife Tree Committee (WTC) provided clarification to the LOD-1 table of significant defects in response to reviews of tree assessments on worksites intended for LOD-1. Slight improvements to the description of the decadent stem description have recently been made in 2008 and are described in this bulletin.

Wildlife/Danger Tree (WDT) Assessors should review and implement the following revised Table 3 during tree assessments in 2008. Revisions to course manuals and field cards are also being made and can be viewed on the WTC website (www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfp/values/wildlife/WLT/index). This bulletin serves as a standard of practice addendum and replaces earlier versions of Table 3 in the WDT assessor’s Course modules for Harvesting/Silviculture, Parks and Recreation, and Wildland Fire.

REVISED clarifications to LOD-1 Significant Hazards (July 2008)

**Table 3. Dangerous Tree Assessment Process for Level 1 Disturbance Activities—
3 Significant Hazard Indicators**

D = dangerous	<p>D if tree has one or more of the following significant tree hazards that are at risk of imminent failure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insecurely lodged trees or Insecure hang-ups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Insecurely lodged trees (a tipped tree that is likely to shake free of the support trees and fall to the ground); or ii) Dislodged but hung-up limbs or tops (consider size and height above ground) at risk of shifting free during light winds or other tree motion • Highly unstable tree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) >50% of tree cross-sectional area damaged or decayed; or ii) Spongy snags with heart rot conks along the majority of the length of the stem (e.g., class 5-6 conifers or class 4 deciduous) or soft snags (e.g., class 7-8 conifers or class 5 deciduous); or iii) >50% of lateral support roots are damaged or with advanced decay; • Recent lean towards the work area AND decayed root system (>50% of roots have advanced decay) or damaged and lifting anchoring soil layer (consider soil conditions and anchoring)
S = safe	All other trees

Rationale for revisions:

Some assessors have been uncertain about how to assess trees for LOD-1 application. As a result, there are many examples where trees are incorrectly rated as Dangerous for LOD-1 activities. A dangerous tree for LOD-1 is at risk of imminent failure. The challenge is describing this tree in a way that ensures consistent application of the criteria.

There are 3 significant defects, and the clarifications are discussed separately:

1. Insecurely lodged trees – formerly missing the overhead hazard element. Change this defect to reflect the concept of “**insecure** hang-ups”.
 - a. Insecurely lodged tree: a tree that has tipped to the extent you wonder how it could remain suspended if it was not for the support by another tree. It is dangerous when not securely supported. The wording “insecurely lodged” is adequate, but the concept must be that it is likely to shake free and fall to the ground.
 - b. Hanging parts (can be a top or large limb) are missed in the previous wording. Hence, “dislodged but hung-up limbs or tops ... at risk of shifting free during light winds or other tree motion” has been added to capture the imminent failure concept. These are the “overhead hazards” or widow-makers.
2. Highly unstable stem - the condition of the stem poses imminent risk of failure because it is unstable (from damage or decadence or combination).
 - a. Extent of damage is essentially the same with minor rewording. Obviously, excessive stem damage without decay can be hazardous as can excessive decay without damage. Extensive damage combined with decay is a very serious hazard. Damage can be evident in many forms and combinations such as fractures, gouges, burns, and cuts.
 - b. Tree class examples of decadence have been modified to correlate better with stem condition. In addition, the table now captures the classifications for deciduous trees. The descriptions therefore reflect the type of tree and its resulting classification system. The descriptions also needed to capture the fact that “Soft” tree classes can exist without the presence of heart rot conks. Therefore soft snags must be considered highly decadent regardless of conk presence or absence.
 - c. Root condition is essentially the same but assessors need to understand that a support root is considered unstable when more than half of the root is rotted thru (advanced decay) or damaged.
3. Recent lean and compromised rooting – it is the recent lean as a consequence of severe rooting issues that renders a tree unstable. Thus the “% lean” created a sense of false security – “recent lean” invites investigation of the rooting issues. A separation of duff from the bole of the tree is not as serious as if there is a lifting mat, or undermined roots, or highly decayed roots.