FORESTRY MUTUAL NEWS

Newsletter of the Forestry Mutual Insurance Company Vol. 15, Issue 1

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

We are pleased to announce that Forestry Mutual concluded 2015 on a strong note from both financial and safety perspectives. We appreciate our policyholders collective attitude towards making their work environment as safe as it can be. We work in dangerous industry. We can never forget that fact.

Along that train of thought, our loss-control staff are always identifying areas for improvement through their personal visits to our policyholders and claim investigations.

In the manufacturing sector, we have witnessed a recent surge in falls from elevated positions. We encourage our policyholders to review this area of safety in their upcoming safety meetings.

Our top problem area continues to be trucking. Over 23% of claims to our office over the past year involved truck drivers being injured while performing routine procedures. Of course, a log truck accident is a top issue, but it is important to realize that many of our claims originate from daily routines, including activities such as entering or existing the cab, being injured by faulty landing gear, and throwing the securing strap over the load.

Last July, Forestry Mutual met with insurance companies, loggers, associations and mills to start a dialogue and find some solutions to the problems plaguing the trucking side of our industry. To get things underway, TEAM Safe Trucking (TST) was formed and the effort is guided by four committees. Everyone realizes that it is not just the lack of drivers, but the lack of quality drivers that impacts the forest products industry. And when we get quality drivers, we need to improve our training resources for them. Things are only going to get worse if we do not meet this challenge head on with a collaborative effort. Please be willing to help out if you are called upon to participate in any effort from TST.

In addition to improving the quality of driver and training resources, the TST is committed to improving the image of the forest product industry. Our policyholders are our industry's best ambassadors since they are doing things the right way while providing quality job opportunities within their community. In most states, forestry ranks as one of the top five employers in terms of revenue and job creation. Be proud of the significant contribution you make!

Keith Biggs

Looking ahead to 2016, Forestry Mutual projects its premiums to be over $25 million. We are pleased with this result since the rates have dipped lower than I have ever seen them in my 30 year career. We certainly appreciate the loyalty of our policyholders!

In closing, I would strongly encourage our policyholders to be involved in the legislative process in their state. Get to know your elected officials! There are significant legislative issues introduced annually at state houses across the south that will impact your business operations. Please do not sit back and ride the coattails of the few active members in each state that take time out of their schedule to participate in legislative events. I also recommend our policyholders supporting the efforts of the various associations that lobby on the behalf of the forest products industry at the state and national level.

Thanks to our loyal policyholders for the contributions they make to our safety efforts each day.

Sincerely,

Keith S. Biggs

CLA MEETS IN WILMINGTON

The Carolina Loggers Association (CLA) held its annual meeting in Wilmington in late February. Over 150 loggers were in attendance to hear a speaking program that focused on truck safety. After an enjoyable opening evening reception and dinner on Friday night, the meeting got underway Saturday morning.

C.K. Greene, who is with the Virginia's Loggers Association (VLA) and the CLA, provided an update on a trucking issue with the city of Emporia. Members of the VLA and Emporia City officials reached an agreement on an ordinance that gives forest products truckers the ability to travel through the city, provided they are loaded and observing all provisions of the ordinance. The ordinance is necessary due to the lack of a weight variance on Federal Interstates.

North Carolina Trooper Robert Mellott provided an excellent

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(l-r) Keith Biggs, Keith McCollum and Bruce Evans reluctantly posed for this photo during the CLA meeting in Wilmington.

THE SAWSHOP

by Bryan Wagner
Chainsaw Trainer for
Forestry Mutual

THE OTHER INCIDENTS

As if we were not already aware, logging is an inherently dangerous occupation. A simple mistake or a miscalculation can result in serious injury or worse. We work in a very unforgiving environment.

As an insurance company, we constantly drill loss control and training towards the manual felling and topping areas of a logging job, which is warranted. Without a doubt manual felling and topping have the highest risk levels that are present on any logging operation.

It is important to follow lock-out, tag-out procedures when servicing equipment.

BUT...recently, we have seen an increase in "other" types of incidents. Injuries have been reported while performing "normal" maintenance on logging equipment. Remember, every task on a logging job has its own specific risk or hazard. We must constantly be aware and focused on where the specific risk is on the job that we a doing. High lighted are some risk areas that seem to need attention, according to recent claims reported.

- Are lock-out, tag-out procedures being followed?
- After the machine is properly locked out, do you have a steady, safe place to perform your work? Are your boots muddy? Is the machine free from oil or grease that may cause a slipping incident?
- What's going to happen if this wrench slips? Will I be injured from a fall, or will I injure my hands? Am I using the proper tool for the job?
- Are you focused on Slip/Trip and Fall issues associated with the deck area? Loose bark, logging mats, and mud are responsible for numerous "other" claims.
- Are your employees using their seat belts?
- Are eye and face protection being used, EVERY TIME?
- Is hearing protection used when needed?
- Is proper 3-points of contact mounting and dismounting being used?
- Is care being taken while backing vehicles? Are there "blind-spots"?
- Are workers reminded of the dangers around the deck area; this is a very busy place? Is high visibility clothing being used? Can you see me? Am I in a safe place?
- Am I visible? Am I in a "blind spot"? Is there "sun-glare present"?

If you notice, the last three safety questions involve being seen, or visible and keeping the body in a safe position. If the body is not in a bad position, it isn't injured there!

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ACCOUNTABILITY STARTS WITH YOU!

by Nick Carter, Forestry Mutual

Are you holding your employees accountable? As my dad once said, "You can't control other people, you can only control your reactions to them." This quote resonates with what we as business owners experience on a day to day basis especially with the difficulty in finding good "qualified" truck drivers. When an accident occurs, the second question that comes to mind after everyone is OK is, who was at fault? But in reality, does that even matter anymore? Why do I have to carry one million dollar limits on my policy while others just carry the state minimum?

We are all aware of the shortage of truck driver capacity that our nation is facing and it is especially prevalent in the logging business. It doesn't matter if I am in west Tennessee or eastern Virginia, the common theme discussed when talking to loggers is lack of qualified drivers. With the efforts of the newly formed TEAM Safe Trucking group, I feel confident we will narrow the gap in due time for obtaining and retaining qualified drivers.

One buzz word that resonates in this group is accountability, which as a business owner, speaks volumes. Are you holding your employees accountable for their actions? If not, you will struggle to hire and retain qualified employees.

It seems we never react until an earth shattering event occurs that takes numerous years to recover from, not only mentally, but also financially. An example of this is when a company has a clean loss history and all of a sudden, it has an unexplained bad year of losses. Was the owner holding employees accountable before the losses? If not, I'm sure they are after the year/years of bad losses.

Loggers pay an undetermined amount of unnecessary fines to the Department of Transportation (DOT) each year. Let's take the potential fines and reward employees on being proactive on preventing the fines.

For example, if we add up the monetary amount of fines you received in 2015 and divide that number by the number of drivers, you can obtain an amount to reward your drivers as an incentive to prevent receiving the fines in the first place. This is also the same amount that is for each employee to lose. You can deduct from that reward amount for each violation that occurs in which the DOT fines you. This will make your truck drivers work as a TEAM toward the common goal of getting rewarded, but more than anything, it will hold them accountable for their actions. The most deducted violations should be for not wearing a seat belt or speeding, which should wipe out the entire incentive reward. Both of these violations are well-under the driver's control.

Accountability starts with the driver when companies are addressing truck safety.

Keep in mind, many accidents occur during the year that are not the fault of the driver, but yet, since the other person(s) is under insured, the non-fault driver still might have to use its insurance to cover all the losses.

It is safe to say that truck safety is a difficult challenge. We must hold our drivers to a high level. They are going to work everyday on our public roads that are more and more being frequented by distracted drivers. We cannot control others actions, only our employees behaviors and actions ■

MAKE TIME TO REVIEW FORKLIFT SAFETY

by Jimmy McCraney, Forestry Mutual

Forklifts (powered industrial trucks) account for 61,800 minor injuries, 34,900 serious injuries, and 85 deaths annually, according to OSHA estimates. With over 900,000 forklifts in operation at any given time in the United States, those numbers amount to a 1-in-10 chance that a forklift working at your job site will be involved in an accident this year. With those odds, what are the chances that one or more of your employees will be injured during 2016 due to a forklift accident?

Forklift collisions account for about 46% of total forklift accidents, including crush injuries where personnel are trapped between two forklifts, between a forklift and stationary surface, and/or where pedestrians are struck by a forklift. The high numbers demonstrate that the odds are against you unless forklift operators unless they undergo proper training. The training should focus on key areas such as collision prevention, driving speeds, lift attachments, and pedestrian safety in order to reduce your risks and delivered at least once every three years.

Forklifts used in and around sawmills, pallet mills and some logging locations present special hazards that a lot of manufacturing companies do not share. The safety concerns around forklift operations are characteristically inherent attributes. Some of those include:

- A tendency to become unstable with heavy loads.
- Carrying lumber/log loads too high up creates potential for unstable condition.
- Shift in center of gravity as loads are moved up, down, forward, and backward.
- Longitudinal stability is significantly decreased when load is high or out from vehicle.
- Driving on rough, muddy, rocky, uneven, or sloped terrain.
- Carrying loosely packed lumber or logs loads.
- Driving unauthorized passengers creates a hazard (one seat = one operator, no one else).

Never use a forklifts to lift employees up by the forks to conduct maintenance operations. Fact is, if you use forklift trucks to elevate employees, a properly approved and certified attachment device must be employed. Too often, employers are be sited for using home-made devices (wooden pallets, skid plates, bucket type devices) that are not certified by regulatory authorities.

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Proper training for forklift operators should be one of the top priorities for mills, regardless of their size. Drivers need to be alert of all potential dangers on the yard.

A LOOK AT OUR LEADERSHIP

by J.J. Lemire, Director of Loss Control

Mike Macedo

We conclude our series that has given insight and the opportunity to meet the individuals that provide oversight, guidance and direction to your Forestry Mutual Insurance Company. This issue we will introduce Mike Macedo, who is with International Paper. Macedo's knowledge and commitment to the forest product industry is invaluable and often sought after by his peers and colleagues. He personifies integrity and honesty.

Macedo was born and raised in Massachusetts. Upon graduating from high school, he completed his undergraduate studies in Forest Engineering from the University of Maine. He graduated in 1981, and one week later, he started work for International Paper (IP) in northern Maine. His duties included forest engineering, road building and bridge building for the company's 500 thousand acres of timberland. The location was so remote that it required a two hour trip to town for supplies.

Macedo has worked for IP for over 34 years. In 1987, he received the Hinman Fellowship, which sends foresters to Yale University for graduate studies. He received his master's in Forest Management at Yale in 1988. He returned to an operational research center in Bangor, Maine upon his graduation where he took part in operational research involving tree planting, thinning and silviculture.

In 1990, he moved from Maine to New Hampshire and was a supervisor for a ten-truck fleet for hauling pulpwood and chips. In addition, he oversaw the wood yard and chipping operations. In 1994, he and his family moved to Oregon where he assumed the duties as a procurement manager for the mill. In 1999, he packed the family up again and moved to Mississippi, Louisiana, and Georgia, and finally, South Carolina.

Currently, he serves as the Region Manager for International Paper's East Region Fiber Supply organization. His primary responsibilities include management of the fiber supply operations supporting International Paper's mills in Savannah, GA, Augusta, GA, Eastover, SC, Georgetown, SC, Riegelwood, NC, Franklin, VA, and Ticonderoga, NY.

Besides his duties at International Paper, Mike supports the wood product industry through leadership and membership in several national and state organizations. A member of the Society of American Foresters, Macedo serves on the Southeastern Policy Committee with the Forest Resources Association and the 20 x 15 committee initiative. He also is a board of directors member for the South Carolina Forestry Association.

In 2014, he was named a director for Forestry Mutual Insurance Company. Macedo embraced the opportunity because he shares the belief that loss prevention is the key to safety in the workplace, and it is just one of the elements that differentiates Forestry Mutual from other insurance carriers. He appreciates how much time and effort Forestry Mutual puts into its hands-on safety training and personal attention to policyholders and their safety issues. Macedo is a charter member of the Team Safe Trucking initiative, chairing the Awareness and Professionalism Committee.

Macedo believes that the key to safety is creating a culture that puts an emphasis on safety. This attitude starts at the top where each team member is committed to operating safely, no matter how much time or money could be saved by taking a safety shortcut. It is important to have up-to-date and proper training for all employees. After the training, employers and employees should hold each other accountable with regards to safety. It is important for employees to look out for one another!

Mike and his wife, Karen, were married in 1985 and now reside in Georgetown, SC. They have two adult daughters. ■

Forklift Safety...(from page 3)

In terms of injuries, many occur when companies are using illegal devices. Lift attachments must be enclosed with hand and mid-rails, toe boarding, a minimum seven-foot mast guard, and must have a means of securing the attachment to the lift truck. Forestry Mutual recommends that if you need such an attachment, the safest path is to purchase a lift attachment that comes with a manufacturer's approval and certification.

Cell phones, MP3 players and other personal devices are also contributing to forklift accidents. In most accidents, it is revealed the drivers were more focused on the personal device than their driving. Answering phones, texting messages, or tuning into your favorite song distract drivers from their primary function which is to safely operate the forklift.

Employers are encouraged include a statement in your company safety rules that restrict employees from using these devices while operating forklifts or any powered industrial truck. ■

The Other Incidents...(from page 3)

We at Forestry Mutual are in the process of requiring all employees to wear high-visibility clothing. We feel that this inexpensive requirement reduces a lot of risk. If I can see you, I'm not going to hurt you!

The questions asked above seem to be basic, but a great deal of risk can be reduced by following them. We must constantly remember every aspect or area of a logging operation has its own risk or hazard factor.

Awareness and staying focused can reduce the chance of being injured in the "other" category. The goal is to have employees get in the truck to leave the job, the same way they got there in the morning, healthy and safe! ■

CLA Meeting in Wilmington...(from page 1)

overview of what North Carolina's Highway Patrol is focusing on when it comes to truck safety. Mellott cited proper tire treads, functional lights, and proper load securement. He also stressed the importance of pre-trip inspections and organizing paperwork prior to getting on the road.

Jimmie Locklear and Keith Biggs led a review of the new Team Safe Truck (TST) organization that has begun work on addressing the top truck safety issues facing the industry. A report on TST is listed below.

Lawyer Marc Tucker, who frequently defends trucking companies, stressed the importance of the selection, training and monitoring of truck drivers. He encouraged all loggers involved with trucking elements to keep comprehensive records, especially if one of their trucks is involved in an accident. Tucker stated more than once that if it is not documented, it didn't happen. These records are helpful, particularly if a case originates several years after it occurred.

The afternoon portion of the program covered the financing of equipment by Tony Fitzgerald with James River Equipment. Fitzgerald's background also included service with John Deere's finance department as well. The meeting concluded with the ProLogger Module 16 course. ■

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

We recently completed our 2015 audit, and I am pleased to announce that our company added two million dollars to our premium reserve fund. This is the third year in a row that our policyholders and staff have helped us to strengthen our company financially. This fund is one of the key elements reviewed when our company's insurance rating is reviewed annually. Overall, our premium reserves have grown to over $22 million. This is quite a remarkable achievement with rates going down every year.

Keith Biggs

With this said there is always room for improvement. There were several losses last year that were totally preventable. We will always strive to make sure safety is first and foremost on our policyholders' minds.

In recent months, we have seen claims on injuries to individuals struck by skidders and loaders. One common cause is the lack of visibility for the person on the ground.

As such, Forestry Mutual has implemented a new policy for our staff and policyholders. All ground personnel in the woods need to wear high visibility clothing. The better an individual can be seen by equipment operators, the less likely that individual will be hit or struck in the woods or on the log deck.

As most of our policyholders are aware, we have initiated TEAM SAFE TRUCKING (TST) to tackle the trucking problem. This group is a cooperative effort of loggers, insurance companies, and companies from across the United States.

(right) Bryan Wagner and James Smith pose for a photo after a ProLogger class.

We have to raise the bar on our truck driver training. We have some great truck drivers out there, but with the economy picking up, we are simply running short of properly trained drivers. TST, a new non-profit organization, is tasked with developing a new training program designed to address our current situation. The goal is to create a better truck driver workforce by establishing a higher, safer standard through better training and greater accountability. Please contact me if you are interested in joining this effort.

At the end of each year, we proudly send out our special Zero Loss Certificates to our qualifying policyholders. We are happy to report that in 2014, we had 84% of our policyholders receive this special distinction. Congratulations and thank you to these top performing policyholders.

As always, if you have a question or problem, please contact me at (919) 880-1006. We appreciate your business.

Sincerely,

Keith S. Biggs

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SCREENING DRIVERS

by Chris Huff, Forestry Mutual

If your first reaction when learning about an employee being in an accident is: "W*as that employee added to my insurance?*" We have a serious problem.

In a time where tractor trailer accidents lead every newspaper headline, television newscasts and website coverage, it is obvious that our industry must take the time to research and screen any employee who may get behind a wheel of any type of vehicle.

All drivers have to be approved by your carrier first, and then you can add them to your policy. After these two steps, you can let the employee drive. Failure to do so could result in a denied claim and possibly a cancellation of your policy.

There are some things you can do to screen the driver before you ever request your agency or carrier to approve the driver.

First, when a driver prospect contacts you about a job opening for a driving position, ask him to bring a copy of his MVR (Motor Vehicle Record) with him to an interview. If he does not have one, there is a form you can have the driver sign giving you permission to run his MVR. You then have the right to know his record. A lot of times this initial request will eliminate some drivers because they know that their MVR shows

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THE SAWSHOP

by Bryan Wagner
Chainsaw Trainer for Forestry Mutual

A SAFETY APPROACH FROM THE TOP DOWN

Our forest industry, not unlike other industries, has a definite pecking-order in terms of size and structure of companies. Our adventure starts with the timber being marked for sale, then harvested, transported, and finally processed by a manufacturing facility. During this process a lot of decisions are made from the Top-Down. Every individual involved in this process has a responsibility of promoting logging safety.

Proper decisions from the Top-Down lessens exposure and risk levels. My goal as a logging safety trainer is to protect our work force in the woods, through training and education. Say what you want about any logging statistic, we are trying to protect these men that are fathers, sons, husbands and good friends. Proper decisions from the Top-Down keep the family unit whole.

Safety starts at the stump and the forest products industry plays a critical role in shaping the challenging work environment loggers face on a daily basis.

Large Forest Products Facilities

Large forest products facilities, such as paper companies or large sawmills with procurement staff, can initiate the focus on safety. Field staff from these companies should be trained to recognize risk and entrusted with the responsibility to communicate an identified problem to the logging workforce. The company's safety and environmental policies are backed by both the political and financial clout of the company to effectively fix a potential problem. Most large companies have representatives involved with state forestry and/or logging associations that develop and deliver successful training programs. Training has proven itself over the years to reduce risk within the forest products industry.

An area that is particularly important to the environment and safety are the policy on harvesting timber in a Stream Management Zone (SMZ). Harvesting timber from a SMZ greatly increases the risk on a logging job, especially if a mechanized job that is not used to manually felling timber. Procurement foresters must use great care and good judgment while marking harvest trees in a SMZ.

- Make certain the trees are in a true SMZ. Requiring a mechanized crew to manually fell timber out of an imaginary SMZ increases risk.
- Check for overhead hazards before marking harvest trees.
- Avoid marking timber that may strike the residual stand. Thoughtful marking can create holes for the timber-cutter to practice safe directional felling.

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PROPER TRAINING CAN LIMIT INJURIES ON THE JOB

by J.J. Lemire, Forestry Mutual

As Director of Loss Control, I review all claims that occur on any given day. For the first five months of 2016, we have had one of the worst years for injuries in over 10 years. Why is there an increase in the severity and frequency of claims this year?

In order to understand why, we need to look at who is getting hurt? The majority of our claims are from new employees to a company. This does not necessarily mean just new employees in the workforce, but also includes experienced employees that have gone to work for a new company.

In reviewing the claims, the number one element of risk is employee training. Employees are not being trained properly for their job because there is a lack of a job safety analysis in the first place. Employers are entrusting employees to do a job before that employee fully understands the hazards involved and the proper operating procedures. Let's look at why this contributes to the problem.

You would not allow a new employee to operate your new and expensive tractor without making sure he/she has a CDL or experience driving this type of vehicle. So why would you allow employees to work at a job without making sure they are qualified and made aware of the hazards with the job?

The way to do achieve the best safety and performance results is to have employees complete specific job training. This one step can reduce risk for your employees. This training puts the responsibility of the employer to invest the time and energy to identifying potential hazards with each job. Then, the employer must train the employee to work safety with the ability to identify potential hazards/problems before they may occur. Here are some tips:

- Spend an adequate time training employees. Require coworkers and supervisors to make frequent visits during the day a new employee first starts working on his/her own.
- Teach them proper procedure. Produce a job specific training program. A topper on the deck is not the best person to operate a feller buncher if he has no experience. Likewise, a green chain worker that has never operated a forklift should not be given that duty without adequate training.
- Do not teach short cuts. Bad habits lead to injuries.
- Remember Lockout/Tagout training. It must be used and enforced.
- Teach about proper body, arms, and hands placement – remember, if it is not where it can be hurt, it will not be injured.
  - Teach employees about safe work habits.
  - Do not use your hand to clear a jam or remove a piece of wood when a machine is running.
  - Shut down the machine before you use you stick a body part into moving machine.
  - Clear a jam with a board or use a push stick.
- Moving machinery and ground personnel do not mix. Use radios to let drivers and ground personnel communicate.
- Use high visibility vests or clothing to allow the ground person to be seen.
- Vehicle accidents account for 43% of our claims – make sure your drivers are trained to slow down to match road conditions.

Employees must be taught to follow safety rules once they are properly trained to do their job. Once they have been trained, be sure to have them read and sign your safety rules. You must have the courage to enforce your disciplinary procedures when an employee violates a safety rule. You need to hold them accountable before and after an accident if they violated a safety rule. ■

THE IMPORTANCE OF REFLECTIVE SAFETY CLOTHING

by Jimmy McCraney, Forestry Mutual

By now, many of our policyholders have experienced our *new look* for our loss control staff and agents. As per company policy, we now will show up wearing reflective safety vests and shirts to increase awareness of the importance of visually being seen in the workplace or job site.

It does not often make the news, but too often employees are injured simply because they were not seen during daily activities on the logging deck or in the woods. In the worse case scenario, there have been fatalities as one member of the crew could not see his co-worker.

Reflective clothing helps identify individuals on the ground to loader and skidder operators during a logging operation.

Employees blending into the background places them at risk for an accident. The use of reflective vests is one easy way to increase the chances of being seen. Forestry Mutual recommends that all of our policyholders establish a safety policy that requires employees to wear reflective shirts and/or vests.

If you visit a logging operation or any wood products facility, it does not take long to figure out that there are a lot going on and a lot of moving parts, machinery and people every day.

When production deadlines are looming, the job site can get even more hectic. This is the time employees are the most vulnerable to accidents. Safety gear is not just a suggestion at this point - it is a necessity.

Reflective safety shirts and vests are important because they alert others around you to your presence. Safety gear alone will not prevent accidents, but use of reflective materials is a great starting point.

While a reflective safety vest may annoy some employees because they view it as an additional layer of clothing, most reflective safety vests are composed of lightweight and breathable material. The goal of an employer requiring employees to wear such gear is not for their inconvenience, but rather, it is to ensure their safety and visibility issues are serious when a job places employees around moving equipment. Other options include high visibility T-shirts and button down shirts with the high visibility reflective stripes on the arms, chest and shoulders. The recommended safety colors are orange and lime green.

Safety shirts and vests are available in many varied designs configurations and fabrics. The most popular material used in the manufacture of safety wear is polyester. The reason polyester is used is due to its ability to hold the bright, neon-like colors for high visibility. If warm conditions or climates is a concern, a mesh type safety vest helps keep employees cooler during their workday.

Employers must be aware that if an employee is injured on the job and it is deemed the accident was caused because an employee was not visually seen, the employer could receive an OSHA citation under their General Duty Clause for *"not providing a work environment that is free from recognized or known hazards that could cause or likely cause death or serious physical harm to an employee(s)"*. Visibility is critical for safety and the associated penalties for such injuries and/or fatalities can be very costly.

To prevent injuries and fatalities from "struck-by" hazards, Forestry Mutual Insurance recommends that policyholders have employees wear a high-visibility shirt or safety vest to help alert vehicle and machine operators of their presence. Wearing a reflective safety clothing can literally save your life. ■

LATE PAYMENT OF POLICY PREMIUM

by Coy Baker, Forestry Mutual

Forestry Mutual's monthly premium payment plan for policyholders is due the first day of each month. The payment must be received in our office by the 15th of the month to avoid cancellation of policy for nonpayment of premium in Virginia, South Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. We issue a 10 day cancellation notice that is mailed certified to the policyholder on the first business day after the 15th and also a letter is sent to all certificate holders we have on file for the policyholders notifying them that the policy is due to cancel 10 days out if payment is not received.

In North Carolina, an Intent to Cancel letter is sent out to policyholders and their certificate holders on the first business day after the 15th which notifies the policyholder and certificate holder that the policy will be cancelled 15 days out if payment is not received. If the payment is received after the notices are sent out and prior to cancellation date stated on the notice, the policy is reinstated and both the policyholder and certificate holder are notified via the United States Postal Service that the payment has been received and the policy is not canceling on that date.

As a reminder, please mail the monthly payment with enough lead time so that it will be received in Raleigh, North Carolina prior to the 15th of the month in order to avoid the cancellation/intent to cancel issuance.

An alternative to mailing the payment is our on-line payment plan for policyholders, but the payment must be posted by the 15th to avoid cancellation notices being issued. If you are interested in signing up for on-line payment plan, please contact Brittany Rhinehart or Tammy Bowers at (800) 849-7788. ■

A Safety Approach from the Top Down... *(from page 2)*

- Observe stumps and butt logs for proper felling techniques. Please do not turn your back on safety violations.

Management

The owner and or foreman have a huge responsibility to keep a focus on safety. Management must constantly monitor risk on the job. Management needs to focus on the traditional logging risk areas.

- Proper working distances must be observed.
- Mobile logging equipment must not invade the safe zone of ground personnel.
- No one is permitted within two tree lengths of any felling operation.
- Proper felling and limbing techniques are mandatory. Proper body placement is crucial.
- Seek or implement training when safety issues are observed.

Employees

Ultimately, each logger has the responsibility of working safely. It is a demanding, and very unforgiving, working environment. One lapse of focus can lead to catastrophic consequences.

- Stay focused on the job at hand.
- Use your Personal Protective Equipment ----- EVERY TIME!!
- Maintain proper working distances. Maintain communications with coworkers.
- Use proper felling and limbing techniques.
- Maintain proper body placement
- Do not take short cuts.
- Make the right decision. Know the reactions from your action.

From the Top-Down, logging safety works best when we limit the exposure levels to our loggers. As I have said countless times, lower the exposure, lessen the chance for an incident. Be aware. Log with care. ■

Screening Drivers...(from page 1)

multiple violations. They will not come to meet with you. Once you receive the MVR take a good look at it. If you notice one or maybe two minor violations, the driver may be okay with proper training, but if you notice a high-volume of violations, you need to consider someone else.

As an agency, we understand how hard it can be to find quality drivers, but do you really want someone driving your 80,000 pound tractor trailer down the road if he has had multiple at fault accidents or numerous speeding tickets?

The major concern here is not whether he may damage the tractor trailer, but the fact that he may injure someone else with that trailer. If you allow a driver that is questionable in your vehicle, and then that driver has an accident, you as an owner are then negligent, knowingly putting a bad driver behind the wheel.

If your applicant has a satisfactory MVR, you will need to discuss the applicant's driving history. The driver must have a minimum of three years of experience driving, and you should take the time to learn what type of driving experience. Has it has been over the road such as interstate driving or does he have experience with smaller roads where log trucks are normally hauling? Has the driver hauled logs before or any other type of load that may shift once in motion? These items can make a big difference on whether or not he is able to drive a log truck.

Another key step in the application process is to introduce your drug testing policy. They need to know that they will have to pass a drug test and be randomly tested throughout the year.

The final step in this initial interview is gauging your first impression on the driver in terms of composure and confidence. If you have an uneasy or bad feeling about entrusting an applicant with delivering your wood as a part of your operations, then it is probably better to keep looking.

The bottom line is we have got to a do better job screening drivers. Your name is on the side of the door, so anything that driver does directly reflects directly back onto your company and reputation in the community. Let's look at how much that load of logs could cost my company versus how much that load will make my company.

Once you have done these items and feel good about the driver, then contact your agency to see if the carrier will approve him. Remember, that truck going down the road is a representation of your company. ■

Insurance fraud impacts everyone. Call us at our toll free number 1-800-849-7788 if you suspect insurance fraud is being or has been committed.

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FORESTRY MUTUAL NEWS

Newsletter of the Forestry Mutual Insurance Company Vol. 15, Issue 3

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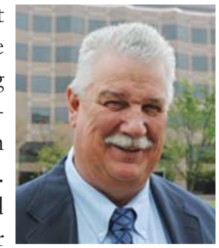
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, trucking is still the number one problem facing our industry in terms of dollars and cents and public perception. Trucking is a significant part of our public profile.

As our field representatives and members of our marketing team are out visiting policyholders in the future, they will be hand delivering truck safety flyers designed to raise the awareness on truck safety and the responsibility truck drivers have to themselves, their family and the public to be at the top of their game when they get behind the wheel.

Truck safety remains a top concern for the forest products industry across the nation.

We understand and appreciate that everyone within our industry and the trucking industry on the whole is struggling with the task of hiring and retaining top-level truck drivers. I challenge everyone in our industry to do their best to get the best. Do not risk your company's reputation and possibly its future on a driver with a poor performance record. I would particularly caution you on adding a driver that is approved only with a surcharge on your policy for coverage.



Keith Biggs

In terms of safety materials, Forestry Mutual and FMIC Agency are in the process of developing a handbook for drivers and companies to help with the training and safety policies that can make a difference in your overall performance. Remember, your employees' attitude is only as good as what you except.

We are also asking all of our policyholders to make sure we have up-to-date e-mail addresses as we will begin to send our quarterly newsletter by e-mail. We also will send timely safety alerts to these e-mail contacts. PLEASE take time to contact our Raleigh office at (800) 849-7788 and ask for Brittany or Tammy to make sure they have your most current e-mail address.

As we enter the fourth quarter, we hope everyone has a safe and happy holiday season. We appreciate your business and if you have any questions, suggestions or problems with your policy, please contact me at (919) 880-1006.

Sincerely,
Keith S. Biggs

LOGGER CHALLENGE AT COLUMBIA BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN COMPETITORS

Forestry Mutual Insurance Company held its annual Logger Challenge competition in September in Marion, North Carolina as part of Columbia Forest Products Logger Appreciation Dinner. Each year, Columbia invites its suppliers and partners for a night of fellowship and terrific barbecue. There were over 300 people in attendance.

Just left of the big seating pavilion, chainsaw trainers extraordinaire Greg Helton and Bryan Wagner set up a skills challenge for loggers that measured attention and use of safety equipment as well as the timber cutter's skill with the saw.

In terms of attention to safety details, Greg Helton was impressed with the improvement

(continued on page 3)

(l-r) Greg Helton, Eddy Norton, Bryan Wagner and Eddie Campbell pose for a photograph after Eddy Norton was named the FMIC Logger Challenge winner.

THE SAWSHOP

by Bryan Wagner
Chainsaw Trainer for Forestry Mutual

BE AWARE OF THE SUN'S GLARE

I have been doing logger training, in-woods risk management, and writing safety bulletins for forest products folks for quite some time now. In my safety alerts, I try to address industry trends as well as identify possible hazards or hazardous conditions before they become a trend. I am always trying to stay ahead of the curve, looking for fresh material that will ultimately reduce the level of risk leveled at our logging crews.

The other day, I was driving in the Virginia mountains to visit a logging job. I had directions given to me by the logger. I had worked in this area before, but I was not exactly sure where the particular road was that I needed to turn onto. With oncoming traffic and some vehicles behind me, I was evidently traveling east based on the terrific glare from the sun that nearly blinded me!

Looking to make a left hand turn at some point, I thought, great, I can't even see the hood of my truck never mind the road and traffic ahead of me. Thankfully, everything turned out to be fine. I found the road and completed a great day of training.

On the way home, it dawned on me just how high the level of risk that I had encountered earlier that morning on the road. In all of my years, I can't ever remember reading a logging safety article dealing with sun glare, so here it is!

A logger's vision and visibility are key factors to his safety in the woods. On the positive side, overhead visibility in the woods is generally better than usual from November to March because the leaves have fallen from the trees and the canopy is relatively clear.

On the negative side, sun glare on the roads and in the woods is more prevalent and severe since the sun is rising and setting lower in the sky this time of year. Regardless of your role on a logging crew, everyone is impacted by the sun's bright glare during these times of the day.

A real basic example is traveling to the woods in the service truck. The sun can cause very serious visibility issues on the roadway that may lead to lessoned vision and/or a sudden slow down in traffic.

Once we are on the logging job, sun glare can magnify logging risks

(continued on page 3)

Sun glare in the morning horizon can be a hazard that should be considered since it may interfere with vision on the log deck area, in the woods, and on the roads to and from the logging site.

SAFE GUARDING AGAINST JOB COMPLACENCY IS IMPORTANT

by Jimmy McCraney, Forestry Mutual

According to a leading safety source, every day in the United States on the average, 15 workers lose their lives as a result of workplace accidents, injuries, or illnesses related to their work - that is a staggering 5,400 employees annually. The single most common cause of these work related accidents is *job complacency!*

If you consider your personal work habits, most likely you can remember an instance or two where you became complacent and were nearly injured. It happens because we perform many functions on an almost continuous basis. Many jobs in the wood industry are repetitive in nature. The more employees repeat what they are doing, the higher the chance that they will become complacent without even realizing it. Therein lies the potential danger for job complacency.

Most of our policyholders work hard to create a safe workplace for their employees and eliminate unsafe conditions. But what about the employees' own unsafe behavior?

If you examine your past accident records, you are likely to discover that the main cause of most of the accidents was the result of unsafe acts rather than unsafe conditions.

If you read between the lines, you might find that the employees involved in the accidents had become complacent about safety. Employees tend to go on autopilot. At this point, they stop paying attention to what they are doing, resulting in unsafe risks.

Many of our policyholders try to combat complacency with safety awareness training. While awareness training is essential to any safe workplace, it is not absolute. Employees should also be trained on the hazards that can distract them from their job at hand. Safety awareness training along with reminding employees on the various workplace distractions that are common to your work environment will place more emphases avoiding accidents.

Common workplace distractions include:

- **Eyes not on the task** – Not looking at what we are doing or not looking before we move our hands, feet or body. Without looking we lose the ability to react to the hazards of the job and this is the most important defense against injury.
- **Mind not on task** – Not thinking about the task we are doing. Employees going into that "autopilot" thought of mind. Employees must be continuously reminded to keep their minds on the task at hand for their safety.
- **Being in or moving into the line-of-fire** – Employees placing themselves in a hazardous situation. Staying clear of moving and rotating parts or staying clear of falling trees.
- **Losing balance, traction and/or grip** – Slip/trip hazards that cause employees to lose their balance and fall, or losing grips that leading to a fall hazards.

Employees must continually be reminded that when they become complacent about personal safety by repeated exposure to complacent situations, their risk of injury or possibly fatality is greatly increased. Complacency is a known safety concern that should be clearly factored in with your accident prevention efforts. And all it takes is constantly reminding employees to about keeping their mind on the task at hand. ■

WHAT DO THE SYMBOLS ON YOUR AUTO LIABILITY POLICY MEAN?

by Eddie Campbell, Forestry Mutual

Have you ever noticed that your auto liability policy has numbers that classify exactly how your vehicles are covered? These numbers are called auto symbols and are very important in determining your coverage. Having some understanding of them will help when you review your policy for proper coverage.

Symbol 1: This includes coverage for owned, non-owned, and hired autos, and provides automatic liability coverage for autos that are newly acquired. It is a sort of catch-all that insures just about any auto you use in your business. Typically, this is used on policies for corporations, but, all vehicles listed on the policy should be titled in the corporation's name and all vehicles titled in the corporation should be listed on the policy.

Symbol 2: This applies only to autos owned by the insured, and provides automatic liability coverage for autos that are newly acquired. *Note that non-owned and hired autos are omitted on this symbol.*

Symbol 7: This applies only to those autos described on the schedule. There is no automatic liability coverage for newly acquired autos. This one is simple – if a vehicle is not listed on the policy, it's not covered. *This symbol is also used to determine coverage for physical damage.*

Symbol 8 & 9: These two symbols are typically listed together on policies, if it is included. You do not automatically get this liability coverage – it must be requested. It applies only to those autos borrowed, leased, or hired by the insured to be used in connection with the insured's business. You are charged premium for this coverage based on how much exposure you have in hired cost and number of employees. *Note: If you have a policy with auto Symbol 1, you will not see Symbol 8 & 9 on the policy because it is included in Symbol 1. However, if you have hired and non-owned liability covered on your policy and your owned autos are written with Symbol 2 or 7, then you will see Symbol 8 & 9 listed.*

You've heard me comment in the past about how understanding insurance coverage can be such a confusing task. Hopefully, this brief summary of the primary auto symbols used on liability policies will help provide a better understanding. Always contact your agent for clarification on insurance coverage issues. ■

Logger Challenge...(from page 1)

made by the field of competitors over last year's competition.

"Last year, we had 11 of 13 competitors commit a minor safety violation," stated Helton. "This year, we only had two out of 11 record a violation. One forgot to place an ear muff back down and another forgot about his shield being up. It was a big improvement over last year and shows that safety reminders work. These guys didn't want to lose points."

The cutting tests consist of bore cutting and timber felling on the prepared logs standing within the squared-off competition area.

In bore cutting, loggers are asked to cut into the log without coming out on either side as they make their way through the log.

"The sides of the log in the bore cut competition represent the hinge wood a logger would encounter in the woods," explained Helton. "If they cut into the side, they would be cutting their hinge wood, and that's not good."

The back of the log was cut to leave a small gap between the middle of the log and the outside edge.

(continued on page 4)

Be Aware of the Sun's Glare...(from page 2)

that are already there. How is your visibility looking through scratched or dirty Lexan with the sun's glare? Remember, if I can see you, I won't hurt you. Traffic problems around the log deck can happen very quickly when you factor in a blinding bright sun!

Let's take some time to lower the risk of this not often talked about safety issue. The time tested Heads-Up for Overhead Hazards Program is a great starting place for everyone on the job. Please take the time to brief your crew on the hazards that are created by the bright early morning and late afternoon sun glare!

TIMBER CUTTERS

- Use approved personal protective equipment (PPE) for head protection. Safety glasses and visors should be kept clean to lessen the effect of sun glare.
- Look and scan at least 50 feet ahead on your ground path of travel.
- Look and scan at least 100 feet ahead for all overhead hazards.
- Don't place yourself under any object that can fall or move due to gravity or the loss of hydraulic pressure.
- Maintain at least two tree lengths from all felling operations.
- Be visible; wear high visibility safety colors. Please **DO NOT** take for granted that machine operators can see you!
- Maintain communication with every one in the work area. Verify their location with frequent eye contact and hand signals.
- Never walk into a work area with running or moving equipment until the equipment is stopped, engine cut-off and implements grounded. Never approach that piece of equipment until the operator motions you to approach!
- Timber cutters shall use proper felling techniques which include proper face notches, with no by-pass, and adequate hinge-wood to control the tree's fall to the ground.
- Timber cutters should be using the "five-part" felling plan. This plan reduces risk during the manual felling process. **LOOK UP AGAIN!**

MACHINE OPERATORS AND TRUCK DRIVERS

- Maintain a clean and clear windshield; side and rear glass panels.
- Replace glass panels that are scratched or cracked, these amplify the effects of glare!
- As with ground personnel, don't take for granted that "other" equipment operators can see you, due to the glare!
- Maintain all "Safe Distance" rules.
- Be visible! Be seen!
- Use of good, clean sun glasses can limit the effect of glare.

Truck drivers should be extra careful during the early morning and late afternoon on the loading deck and the open roads. This means having your body in a safe place while being loaded, being extremely cautious when entering and exiting the roadway to and from the logging deck, and maintaining proper sight lines and speed based on the sun en route to the mill.

Again, please take the time to review safety issues involving the bright glare from the sun. Everyone on the logging crew is effected by the bright glare. I am going to end this briefing with one final point to ponder about sun glare.

On any given day, how many of your employees are riding together in the service truck? I guess that drew some attention!! As always be careful out there! ■

Logger Challenge...(from page 3)

"The second part of the test relates to hazards that might be behind a standing tree such as rock," stated Helton. "The goal is for the logger to complete a bore cut within the log and controlling his stopping point. You should be able to feel when you break through the back half of a tree."

At one point in the competition, a logger stopped his saw with his bore cut nearly complete to walk around and see if he was through the core of prepared log.

"Oh yeah, these guys have learned little tricks along the way," replied Helton when asked about the specific logger. "You know those guys have done it before."

Setting up a tree felling competition presents its own sets of challenges in a setting that does not allow for poles to be planted and/or real trees to be dropped. But that didn't stop Bryan Wagner for inventing his own twist to include a felling competition.

"So I was lying in bed one night trying to figure out how to come up with a way to test felling accuracy without actually cutting down a tree," stated Wagner. *(Can you tell this guy loves his job?)* "In the past, we would put in poles in the ground or find a row of trees, put the flour bags out there, and away we'd go, but we cannot do that everywhere. Then it hit me – will just measure the notch!"

With a set of prepared logs, Wagner and Helton painted notches on each side of the block. Loggers were tasked with completing a bore cut through both painted areas.

"The goal there is to teach these guys to have a level bore cut," stated Helton.

With the bore cut completed and a top notch completed earlier in set up, Wagner and Helton set out a nail some 30 feet away from the bore cut. The logger then set the bottom notch, aiming for the nail. After the cut was complete, Helton and Wagner measured with two tape measures from each side of the bottom notch to the nail.

If both tape measures read 30 feet and 30 feet, the logger is right on the money with his aim. A 30 and 29 reading would put the logger at a minus 1. A few of the loggers did manage to record a perfect 30-30 on the tapes. It's safe to say that as accurate as most of these loggers were with their notch, a four-inch flour bag would have been popped by all competitors. The nail just raises the bar.

When the saw dust finally settled out on the grass, veteran chain saw competitor Eddy Norton once again was the winner. He was followed closely by Randall Vass, who has been the overall winner in years past, and Dennis Helton. All three were presented with Stihl chainsaws and safety equipment for their efforts.

"We always have great, close competitions," stated Wagner, "and tonight was no different. The guys really did a great job." ■

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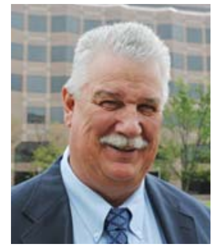
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK...

We would like to wish our policyholders a safe and happy holiday season! I am pleased to report that Forestry Mutual and FMIC Agency have enjoyed another successful year thanks to the commitment to safety among our policyholders and the diligence of our staff. Thank You!

Our worst fears about our trucking issues are coming true. We are having too many claims on the trucking side of our business, and we are not alone. The trucking problem is nationwide in all industries. Consequently, next year will be difficult to find auto insurance for your company if it has recorded auto losses as we have witnessed several companies leave the marketplace.

If you have commercial autos on the road, you need to be doing everything you can to keep good drivers and keep your safety scores in check. With the shortage of drivers, some of you are letting less skilled drivers operate your trucks. If this driver is involved in an incident the attorneys are going to leverage this against you.

Forestry Mutual and FMIC Agency have developed some safety resource materials that can benefit you as the owner of the company as well as for your drivers. Our loss control staff and marketing team will have this material available on a flash drive or as hard copy. The nice thing about the flash drive is that you can customize this information for your company.



Keith Biggs

TEAM Safe Trucking (TST), which is a new 501c organization, will be developing and distributing safety materials to help our industry train its drivers. This group is comprised of loggers, mills, associations, and insurance companies focused on finding solutions to our trucking problem. Team Safe Trucking will be distributing safety flyers and other information to drivers through participating forest products companies.

There have been numerous attempts by MGA's and others to find another standard market for commercial auto insurance, but unfortunately, no one is interested in trucking period. My one piece of advice would be for our policyholders to be willing to sacrifice a load or two in order to make sure your drivers are operating at the highest safety level and driving appropriate speeds. These few loads may just save your company from experiencing high insurance rates.

We are determined to solve this trucking issue with your cooperation. We appreciate your business and if you have any questions, suggestions or problems with your policy, please contact me at (919) 880-1006. Again, from everyone at Forestry Mutual and FMIC, we wish you a safe and happy holiday!

Sincerely,

Keith S. Biggs

THE CAMERA DOESN'T CHANGE ITS STORY

When Alton Griffin asked his wife, Sarah, for a dashboard camera for his truck cab for Christmas, he had little idea how important those captured moments in time would be to his professional driving career.

"I was telling my wife about all the crazy stuff that I see," stated Griffin. "I told her I just wish I had a camera so I could show it to her."

Griffin drives for Katesville Pallet Mill, Inc, which is owned and operated by David Kemp in Franklinton, North Carolina. The company was started by David's father, T.T. Kemp, in the 1970's. David added the logging component of the company in the early 1980's.

After receiving his Christmas gift, Griffin installed the video dash camera that provided a clear view of the front end of his truck, starting well before the wheel wells. In addition, the unit included a smaller camera that Griffin mounted on his left rear view mirror that provided a clear view of the back end of his truck.

"He is always telling stories about what's going on out on the roads," stated David Kemp about how the idea got started of putting cameras in the Katesville owned trucks. "I guess now he can just show you the stories."

Stories can be funny and produce lighthearted entertainment. Accident reports are not fun and *(continued on page 3)*

(l-r) Alton Griffin and David Kemp truly appreciate the value on dash cameras.

THE SAWSHOP

by Bryan Wagner
Chainsaw Trainer for
Forestry Mutual

NEW AWARENESS FOR NEW YEAR

Timber harvesting systems differ according to a myriad of things including, terrain, timber type, timber size, and markets. Logging systems range from totally mechanized, with no one on the ground, to a manual operation using chainsaws and cable skidders.

What is common to all is risk? We must deal with the specific risks on the specific stage or part of the logging operations. Recently, I was at a meeting, when the question was asked, "How many times do we have to hear about Slips, Trips and Falls?" I guess the answer is, repeatedly! Slips, Trips and Falls are a very real risk to all aspects of our forest industry, not to mention other industries nation-wide. This subject should be part of every safety briefing. Another risk that should be included in our New Year awareness package is proper body position. Again, this subject effects all aspects of our industry, from the saw mill to the logging woods. If the body isn't in a bad place, it is not injured there!

Bryan Wagner leads a review of the Five Point Felling Plan for a ProLogger Base Class in Troy, NC.

Without a doubt the manual felling process of a logging job is saturated with risk and exposure. With that being said, we will again go over the five-part felling plan. As you remember, the felling plan deals with the specific risk associated with every part of the manual felling process. Here we go again!!

- Check for over-head hazards! LOOK-UP!! What is up there that could hurt me? LOOK-UP AGAIN!!
- Determine the side-lean of the tree. The weighted side of the tree is the "bad side"; limit your exposure on the heavy side of the tree. If something unplanned happens during the felling process the tree will fall to the weighted side.
- Escape! Your escape route shall be at a 45 degree angle away from the fall of the tree. Get as far away from the falling stem as you can, keep your eyes to the sky! Nothing but "bad" can happen within 8 feet of the stump!! Get "Out of Dodge"!!
- Determine your hinge and its thickness. The basic rule for hinge thickness is 1/10th the diameter at breast height. The hinge is the "steering wheel" in the directional felling process; the hinge also helps to reduce the chance of being struck in a rebound situation. Proper hinge wood shall be continuous across the stump, or the timber-cutter may elect to remove fiber from the center of the tree, leaving 2 (TWO) out-side corners to control the tree's fall to ground.
- Decide what type of back-cut you will use. The controlled release back-cut is preferred, the tree isn't moving while being cut!

After reviewing the felling plan, did you notice that the majority of the plan dealt with the body's position? If the body isn't in a bad position, it's not injured there. Have you heard that before? My ultimate goal in teaching is to get my timber-cutters to use the plans as second nature. As always, training is offered free of charge, don't hesitate to call, it is our privilege to help you. Be safe out there!! ■

CHALLENGE TO INSURE TRUCKS BECOMING MORE DIFFICULT

by Jimmy Locklear, Forestry Mutual

Jimmy Locklear

Unfortunately, the trucking side of raw forest products production is deteriorating rapidly. I am concerned that if the shortage of quality drivers continues to grow, it will ultimately impact production goals of logging companies across the United States. In the face of tough insurance markets for trucking, most producers will have little choice. They will have to adjust to stay competitive. I have not officially heard from processing facilities saying their inventories are suffering, but many facility representatives have expressed their sincere concerns about the truck safety situation.

According to the American Trucking Association (ATA), nationwide (US) commercial trucking was 50,000 drivers short at the end of 2015 and predicts that number will exceed 100,000 within three years. Drivers are retiring, some drivers fail to meet the insurance or governmental benchmarks, and still more drivers are simply walking away because they are burned out. Let's face it there are very few young folks interested in driving trucks for a living. I don't know any, do you?

Recently, Fitch Ratings-Chicago, a major credit rating agency, stated:

"U.S. Commercial auto insurance has evolved into a chronically under performing product segment for U.S. property/casualty insurers. While the property and casualty industry has reported three consecutive years of significant underwriting profits, the commercial auto market reported an underwriting loss for the fifth consecutive year in 2015."

From another prospective, Marsh, a global insurance broker, noted in its outlook for 2016 that:

"Many insurers have seen their combined ratios deteriorate as commercial automobile loss frequency and severity has increased. As a result, Marsh predicted that brokers and insureds will need to look at alternative markets. Insureds and insurers need to focus on loss control techniques, including driver safety training, fleet maintenance and the use of telematics through vehicle monitoring devices."

Some might think we cannot do it since we can barely make the economics of it all work now, but I say the forest products industry must take this step now or we will all suffer much greater consequences in the long run. Adequately trained drivers and well maintained trucks/trailers will come at a price. Adjustments to our daily, monthly and annual training procedures and routines will have to be made on the trucking side of the production equation. Movements to improve haul logistics by reducing loading and unloading wait times, as well as, utilizing back hauls to improve truck revenues should all be considered. Unfortunately, these improvements will not offset the cost needed to afford the trained professional drivers and equipment upgrades many wood production operations need.

There are a number of well-run wood hauling operations that do a great job representing the forest industry across the United States, and they should be commended. Unfortunately, they are having to suffer the consequences brought on by those "in the boat" with them that are not doing things the right way. Remember, our families and friends are traveling the highways with these log trucks that provide a living for most of us. We should all want trained professional safe drivers driving them. ■

Forestry Mutual policyholders can now pay their monthly premiums on-line. Should your company be interested in signing up or inquiring this payment method, please contact Brittany Rhinehart or Tammy Bowers at (800) 849-7788.

PROTECT YOUR HANDS

by Jimmy McCraney, Forestry Mutual

How would your life be affected if you lost a finger? How about if you lost your thumb? Try using any tool effectively without your thumb. What if you lost a hand or both hands? I know a close friend who lost a hand while operating a gang saw. A skilled and typically safety first type of person, he made the mistake of trying to remove a piece of wood debris on the in-feed side of a gang saw. His hand got caught on the wood debris and pulled into the blades. If he had turned off the power to the machine (proper Lock Out - Tag Out procedure for machinery) prior to trying to remove the piece of wood, my friend would still have his hand today.

Accidents do not just happen. They are typically the result of the failure to pay attention to the task at hand and/or not calculating the possible results - both positive and negative - before taking action. I am sure that you can think of instances in your own life where you or somebody you know was injured because of these simple reasons.

You may think that losing a hand, finger, or thumb would never happen to you. But how many times a day do you do something that could result in an accident to yourself or those around you? Someone somewhere suffers an injury every single day, every single hour and possibly every minute.

Employees who work in the forest products industry are especially prone to hand injuries. There are rough materials to handle, objects to be stacked and stored, tools to be utilized, and equipment to be operated. All pose special risks to hand injury, and it would be impossible to list all of these potential hazards.

People usually *approach a task at hand* in one of two ways: 1) They either don't think of safety before they jump into the task, or 2) They think that they "won't or "can't" get hurt.

We would encourage our policyholders to do the smart thing. Before beginning a project, picking up a tool, or starting a piece of equipment, please take the time to consider that an accident that CAN and WILL happen unless you think it through. Keep your mind on safety - protect your hands and fingers. Be the person that encourages safety, looks for workplace hazards, and makes sure they are corrected. You came to work with two hands ready to get the job done – protect them throughout the day and return them home with two hands. ■

FMIC MAKES CONTRIBUTIONS TO FIRE FIGHTING EFFORT IN WNC

Forestry Mutual President Keith Biggs and Safety Chain Saw Trainer/ Western Field Representative Greg Helton recently donated a box of items to the local fire departments and volunteers battling the wildfire forest fires. The box included six saw chaps, 12 pairs of safety glasses, and six personnel first aid kits. The donations were dropped off at Hunt Family Farms feed store located in Golden Valley, NC, which is the collection station for donations to assist the efforts of the brave firefighters working in the South Mountain State Park.

Kelly Hull, the South Mountain Fire Rescue Assistant Chief, is the coordinator for receiving and distributing items to the firefighters. Firefighters hail from South Mountain Fire Rescue, Inc., South Mountain Park Service, NC Forest Service, and Hot Shot crews from other states. The wildfires in the South Mountain State Park, located southeast of Marion and southwest of Morganton, have burned 6,200 acres. ■

The Camera Doesn't Change Its Story...(from page 1)

are serious business.

After two on the road accidents in 2016 that involved Katesville trucks equipped with dash video cameras, Kemp is a firm believer in the value of capturing video evidence. In both instances, the video captured by the dash camera provided the investigating officer enough information to exonerate Kemp's drivers from any wrong doing.

"Stories can change," stated Kemp. "The camera doesn't change. It's been really beneficial for our company. If we hadn't had them installed, we would be going on somebody's word."

Three of Kemp's trucks have dash video cameras presently, but he plans to have all six of his trucks furnished with dash cameras that include a rear shot camera as well in the next two weeks. The cost of the initial cameras were about $150 a unit. Based on his company's experience, Kemp is considering upgrading to a more elaborate model, somewhere in the $450 range.

"We are talking about going to one that's a little bit more expensive, but it includes more features such as the GPS tracking of the truck," stated Kemp. "That way you can tell what the truck is doing."

When asked if he has received any objections from his drivers when he informs him about the installation of dash cameras, Kemp just smiled and shook his head no.

"It is good for the driver," replied Kemp. "It can save him a lot of hassle."

Kemp makes this claim based on his company's firsthand experience. When Griffin was involved in an accident, he recounted that the trooper asked about the video camera on the dash and then asked to see the memory card. The trooper then went back to his vehicle, inserted the card into his computer, and from the video footage, the trooper was able to witness the accident. He was able to determine the speed of the Griffin's truck and see the timing of the incident. In this case, the officer determined that Griffin was not at fault for the accident.

"It's really cut and dry," stated Kemp. "That's what I like about it. You don't have to go on anybody's word."

David Kemp of Katesville Pallet runs four crews and is based in Franklinton, NC.

In terms of maintenance, Griffin insists that it is not much effort to keep the camera ready to roll each day. He upgraded his memory card from the start to 32 GB so he could capture a complete day on one card. If he needs to save anything from the day, he can download the footage to a computer in the evening.

Kemp, who has built his company on new ideas, plans on recommending dash cameras with the front and rear end cameras to his contract loggers as well.

After graduated from East Carolina University in 1983 with an

(continued on page 4)

The Camera Doesn't Change Its Story...(from page 3)

Industrial Technology and Business Administration Degree, Kemp returned home to Katesville Pallet to inform his dad that he wanted to start a logging company. Dad was not too happy.

"I was in the dog house," stated Kemp with a chuckle. "My dad said he spent too much money on the education for me to go into the logging business."

Some 33 years later, Kemp coordinates three logging crews and one thinning specific operation. He has 22 employees, which includes shop help. His equipment lineup includes five skidders, four knuckleboom loaders, three fellerbunchers, two bulldozers and one excavator.

"I really don't have any regrets," stated Kemp. "I mean, I understand this can be a tough business, but no regrets."

Today, coordinating a harvest schedule is a top challenge since Kemp purchases his own timber as well as working locally with different mills in the area.

"You have a lot of competition for timber," stated Kemp. "I work really well with Toney Lumber (in Louisburg, NC) because we are basically five miles apart – my shop and their sawmill. They are after a totally different type of timber than I am so we really work well on that end."

In his role, Kemp is a rover among his crew providing oversight on complicated harvesting operations or just filling a seat in a piece of equipment in case of an absent crew member.

"Well, I basically try to figure out each day where we might have the most need for me to be at in cases of problems," stated Kemp. "Like, for instance here, we got this cell phone tower that we are cutting close to, so I like to be close by for stuff like that. If we are on a wet tract, I am trying to help make it flow a little bit better."

Kemp does not maintain set production goals on his crews because of the amount of specialty projects his company contracts on a regular basis. Instead, he formulates production expectations based on each job, and he rewards his crew members for meeting those goals.

In terms of trucking and the recent issues with truck safety, Kemp believes the improvements in truck performance has been lost on the general public.

"I don't think people realize that these trucks are a lot faster on the take off than they used to be and they keep their speed going up a hill a whole lot better than they used to," stated Kemp. "They are thinking, well, I am going to get stuck behind a slow truck, and it's going to go up a hill at 25 miles per hour. Whereas now they go up a hill at the speed limit, pretty much. People don't take that into consideration when they are making their driving decisions."

As for Kemp's driver, Alton Griffin, he sees this reality every day. While Griffin is not willing to rank his dash camera as his best-ever Christmas gift, he is will to put it in his top five.

"But, I will say this, I will never drive another truck without one," stated Griffin with a smile. ■

Insurance fraud impacts everyone. Call us at our toll free number 1-800-849-7788 if you suspect insurance fraud is being or has been committed.

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