

## Forest Fire Awareness

Being caught in or fighting a forest fire is considered one of the most hazardous experiences that a person working in the forest can have.



Everybody who works in the wilderness during times of potential forest fires needs to be aware of the risks and the emergency response procedures.

## Forest Fire Equipment

Companies working in the bush are required to maintain equipment to combat fires. The type of equipment required varies by the time of year, fire hazards, and the client being worked for.

As an employee, you are required to know where this equipment is located, and to help the company identify if something goes missing or gets damaged.

Communication Devices should be available to crews working in the bush so they can contact one another, and outside assistance when required.	
Fire Extinguishers should be located in or on all pieces of mobile equipment (except possibly excluding ATVs).	
During fire season, backpack sprayers (aka pisscans) are required on the worksite and in pick-up trucks. These should be maintained full of water.	
Shovels should be in each pick-up truck, heavy truck, and piece of heavy equipment throughout the year.	
An axe or pulaski should be in each pick-up truck, heavy truck, and heavy equipment throughout the year.	

**\*\*\*Please report any missing or defective promptly to your supervisor**

## Fire Reporting

All forest fires must be immediately reported to:

- Other Personnel in the Immediate Area
- The Ministry of Forests (MOF)
- The Client (e.g. Licensee)



All employees should have an emergency radio frequency and phone card in their possession or in their worksite vehicle.

Provide the MOF with as much of the following information as possible:

<b>Location</b>	Area of the fire.
<b>Fire Behaviour</b>	Flame heights and rate of spread.
<b>Size</b>	Area affected.
<b>Smoke</b>	Colour, density, and volume.
<b>Fuel Type</b>	Trees, grass, slash, blow down.
<b>Terrain</b>	Steepness, gullies, etc.
<b>Wind</b>	Speed and direction.
<b>Threatened Assets</b>	Houses, equipment, timber, etc.
<b>Access</b>	Roads, trails, walk-in, air-only, etc.
<b>Water</b>	Availability, distance to, and amount available.
<b>Onsite Contact(s)</b>	Names and how to reach key people onsite.

## Actioning a Fire

### Basic Requirements

All resource workers are required to either have training in basic forest fire fighting or be under the direct supervision of somebody who is appropriately trained.

People are to action fires ONLY if they are suitably trained, led by a suitably trained person, AND where there is minimal risk.

## Actioning a Fire (Continued)

### Determine if it is Safe

Size up your team, equipment, and the fire and collectively decide if it is safe to action the fire.

### Establish a Plan

- Establish a plan to action the fire.
- Trained firefighters will lead the teams and guide the overall plan.
- Get the safety equipment and the fire fighting gear.
- Work in small groups. Stay close and keep in communication with one-another.

### Safety Gear Summary

The following personal protective equipment and gear is required for actioning fires.

Image	Description	Standard
	CSA Approved Safety Boots	Required
	High-Vis Hard Hat	Required
	Leather Gloves	Recommended
	High Visibility Clothing	Recommended
	Communication Devices	Recommended

## Actioning a Fire (Continued)

Fire needs all three to burn



Take any one away and the fire goes out

### Watch Out for Changing Conditions

When the temperature goes up so does the fire hazard of heat

- Ground or surface fires can be actioned by suitably trained ground crews.
- If flames exceed 1.5 metres, the fire is becoming too active for actioning by non-professionals. Discontinue firefighting efforts and regroup.
- Crown fires are not to be actioned by non-professional firefighters.

### Keep a Safe Distance

Forest fires must be given a great deal of respect. If any team member feels that the team is too close to the fire, all members shall move away until all personnel are comfortable with the working distance from the fire.

### Avoid Dehydration

The heat and hard work associated with fire fighting can cause workers to quickly become dehydrated. Drink lots of fluids often – you will have more energy and think more clearly.

### Watch out for Carbon Monoxide

Carbon monoxide is heavier than air and can accumulate to dangerous levels in steep walled valleys or other deep depressions in the ground. Carbon monoxide can impair judgment, vision and alertness. Limit your exposure to carbon monoxide by working only briefly in low-lying areas.

## Backpack Sprayer Operation

Hazard Assessment	F	S	P	R
Fatigue (S)	2	1	1	4
Strains / Sprains (S)	2	1	1	4
Incorrect Use (S)	2	1	1	4
Fire Foam Contact (H)	2	1	1	4

### Carrying Loaded Sprayers

When backpack sprayers are full of water, they are heavy and disrupt your center of gravity. Use extra caution when walking as your balance is affected, and this could result in a fall or twisting related injury.

### Using the Sprayer

Spray the fire at the base of the flame or use to extinguish embers.

**Take inventory Check you camp equipment**

## 13 Fire Suppression Equipment Requirements

Equipment required as per the *Forest and Prairie Protection Regulation* (requirements based on men employed at site of operations).

Equipment for fire control	Men employed at site of operations										
	1	2	3	4	5	6-10	11-20	21-30	31-40	41+	Same as for 31-40 plus increments as directed by the minister
Shovels	1	1	2	2	3	5	10	15	20		
Backpack with pump	0	0	1	2	3	5	10	15	20		
Axe or Pulaski	0	1	1	1	2	5	10	15	20		
Fire pump	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1		
Fire hose (m)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	450	450		
Power saw kit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1		



## Shovel and Pulaski Use

Ensure you have equipment in good working order to avoid personal injury from tools flying apart.

### Check Your Equipment

- Make sure that the equipment you are about to use is in good condition.
- Watch out for loose blades that could fly off unexpectedly.
- Watch out for dull pulaski blades which can glance off roots or wood.
- Tag out defective equipment.



### Watch Out for Your Safety

- Wear gloves to avoid blisters and splinters.
- Keep your feet well away from where you strike the ground with the pulaski.
- Avoid using the pulaski in a way that it could glance off a root and hit your leg or foot.

### Stretch and Take Breaks

- After a few light warm up slings, stop and stretch your arm, shoulder and back muscles. A little stretching can help avoid strain injuries and discomfort.
- Be aware of the affects of fatigue. When fatigued, workers are less accurate and alert when swinging hand tools and are more likely to sustain or inflict an injury.
- Take routine breaks when working with hand tools. Use this time to have a quick drink and do a couple of stretches.

### Maintain a Safe Distance

- It is important to maintain a safe working distance between workers using shovels or pulaskis. Contact between personnel and moving tools or debris can be dangerous. A safe distance is 3 metres or 10 feet.
- Always make your presence known when approaching fellow workers. All too often firefighters are hit by swinging tools.