



Ministry of Forests, Range



Wildlife Tree Committee of British Columbia

Bulletin to WDT Assessors – February 14, 2007

This bulletin clarifies the significant hazard indicators that assessors should be using when conducting tree assessments for LOD-1 activities. In 2006, members of the Wildlife Tree Committee (WTC) reviewed tree assessments on worksites intended for LOD-1 and it was apparent that the hazard criteria for LOD-1 were misunderstood and often misapplied. The result, numerous “safe” trees are rated as Dangerous and subsequently felled at a risk to fallers and an unnecessary burden of cost to silviculture projects.

Wildlife/Danger Tree (WDT) Assessors should review and implement the following revised Table 3 during tree assessments in 2007. Revisions to course manuals and field cards will be made accordingly. However, in the interim, 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 (February 2007)

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"> ▪ Insecurely lodged trees (a tipped tree that is likely to shake free of the support trees and fall to the ground) ▪ 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 decadent and unstable: i) >50% of tree cross-sectional area damaged, burned, scarred, decayed or fractured; or ii) class 5-8 trees with heart rot conks along the majority of the length of the stem; 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 decadent stem - the stem must not only be decadent but also unstable to pose an imminent risk of failure. Hence, decadent AND unstable.
 - a. Class 4 trees are considered to be SOLID trees, according to the Decay classes, and as such are not likely unstable. If heart rot conks are present along the entire bole, then this tree is not class 4. The range will be class 5-8 to capture the Sponge to Soft tree classes as needing consideration for being decadent AND unstable.
 - b. 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.