



Faller dies when struck by bucked tree

A faller was standing on the narrow ledge of a cliff to buck a windfall tree. The windfall's rootwad was lying on the perimeter of the ledge and was only loosely attached to the ground. Most of the windfall's 58-foot trunk was suspended between two standing trees below the ledge. As the faller completed the bucking cuts, the rootwad rolled downhill off the ledge, causing the lower part of the trunk to pivot on one of the standing trees. Then as the suspended trunk swung uphill, its bucked end pinned the faller against the cliff. He sustained fatal injuries.

Safe work practices:

- Ensure that supervisors/bullbuckers inspect falling blocks — by means of a walk-through — to identify potential hazards and to create a safe falling and bucking plan. Communicate this plan to fallers.
- Provide site-specific written safe work procedures for bucking, including the following:
 - Do not buck a tree if you cannot create a safe escape route. Use alternatives such as blasting, a helicopter to reposition trees or logs to a safe bucking area, or creating a no-work zone.
 - Anticipate possible log movements and other hazards that might develop as the log is released.
 - Buck trees or logs at their pivot points or as close to them as possible.
 - Use the saw either right- or left-handed to stay clear of the area into which the bucked log or tree may move.
 - Use the correct bucking cuts — including V notches — for top, bottom, or side binds.
- Discuss bucking difficulties with your supervisor/bullbucker to determine the safest way to proceed. Take hazards such as the following into account:
 - pivot points that may cause logs to swing, roll, or slide, or cause chain reactions — especially on steep slopes
 - heavy binds that may cause cuts to break with sudden force
 - rootwads that may dislodge unexpectedly
- Consult the BC Faller Training Standard for detailed information and instructions on bucking hazards and safe bucking procedures. Find the Standard on WorkSafeBC.com. Click on “Publications” at the top of the home page. Under “Health and safety” click on “By topic.” Then click on “Forestry” and scroll down to the Standard.

