



ToolBox Talks from the SWPA Safety Committee

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (ERP)

Keeping these ERP tips in mind will help you and your crew be prepared for an emergency situation.

1. **Be prepared.** Work locations and the environment can change, even in the same day. Prepare for a different site, drainage, or road system; the weather might be worse this afternoon than this morning; other contractors in the area might have come or gone. It's important for your crew to ask yourselves does our ERP have us covered?
2. **Remember 911 is NOT a RESCUE PLAN.** You can't always rely on it in rural logging areas. If the call won't work and, if you can't get through, what will you do? If you can only make one call for help, clarify who to call!
3. **Be Thorough** when completing a first aid assessment. It's important to factor in the level of risk due to your location and how close you are to help. Rather than only focusing on the risk of the work activity itself, ask can I get to medical help quickly? Can they get to our location easily?
4. **Knowledge for ALL.** Make sure ALL crew members know how to respond to an accident — don't rely only on a crew leader to coordinate. What if you only train one person and they get hurt? It's crucial for each crew member to be able to identify their physical work location at all times (e.g., latitude/longitude). They should also know where to find the communications equipment, how to use it, who to contact, and what to say.
5. **Take Initiative.** People in the woods need to look out for each other. Find out if other crews are working close to yours and what equipment they have — they might be able to respond and help you faster than anyone else. Communications equipment may not work all the time or in all areas. Have a backup plan and/or other options available (e.g., 2-way radios, SAT phones). If your plan involves relaying information through different team members, be sure to practice getting a message across. Have a back up plan!
6. **Practice makes Perfect.** Don't wait for a real emergency to find out if your plan works. Conducting regular, realistic, drills is a great way to know for sure your plan will work. Practice drills should include as many workers as possible. After drills discuss what you and your crew learned and where things could be improved. Implement any changes needed. The point isn't to do it perfectly, but to learn and improve every time.
7. **Review Your ERP.** As part of your accident investigations, think about your plan when reviewing accidents. This way, your plan is evaluated frequently and in the context of an actual incident. It's simple...discuss: was our plan adequate for the situation? What if things were worse? Were we able to communicate effectively?
8. **Buddy system.** Performing first aid in an emergency is not the same as in training. It will be easier with a helper. As part of your plan, consider pre-determining a helper to go with your first aider. Given the challenges of logging operations, having an extra set of hands is invaluable.
9. **Think beyond first aid.** Make sure your ERP is adequate for other situations that would require emergency response, including fires, gas or electrical mishaps, multiple injuries, etc.
10. **Plan for Evacuation.** Depending on your location, the ERP should consider evacuation by air or ground transport. Prepare for emergency heli-extractions by communicating frequently with helicopter companies, having pre-arranged radio channels, and mapping out helicopter landing areas in advance. By ground: If ambulance is responding to your call, make sure you can verbally give directions to where you are and be prepared to meet them if necessary.



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Toolbox Talks are provided as a courtesy to SWPA members. Please remember they are to assist you in developing a safety plan. Keep in mind OSHA, Department of Labor and Insurance requirements may change over time and it is your responsibility to make sure your safety plan is up to date. Reference: OSHA, NIOSH, BC Safe

