

Tier 2
ORC-2PR_820-D-03
Revision Original
Page 1 of 4

Environmental Management System

Procedural Documentation **Significant Weather**

1.0 Purpose

To describe environmental conditions and significant weather events that could impact safety of those in the forest and to minimize environmental damage from these situations.

2.0 Scope

This procedure applies to employees, contractors and overlapping licensees or seasonal staff who conduct work on the Lac Seul Forest.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 ORC Operations Forester or Designates

3.2 ORC Silviculture Forester or Designates

3.3 All Contractors and Sub-Contractors for ORC and OLL

3.4 Overlapping License Holder or Designates (OLL)

3.5 ORC Weekend Fire Contact

3.6 ORC Seasonal Staff (temporary)

4.0 Procedures

Wind

High winds can lead to serious injury or even death from flying debris and knocked over trees. Workers should follow these guidelines:

1. Pay attention to high wind advisories and high wind warnings issued by weather services.
2. Take shelter immediately if there are high winds in your area.
3. Watch out for falling trees and limbs, and flying debris.
4. Exercise caution when driving. Strong winds can make driving difficult, especially high profile vehicles. Take extra precautions on bridges and overpasses.
5. Wear appropriate PPE at all times, especially in mature stands during windy conditions.
6. Ensure that you are aware of your surroundings (visual and hearing). For example, recommend only wearing one ear bud or keep volume reduced.
7. Drive with caution at appropriate speeds due to unexpected hazards.

Tier 2
ORC-2PR_820-D-03
Revision Original
Page 2 of 4

Environmental Management System

Procedural Documentation **Significant Weather**

Road Hazards

Road hazards can take many different forms, ranging from temporary hazards, such as downed trees that temporarily obstruct traffic, to permanent damage that may require construction of a new road or water crossing.

In the event that a temporary roadway barrier, such as a downed tree, drivers who travel forest roads frequently should carry an axe in their vehicles at all times.

Torrential downpours and thunder storms

Torrential downpours and thunder storms are often unexpected events. If it seems likely that a serious event may happen in the near future take cover or find a safe place before it happens. However, this is not always predictable it is advisable to stop working and seek shelter. Avoid tall trees, utility poles or towers during such an event. Do not be the tallest object in the area. Stay away from metal conductors such as wires or fences. Metal does not attract lightning, but lightning can travel long distances through it.

Washed-out and Impassable Roads

1. Use the two-way radio to report conditions to your supervisor and other drivers in the area.
2. Install flagging tape and warning signs to alert other drivers of the hazard.
3. Permanently damaged roads may require construction of a new road or water crossing.
4. Drive with caution at appropriate speeds due to unexpected hazards.
5. Don't attempt to drive through flooded roadways, unless using reasonable caution (e.g. check depth and flow).

Cold Weather and Heavy Snow Conditions

Forestry field workers may be exposed to frost bite when working in winter conditions. Hypothermia is a danger in winter conditions but may also be a factor in any season.

The danger of cold related injuries is primarily mitigated by dressing properly, monitoring the impact of cold on the body, and recognizing and remedying problem situations.

Drive with caution on icy roads, be aware of heavy snow conditions, soft shoulders, downed trees. Check local weather forecasts for snow and freezing rain conditions. Plan your day accordingly as per weather forecasts.

Carry a winter emergency kit.

Tier 2
ORC-2PR_820-D-03
Revision Original
Page 3 of 4

Environmental Management System

Procedural Documentation **Significant Weather**

Severe Heat

Forestry field workers (especially those working in cutover areas) may be subject to heat related injuries such as dehydration and heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. These conditions are a progressive worsening of condition caused by dehydration, loss of electrolytes (from excessive sweating) and an increase in the body's temperature which exceeds the body's capacity to cool itself down.

Other heat related injuries include sun burns and skin cancers resulting from long term exposure to the sun.

Carry plenty of water, take frequent breaks and seek shade during extreme heat. Increase the frequency and length of rest breaks.

Schedule strenuous jobs to cooler times of the day.

Light summer clothing should be worn to allow free air movement and sweat evaporation.

If working outdoors, wear light-colored clothing, preferably long-sleeve shirt and pants, and cover the head to prevent exposure to direct sunlight.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) to Address Wet Weather Events

Wet weather events such as long periods of rain, heavy rain, flash-flooding, and spring melt can affect how we conduct operations. Wet weather can transform an area that is not typically sensitive into a sensitive site that is susceptible to site disturbance and damage.

BMPs to address wet weather events:

- Monitor operations, especially during wet periods, to ensure that site disturbance is not occurring.
- Reinforce soft, wet areas with slash/ chipper debris of corduroy or freeze down trail.
- Know the location of sensitive sites such as natural drainages, silty or clayey soils and lowland organic areas.

For a more information on site disturbance please see ORC-2PR_810-P-08 Site Disturbance SOP.

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References

Document / Form	I.D.#

Revisions

#	Purpose	Prepared by	Approved by	Date
N/A	Original version	EMS Team	Chantal Alkins Certification Coordinator	November 23, 2016
A	Addition of BMPs to address wet weather events	Ashla Hayes EMS Coordinator	Chantal Alkins, Scott Russell	July 18, 2017
B	Annual Review	Scott Russell	Scott Russell	April 1, 2019
C				
D				
E				