TOOLBOX SAFETY TALK

List some upcoming work or job tasks that may expose workers to "Danger Trees":

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WHAT IS A "DANGER TREE"?

Wildfires can leave trees that are left standing but unstable. These trees are prone to falling or breaking. This creates hazards for workers who work in affected areas, including but not limited to forestry workers, harvesters, and hunters.

Trees that have been damaged in wildfires and whose roots have been burned are known as "danger trees". They could topple at any time, especially in windy conditions.

A danger tree may be identified as a work site hazard because of one or more of the following factors:

- Location of the tree
- How the tree leans
- Physical damage to the tree trunk, roots, or limbs
- Unknown overhead conditions

See: *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* – Sections 12 (General Duties of Employers), 13 (General Duties of Workers), 18 (2)(e) (Training of Workers)

IDENTIFY HAZARDS AND CONTROLS

Workers and supervisors must assess the hazards and risks at a work site. If it includes a previously burned area, this assessment may include safety risks related to danger trees. Develop a safety plan together that addresses the hazards. Consider the following:

- **Falling trees:** Even if a tree looks robust, it might be at risk of falling because of a damaged root system, or the fire loosened surrounding soil.

- **Falling branches:** Look up often when travelling through a burned site. Take note of fire-weakened trees and overhead dangling branches. Avoid stopping under a fire-weakened or dead tree.

- **Wind and weather:** Windy conditions increase risks associated with danger trees and falling branches.

- **Avoid working alone:** If the work involves performing tasks on or travelling through a previously burned area, ensure workers are not working alone.

REVIEW

Get input from the team to start your hazard and risk assessment and develop a safety plan.

- At this work site, are trees likely to have damaged root systems, trunks, or limbs?
- Has the ground been disturbed by fires or firefighting equipment?
- What is the weather forecast?
- Can work in a burned area be eliminated?
- If not, what engineering or administrative controls could you implement to keep the team safe?
- Do you need any personal protective equipment in addition to other controls?