

## **Al Lundgren**

Al Lundgren is a rarity in the forestry industry. He worked for 34 years as a faller in the coastal logging industry and never had a serious injury.

Every week, seven fallers in B.C. are injured. What is Lundgren's secret to a long and safe career?

"I can't put it all on luck I guess," he says. "A lot of it is just sticking with a set safe work procedure, maintaining it all the time and planning. You have to plan every move, and you have to plan about five steps ahead of yourself. It's not the type of job where you can let your mind wander. If you do, you're going to get hurt."

Lundgren grew up in Lake Cowichan on Vancouver Island and entered the industry as a logger in 1962. He broke in as a faller in 1968 under the guidance of his father. Recently retired, he has an extensive background in safety education, programming and training.

A member of the IWA Canada Local 1- 80 Safety Council for 20 years, Lundgren, 60, was also a safety representative for his employer for many years. He presented many chainsaw safety awareness sessions for both the logging and manufacturing crews and taught the Wildlife/Danger Tree Assessors Course. He was part of the WCB Faller and Bucker Training Standard working group, participated on a number of MOF and WCB safety publications and participated on the province wide "FallSafe" presentations with the Workers Compensation Board of B.C.

"Falling in general is the most hazardous job out there," he adds. "You're not allowed any mistakes. Everything is heavy – the saws are heavy, the trees are heavy – and everything lands with a crash. It's a lot more dangerous than a lot of other occupations. In most jobs today, the logger will sit in control booths and have protection from rollover cabs. We have a hardhat."

Lundgren says he originally became a faller because it was the highest paid job in the industry then. But he adds that for a lot of fallers, the attraction is that it is "one of the few occupations where you're on your own. You have to develop a safe method of handling any given situation, and you have to successfully complete it all by yourself. You're guided and instructed by management of where you're going to work that day, but how you handle each specific tree is your responsibility."

With the release of the B.C. Fallers Training Standard Lundgren is pleased to have been a part of the certification process and when looking at the contents of the Standard he says, "How I wish I had something like this in 1968, when I first picked up a chainsaw as a trainee faller. The new faller of today will gain the 85 or more years of experience the Working Group brought to the table. What could be more positive than that? It will save lives".

*A photo of Al Lundgren receiving his faller certificate from Hon. Graham Bruce, David Anderson & Rob Wood will be emailed to print media by noon.*