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OVER-HEIGHT HAZARDS IN TRUCKING

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INTRODUCTION: Over-height forestry trucks can be the cause of personal injury, torn down power lines, damaged traffic signals, damaged overpasses and bridges and damaged equipment being hauled. Several precautions can be taken to prevent over-height accidents:

A. LOGS LOADED ABOVE TRAILER STANDARDS

- 1) Never load outside logs over the standards on a log trailer. Crowning of interior logs is permissible as long as the total height does not exceed a legal highway maximum of 13 feet 6 inches.
- 2) Be aware of low bridges along the travel route and possible detours if the posted load height is exceeded.
- 3) Measure the height of standards on new trailers and on repaired trailers to be sure an over-height situation does not exist.
- 4) Always use binding chains, straps, or cables with the proper strength requirements for the load.
- 5) Always bind trucks away from the log loading deck to remove drivers from a high traffic area.
- 6) Carefully check the load for shifted logs before unbinding.
- 7) Always unbind trucks in the designated area at the mill. If unbinding stations are supplied at a mill, always use the unbinding stations and follow all posted rules.

B. MOVING OVER-HEIGHT LOGGING EQUIPMENT

- 1) Measure the height of the total load after equipment is properly secured for travel.
- 2) Don't assume all lowboy deck heights are the same. This will influence total load height.
- 3) Over-height loads may have a higher center of gravity, affecting how loads are positioned and affecting truck handling. Dropping a wheel off the pavement could result in a roll-over accident.
- 4) Secure and bind all equipment, including booms and grapples.
- 5) Obtain over-height permits from appropriate state highway agencies and insure that the assigned route is a safe route. Determine low bridge locations on your own as a check.
- 6) Use escort vehicles if required by the state agency.
- 7) Be aware of low obstructions once the hauler leaves the public road system. Power lines and phone lines to temporary structures such as hunting camps, farm buildings, etc. may be too low to pass under.
- 8) Scout woods roads for low limbs and leaning trees that could damage equipment.

A log truck and logging equipment hauler are typically what the traveling public identifies as the forest products industry. Take care to properly address over-height issues and avoid accidents.

Prepared by the Southwide Safety Committee, Forest Resources Association, Inc.