



WOOD PELLET ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

2026-28 SAFETY COMMITTEE WORK PLAN

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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



OUR MISSION

To improve the wood pellet industry's collective safety performance, to earn a reputation with regulatory authorities and the public as an industry that is highly effective at managing safety, and to learn and share best practices regarding safety.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Safety Committee's responsibilities are:

- To develop strategies for continuous improvement of safety and promote to Wood Pellet Association of Canada (WPAC) members.
- To communicate to WPAC's membership the importance of developing a safety culture.
- Readily and openly share safety and maintain our collective commitment to cooperate on all safety matters.
- To circulate safety news, developments and reports to WPAC members.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING

The Safety Committee is appointed by WPAC's Board of Directors to discharge the Board's responsibilities relating to WPAC's safety objectives.

The Safety Committee reports to the Board regularly.

MULTI-YEAR WORK PLAN

The majority of the key focus areas will span several years. To ensure continuity across years, the WPAC Safety Committee is shifting to a multi-year Work Plan with annual targets and updates.

BC FOREST SAFETY COUNCIL RELATIONSHIP

The BC Forest Safety Council (BCFSC) is the Health & Safety Association (HSA) for WPAC. Membership is funded through a WorkSafeBC payroll levy on British Columbia (BC) pellet producers, passed on to BCFSC.

KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR 2026-2028

1. Process Safety Management
2. Improving Rotary Drum Dryer Safety
3. Safe Wood Pellet Handling and Storage
4. Mental Health
5. Musculoskeletal Injuries (MSI)
6. Winter Fibre Truck Loading/Unloading
7. Communications

FOCUS AREA DETAILS

PROCESS SAFETY MANAGEMENT (PSM)

WPAC, in collaboration with BCFSC, continues to advance the Process Safety Management (PSM) initiative for wood pellet facilities. Building on the foundation laid by the 2023 project, *Integrating Process Safety Management into Canadian Wood Pellet Facilities that Generate Combustible Wood Dust*, funded through a WorkSafeBC Innovation at Work grant, the WPAC Safety Committee has undertaken several critical steps to ensure the effective implementation of PSM across the industry.

A PSM Steering Committee has been established to oversee the project and guide its strategic direction. Progress has been made, including developing a comprehensive implementation guide, work plan, and milestones with a timeline and detailed processes to support the adoption of PSM. The WPAC Safety Committee also developed self-assessment worksheets for PSM elements and sought industry feedback. The feedback received was implemented to enhance the tools' practicality and effectiveness. These efforts are designed to support wood pellet operations in identifying and addressing gaps in PSM practices.

Actions

1. **Commitment from WPAC Safety Committee:**
Reaffirm commitment to progress on process safety aligned with CSA Z767.
Target: Q1 2026.
2. **Hire a PSM coordinator:** The PSM coordinator will drive the project.
Target: Q2 2026.
3. **Process flow diagrams (PFDs):** Each plant develops/updates a PFD.
Target: Q4 2026.
4. **Management of change (MOC) self-assessment:**
Each plant completes the MOC self-assessment, identifies gaps and initiates action planning.
Target: Q4 2026.
5. **Piping & instrumentation diagram (P&ID) gap identification and risk-based plan:** Each plant completes a self-assessment of P&ID status to identify missing and out-of-date P&IDs and to develop a 12-24-month action plan to close the gaps.
Target: Q4 2026.

PROCESS SAFETY MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS			
PROCESS SAFETY LEADERSHIP	UNDERSTANDING HAZARDS AND RISKS	RISK MANAGEMENT	REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT
Accountability	Information and documentation	Training and competency	Investigation
Regulations, codes and standards	Project review and design procedures	Management of change	Audit program
Process safety culture	Risk assessment and risk reduction	Integrity management	Enhancement of process safety knowledge
Conduct of operations and operational discipline	Human factors	Emergency management	Key performance indicators

SAFE WOOD PELLET HANDLING AND STORAGE

Fire prevention and suppression for wood pellet storage requires a unique approach. Risks associated with material handling and self-heating can lead to combustible dust fires and explosions, structural collapse and operation interruptions. To help Canadian first responders and owners of pellet storage facilities, the following actions will happen:

Actions

1. **Webinar:** The Safety Committee will organize a safe wood pellet material and handling storage webinar to enhance awareness in Canada. It will be recorded and published online to expand the reach of people exposed to the information. The webinar will build on the successes of overseas workshops in Japan and Denmark.
Target: Q4 2026.

IMPROVING ROTARY DRUM DRYER SAFETY

The project was initiated through a symposium held in April 2024, which led to a dedicated Working Group reviewing past incidents and developing enhanced, safer operating procedures. A report was completed in late 2025.

Actions

1. **Communications:** The Safety Committee will review the Working Group's findings and ensure the results are communicated broadly across the pellet industry to promote safety improvements.
Target: Q1 2026.
2. **Session at the 2026 Safety Summit:** The Safety Committee will organize a presentation at the Safety Summit to share key learnings and safety practices from the project, further enhancing awareness and implementation of safer operations within the industry.
Target: Q2 2026.
3. **Webinar:** To reach a larger audience than the 2026 Safety Summit, a webinar will be conducted and recorded. It will be published on pellet.org.
Target: Q2 2026.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is an integral component of overall safety and well-being in the workplace. A workforce struggling with stress, anxiety or burnout is at a higher risk of making critical errors, compromising workplace safety and reducing productivity. By integrating mental health initiatives into safety programs, companies can foster a culture of psychological safety, enhance employee resilience and improve operational outcomes.

Actions

1. **Session at the 2026 Safety Summit:** Dedicate a session at the Safety Summit to mental health, including a panel discussion or a keynote speaker with expertise in workplace mental health.
Target: Q2 2026.
2. **Exploratory Research:** Work with Dalhousie University on exploratory research *Application of Process Safety Principles in Improving Mental Health and Well-Being of Workers in High-Hazard Industries*.
Target: Q4 2026.
3. **Article:** Include in a post-summit article in Canadian Biomass Magazine.
Target: Q3 2026.

MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES (MSI)

Musculoskeletal injuries (MSI) are among the most common workplace injuries, particularly in physically demanding industries like wood pellet manufacturing. These injuries can result from repetitive motions, overexertion or awkward postures. They have a significant impact on employee well-being, productivity and safety performance. By addressing MSIs proactively, companies can minimize injury risks, improve workplace ergonomics and promote a healthier workforce.

Actions

1. **Session at the 2026 Safety Summit:** Organize a dedicated workshop during the 2026 Safety Summit to address MSI prevention. This session will include practical strategies, case studies and discussions on implementing ergonomic solutions in the workplace.
Target: Q2 2026.
2. **Article:** Include in a post-summit article in Canadian Biomass Magazine.
Target: Q3 2026.

WINTER FIBRE TRUCK LOADING/ UNLOADING

Winter conditions pose unique safety challenges for pellet plant truck loading and unloading operations. Slippery surfaces, reduced visibility and cold weather hazards can increase the risk of incidents, impacting driver and worker safety. Implementing targeted safety measures for winter operations can help mitigate risks, ensure compliance with regulations and foster a safe working environment.

Actions

1. **Communications:** Distribute revised SOP for winter truck loading/unloading.
Target: Q1 2026.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PLAN

Progress on the Work Plan will be part of the agenda for the monthly Safety Committee meetings. Monthly agendas will include specific work items for review, with committee members assigned to lead and report on tasks. Updates will be provided, and progress will be documented in the meeting minutes.

COMMUNICATIONS

Actions

1. **Monthly safety calls:** Hold monthly Safety Committee conference calls at 11:00 a.m. PST, every second Wednesday of the month. Continue including safety share and icebreaker activities.
2. **Amplification of WPAC safety resources:** Develop and implement communications plan to profile the wide range of WPAC Safety Resources. Plan to include mix of online (i.e., website, publications and articles) and in-person (i.e., mill visits, events) activities.
Target: Ongoing.
3. **Safety hero:** As part of our commitment to safety in the workplace, it's crucial to acknowledge employees who support safety. WPAC Safety Committee members are to nominate a worker who promotes and supports safety at their organization. Nominations are to be sent to Gord Murray (gord@pellet.org) or can be submitted at pellet.org/safety/safety-hero-award/.
Target: Quarterly.
4. **WorkSafe BC HSA amendments:** Review and summarize all HSA amendments proposed by WorkSafeBC as they are released. Discuss each amendment with the Safety Committee. Respond to WorkSafeBC regarding proposed HSA amendments.
Target: Ongoing.
5. **Biannual WPAC Safety Committee/WorkSafeBC meetings:** The Safety Committee will meet twice a year with WorkSafeBC to share progress on the Work Plan, to learn about WorkSafeBC's concerns as they emerge and to demonstrate to WorkSafeBC the ongoing commitment of WPAC members to safety.
Targets: June 2026 and before November 30, 2026.
6. **BCFSC quarterly forums:** Participate in the BCFSC – Forest Industry Multi Sector Safety Forum.
Target: Quarterly.
7. **Safety alerts:** Implement safety alerts as each incident is experienced. Submit incidents to BCFSC and change the branding to “Pellets.”
Target: Ongoing.