

Cougar Attack

SAFETY ALERT

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Enform

Enform is the health and safety association for Canada's upstream oil and gas industry. We provide leading health and safety training, programs and services, touching the lives of hundreds of thousands of workers each year. We are dedicated to the continuous improvement of safety with a vision of eliminating work-related incidents or injuries in the upstream oil and gas industry.

An Industry Product

This document was developed by industry for industry. Working collaboratively, Enform works with the submitting organization representative in developing these documents to improve the industry's hazard awareness. Canada's leading oil and gas industry trade associations support the use of shared information to help companies of all sizes improve performance.

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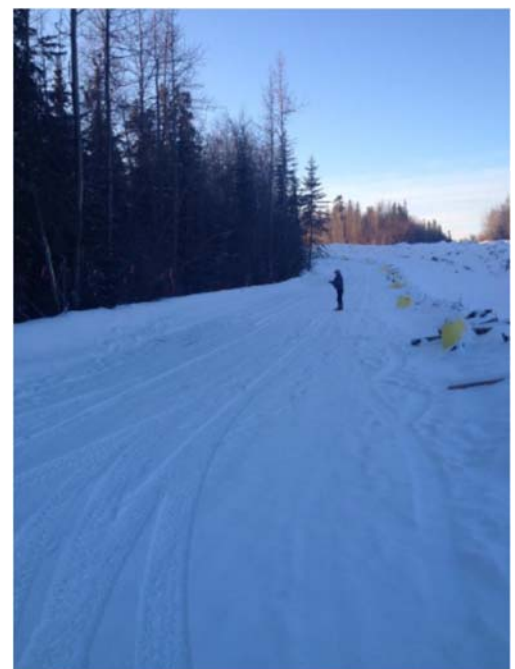
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For more information on this event, please contact: safety@enform.ca

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:

A four-person crew was stringing cones and skids along a new pipeline right of way in the foothills region of NW Alberta, using a truck and trailer. A cougar (healthy juvenile, about 70 lbs) attacked one of the workers, jumping on him from behind, biting his head and clawing his face, neck, and upper body. His coworkers beat the cougar off using tools and their fists. As they made their way to the safety of the truck, the cougar attacked another crew member, biting his shoulder and clawing him. His coworkers came to his aid and successfully repelled this secondary attack. The site ERP was initiated, and the injured workers were transported to hospital for treatment.



Worksite where attack took place.

WHAT CAUSED IT:

Random attack, no known causes.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS INCLUDED:

Consultation with several wildlife biologists revealed several points for consideration:

1. Despite being a predatory animal, cougar attacks on humans are very rare, let alone on a group of people.

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2. Due in part to a lower deer population, the prey profile of certain cougars may change.
3. This cougar was at the age where animals leave their mothers and begin to establish their own range.

CORRECTIVE/PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS:

- Integrate the risk of wildlife into both levels of the job – (1) planning/preparation, and (2) performing work on the job site.
- Ensure you are trained in wildlife awareness, which is your best defense.
- Watch for signs of cougars in your work area (tracks, scat, scraped up dirt/debris, covered kills).
- Maintain awareness of surroundings – head on a swivel, scan forest edges.
- Work only in groups (never alone) if in wildlife areas, including breaks.
- Make noise regularly (loud talking, bang tools, noise makers) to announce your presence to any animals in the area.
- If threatened, make yourself look bigger; never run or turn your back.
- Carry a tool, walking stick, etc. to defend yourself if attacked (very rare) and fight back.
- Never feed wildlife; dispose of food, garbage properly.
- Ensure you know your ERP and have a way to communicate.

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