



"THE BEST SAFETY DEVICE IS A CAREFUL WORKER"

HAZARDS

The meaning of the word **hazard** can be confusing. Often dictionaries do not give specific definitions or combine it with the term "risk". For example, one dictionary defines hazard as "a danger or risk" which helps explain why many people use the terms interchangeably. There are many definitions for hazard but the most common definition when talking about workplace health and safety is:

A **hazard** is any source of **potential** damage, harm or adverse health effects on something or someone. Basically, a hazard is the potential for harm or an adverse effect. Examples of adverse effects would be to people as health effects, and to organizations as property/equipment damage.

Workplace hazards can come from a wide range of sources. General examples include any substance, material, process, practice, etc. that has the ability to cause harm or adverse health effect to a person or property.

See TABLE 1.

Human ~~Error~~ Error

Hazards occur as a result of misusing a product, carelessness, or human error.

Common causes of human error:



- Not paying attention.
- Not following instructions.
- Being distracted / multitasking.
- Not having the knowledge you need.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

Hazard identification can be done:

- **During design and implementation:**
 - ⇒ Designing a new process or procedure.
 - ⇒ Purchasing and installing new machinery.
- **Before tasks are done:**
 - ⇒ Checking equipment / following processes.
 - ⇒ Reviewing surroundings before each shift.
- **While tasks are being done:**
 - ⇒ Be aware of changes / abnormal conditions.
- **During inspections:**
 - ⇒ Formal, informal, supervisor, health and safety committee.
- **After incidents:**
 - ⇒ Near misses or minor events.
 - ⇒ Injuries.

"NEVER GIVE SAFETY A DAY OFF"

TABLE 1		
Examples of Hazards and Their Effects		
Workplace Hazard	Example of Hazard	Example of Harm Caused
Thing	Knife	Cut
Substance	Benzene	Leukemia
Material	Mycobacterium tuberculosis	Tuberculosis
Energy Source	Electricity	Shock, electrocution
Condition	Wet floor	Slips, falls
Process	Welding	Metal fume fever
Practice	Hard rock mining	Silicosis
Behavior	Bullying	Anxiety, fear, depression

WORKPLACE HAZARDS

Workplace hazards also include practices or conditions that release uncontrolled energy, such as:

- ◆ An object that could fall from a height (potential or gravitational energy).
- ◆ Run-away chemical reaction (chemical energy).
- ◆ Release of compressed gas or steam (pressure; high temperature).
- ◆ Entanglement of hair or clothing in rotating equipment (kinetic energy).
- ◆ Contact with electrodes of a battery or capacitor (electrical energy).

MCLB ALBANY'S VPP STEERING COMMITTEE

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TO BE SURE THAT ALL HAZARDS ARE FOUND:

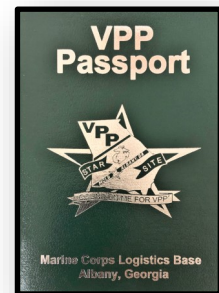
- * Look at all aspects of the work; include non-routine activities such as repair, or cleaning.
- * Look at the physical work environment, equipment, materials, products, etc. that are used.
- * Include how the tasks are done.
- * Look at injury and incident records.
- * Talk to employees: knowledgeable in the tasks and potential hazards associated.
- * Include all shifts, and people who work off site either at home, on other job sites, drivers, teleworkers, with clients, etc.
- * Look at the way the work is organized or done (include experience of people doing the work, systems being used, etc.).
- * Look at foreseeable unusual conditions, such as procedures that may be unavailable in an emergency situation, power outage, destructive weather, etc.
- * Determine whether a product, machine or equipment can be intentionally or unintentionally changed (e.g., a safety guard that could be removed).
- * Review all of the phases of the lifecycle. Examine risks to visitors or the public.
- * Consider the groups of people that may have a different level of risk tolerance such as young or inexperienced workers.

RISK ASSESSMENT IS THE PROCESS WHERE YOU:

- Identify hazards and risk factors that have the potential to cause harm.
- Analyze and evaluate the risk associated with that hazard.
- Determine appropriate ways to eliminate the hazard,
- Control the risk when the hazard cannot be eliminated.

These critical steps are to make sure the workplace has taken a systematic approach that looks for any existing or potential hazards, has taken appropriate steps to determine the level of risk of these hazards, and then taken measures to control the risk or eliminate the hazard.

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RISK

Risk is the chance or probability that a person will be harmed or experience an adverse health effect if exposed to a hazard. It may apply to situations with property/equipment damage or harmful effects to the environment.

These risks are expressed as a probability or likelihood of injury/illness, whereas hazard refers to the agent responsible.

Factors that influence the degree / likelihood of risk:

- Nature of exposure.
- Method of exposure.
- Severity of the effect.

Watch your step
– it could
be your last

