Identifying, Assessing and Controlling Hazards in HCM

As an employer, you have a general legal duty to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of your workers. Above all, this means identifying potential and actual hazards, and taking steps to eliminate or minimize them.

As workers it is your responsibility to work towards completing this hazard identification in conjunction with health and safety rep and supervisors.

Identification

Hazard identification should be an on-going process. Program elements relating to hazard identification may include some or all of the following:

- planned workplace inspections;
- accident investigations;
- review of new projects at conception and design stages;

Assessment

Criteria against which to assess hazards will enable you to determine priorities for action.
In establishing criteria, consider the following:

- degree of risk, that is, the extent to which the hazard is likely to cause:
    - permanent disability, or loss of life; or
    - serious injury or illness (resulting in temporary disability); or
    - minor (non-disabling) injury or illness;
- probability of occurrence (high, moderate, low);
- number of persons exposed;
- duration of exposure.

Where there is exposure to hazardous chemical, biological or physical agents, you will need to include workplace and personal exposure monitoring to ensure that exposures do not exceed regulated or recommended limits.

Control

After hazards have been identified and assessed, you will need to take appropriate measures to eliminate or minimize them. Program elements related to hazard control may include some or all of the following:

- engineering controls (e.g., machine guards, ventilation);
- work procedures; general rules and practices;
- industrial hygiene procedures; housekeeping procedures;
- fire prevention;
- emergency plan;
- maintenance procedures;
- health care;
- personal protective equipment.

Consider the general work environment where exposure to particular hazards occurs. Examine the hardware, work procedures, and personnel involved, to help you determine the appropriate controls that are needed to eliminate or minimize identified hazards; these should be included in your health and safety program.

Hardware

- equipment (design);
- materials (process design); maintenance of equipment and facilities;
- safety equipment (e.g., guards, control panels, alarm/warning systems, ventilation, personal protection);
- workplace/ equipment layout (ergonomic considerations).

Procedures

- job procedures;

- rules;
- emergency procedures;
- housekeeping procedures;
- operating procedures;
- procedures for working alone;
- job rotation and job enrichment;
- hygiene practices.

In setting standards for each hazard control element, take into account the following:

- relevant regulations and codes (e.g., machine guarding, designated substance regulations, the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), the Ontario Fire Code, and the Building Code);
- applicable standards (e.g., Canadian Standards Association standards);
- manufacturers' specifications;
- internal and external engineering specifications;
- industry codes of practice or health and safety guidelines.

On an ongoing basis, please record any hazards that you identify in the normal course of completing your job. We will then have to complete an analysis of the activity and determine a proper set of standards or guidelines to ensure safety. Identification is the first step.

Type of Hazard/Situation/Equipment that should have documented procedure	**Location/ – garage, vehicle, disposal site, office, hall, yards, various**	**Steps Taken to ensure safety**	**PPE used to ensure safety**

Type of Hazard/Situation/Equipment that should have documented procedure	Location/ – garage, vehicle, various	Steps Taken to ensure safety	PPE used to ensure safety