

HAZARD AWARENESS

Being aware of hazards is not always easy – often people don't realise that a hazard exists until it is too late to do something about it. Our aim is to encourage people to make themselves more aware of the hazards around them, particularly those that may occur in the workplace or working environment that have the potential to cause harm.



A 'hazard' is defined as a condition or a changing set of circumstances that presents a potential for injury, illness, or damage to property, materials, or equipment. A 'hazard' could also be a situation where the inherent characteristics of an activity, condition, or set of circumstances might result in adverse or harmful consequences.

An 'accident' is defined as an unforeseen and unplanned event that results in an unfavourable, unwanted or unplanned outcome. They are often caused as the result of carelessness, or ignorance, or both.

There are some key words in these definitions:

- Unplanned;
- Unforeseen;
- Unfortunate;
- Unfavourable
- & most importantly Potential!

"I heard about a bloke working for another contractor the other day who had fallen from a height of about 8 metres onto a concrete floor in a shaft. He was fortunate to have escaped this accident with only a badly broken leg. A number of years ago I worked with a plasterer who fell 18" backwards off a ladder and struck his head – he went into a coma and never recovered. Both of these situations have been discussed to the limit and on several occasions I have heard people refer to 'luck' – both good and bad! Well, the last time I looked, employing 'luck' was not an effective accident prevention or loss control technique."

For something to go wrong – an 'unplanned' or 'unforeseen' event to take place – there has to be 'potential'! Being complacent and taking things for granted are causes of a tremendous number of incidents each year, many of which end up as personal injuries. Recognizing hazards and doing something about them is everyone's responsibility!

So as you begin work, ask yourself:

- Do I have the right tools / equipment for the job that I am about to do?
- Have I inspected my tools / equipment to make sure they are in good repair, or do I expect somebody else to have done it for me?

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- Am I trying to get by with inadequate tools and equipment, or will I do something about it this time?
- Is the work laid out to provide safe access to the job?
- Is the work laid out to provide safe completion of the job?
- Are the materials I am using safe, or do I need additional personal protective equipment such as: safety glasses, gloves, hearing protection, overalls, respiratory protection, etc.?
- Is there a safer way to do the job?
- Are all necessary equipment guards and workplace safeguards in place?
- Is something amiss or do I know of something that I need to bring to the attention of my Supervisor / Manager / colleagues?
- Are written procedures such as the working arrangements, permits, isolations and lockouts being followed?

BE AWARE OF THE POTENTIAL HAZARDS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR WORK AND MAKE YOUR CHOICES CAREFULLY!!

REMEMBER TO LOOK AFTER YOUR OWN SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF YOUR WORKMATES!!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT IF YOU DON'T THINK IT IS SAFE!!

DON'T FORGET – IF IT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU, IT'S IMPORTANT TO US SO LET US KNOW BY RAISING A SFETY CONCERN OR NEAR MISS REPORT. YOUR PROMPT INTERVENTION COULD PREVENT AN ACCIDENT!!