



How to Manage Hazards



FOR FORESTRY



If you are thinking about improving the health and safety of your workplace, hazard management is a good place to start.

Why should you do this thing called hazard management?

- This is the step that will make the biggest difference to your staff's health and safety.
- It is the most basic step and it's not hard.
- You don't have to do it by yourself – you achieve better results by actively involving your staff.
- The law says you have to.

How well are you doing with hazard management?

To see how well you are going with hazard management, ask yourself, health and safety representatives, and your staff the following questions.

	YES	NO	N/A
Do you have a record of workplace hazards and how you are dealing with them?			
Are health and safety representatives and staff actively involved in hazard management on an ongoing basis?			
Have you and your staff identified hazards relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Plant – eg, safe (pedestrian) areas on skid sites, protective structures, safe loading practices. → People – eg, hydration, nutrition, fatigue, vibration, noise. → Locations/environment – eg, weather, slope, windthrown trees. → Chemicals – eg, storage, labelling and spraying. → Tasks – eg, working alone, felling, breaking out. 			
Have you and your staff decided which hazards are significant (see the next page for a definition), and which are of a lesser concern?			
Have you and your staff worked out how you will deal with hazards and taken action?			
Do you have a system for monitoring hazards that have either been isolated or minimised eg. daily or monthly checks? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Eg. Personal protective equipment (PPE). → Eg. Haulers. 			
Do you check regularly to see that you have dealt with hazards effectively?			
Do you and your staff identify hazards and adapt processes as new things, equipment or people are brought into the workplace?			
Do you monitor the workplace and staff for exposure to hazards that require health monitoring eg. noise?			
Do you tell contractors (eg. for machinery maintenance) and visitors about relevant hazards and how they can keep safe?			
Do you find out from contractors what they bring into your workplace and how to keep your staff and visitors safe?			
Do you make sure that contractors have the right knowledge and skills to do the job safely?			

If you could not answer YES to all these questions, note down on the next page the action you and your staff need to take.

HAZARDS

Hazard

a) means an activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation, or substance (whether arising or caused within or outside a place of work) that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm; and

(b) includes-

(i) a situation where a person's behaviour may be an actual or potential cause or source of harm to the person or another person; and

(ii) without limitation, a situation described in subparagraph (i) resulting from physical or mental fatigue, drugs, alcohol, traumatic shock, or another temporary condition that affects a person's behaviour.

What do you need to improve?

	WHO	WHEN

IS THIS HAZARD SIGNIFICANT?

The HSE Act defines **significant hazard** and **serious harm** as follows

Significant hazard

“Significant hazard” means a hazard that is an actual or potential cause or source of –

- (a) Serious harm; or
- (b) Harm (being harm that is more than trivial) the severity of whose effects on any person depend (entirely or among other things) on the extent or frequency of the person's exposure to the hazard; or
- (c) Harm that does not usually occur, or usually is not easily detectable, until a significant time after exposure to the hazard.

Serious harm

1. Death.
2. Any of the following conditions that amounts to or results in death, permanent loss of bodily function, or temporary severe loss of bodily function: respiratory disease, noise-induced hearing loss, neurological disease, cancer, dermatological disease, communicable disease, musculoskeletal disease,

illness caused by exposure to infected material, decompression sickness, poisoning, vision impairment, chemical or hot-metal burn of eye, penetrating wound of eye, bone fracture, laceration, crushing.

3. Amputation of body part.
4. Burns requiring referral to a specialist registered medical practitioner or specialist outpatient clinic.
5. Loss of consciousness from lack of oxygen.
6. Loss of consciousness, or acute illness requiring treatment by a registered medical practitioner, from absorption, inhalation, or ingestion, of any substance.
7. Any harm that causes the person harmed to be hospitalised for a period of 48 hours or more commencing within 7 days of the harm's occurrence.

HOW TO MANAGE HAZARDS

The law says you must have a systematic approach for dealing with hazards.

There are three parts to this:

1. Identify all the hazards in your workplace.
2. Identify the significant hazards. Then work out which ones need immediate attention and which are of a lesser concern.
3. Take action to deal with the hazards – remove them or at least reduce their impact.

When these things have been done you will need to:

1. Review the situation regularly.
2. Adapt processes as new things/equipment and people are brought into the workplace.

1. Identify hazards

Make a list of all the hazards in your workplace. (See our example hazard record on the next page.)

Some of these will be really obvious physical things such as a piece of potentially dangerous equipment, stockpiles of chemicals being cut by a chainsaw, being struck by logs. But you will need to look further and also consider the hazards that can't necessarily be seen, hazards that can result from work processes and tasks that:

- Are repetitive – eg, pruning, delimiting.
- Build up gradually – eg, fatigue from travel or long hours.
- Involve working alone.

Also think about hazards which come about from having untrained, new or part-time staff or volunteers, newly installed equipment, and changing tasks or processes for staff.

**UPDATE THIS
LIST REGULARLY**

**THINK BEYOND
THE OBVIOUS**

2. Rate the significance of hazards

Note the hazards that can cause serious harm and deal with these ones first.

You will now need to decide which hazards you will deal with first. To do this think about:

- Are they what the law would call "significant"?
- What injuries have people had already?
- Have there been "near misses"?
- How likely is it that this could happen?
- How serious could the illness or injury be?

Also consider hazards that staff want to be addressed immediately, and those that will result in good cost/benefit and can be addressed quickly and easily.

**INVOLVE YOUR
STAFF, THEY
MIGHT HAVE A
BETTER IDEA OF
WHAT HAZARDS
ARE FROM THEIR
DAY-TO-DAY
ACTIVITIES**

3. Deal with the hazards

WHY SHOULD YOU DO ANYTHING?

This is how you will protect yourself and your staff from getting hurt at work. It simply is safe work practice. And the law says you have to – or you could face big fines.

So, HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT DOING THIS?

You and your staff need to develop a suitable system or action relevant to each specific hazard. The law says you can do this by considering these actions in the following order.

a. Get rid of the hazard altogether (eliminate)

- eg, → Use mechanical felling in high risk conditions eg. ground or windthrow.
- Plan the layout of the skid sites eg. allow space for the use of bearers.
 - Replace or remove dangerous machinery.

If that's not possible:

b. Isolate the hazard

- eg, → Provide safe storage for fuels, etc.
- Physically separate staff and machinery on skid sites.

If that's not possible.

c. Reduce the likelihood of any harm (minimise)

- eg, → Use appropriate personal protective equipment and ensure it is fit for purpose.
- Train staff in safe work procedures eg. 2 tree lengths rule when felling.

In six months' time, have a look at it all again to see that you and your staff are involved and taking preventative action. Is your plan effective?

WHAT DOES A HAZARD RECORD LOOK LIKE?

On the next page is an example for a small business showing how you can record this information for each of the three parts. There is also a template for you to photocopy and record your workplace hazards.

INFORMATION ON MANAGING SPECIFIC HAZARDS, BEST PRACTICE AND CODES OF PRACTICE ARE AVAILABLE FROM WWW.ACC.CO.NZ AND WWW.OSH.DOL.GOV.T.NZ

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN BUYING EQUIPMENT, TOOLS ETC

- What safety information has been obtained regarding the item?
- What hazards are associated with the item?
- What health and safety risks will the item introduce?
- What strategies need to be implemented to ensure safety during installation, transport, handling and storage?
- What changes need to be made to work procedures and training?

Example hazard record for a small business

HAZARD		SIGNIFICANT?			ACTION		REVIEW	
Hazard and harm	Where or what task	Significant Yes/No	Does the action eliminate, isolate or minimise the risk?	Action	How often action is monitored	Date of last review		
Manual Handling – muscle strains & sprains	Chainsaw work – trimming and cutting on old skid sites	Yes	Minimise Minimise Minimise Minimise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider blade length/saw size – minimise saw size/weight, ensure properly balanced. 2. Use stem bearers where practicable. 3. Only trim from ground level not standing on logs. 4. Info/instruction/training. 	Daily/Monthly Daily/Monthly Training Register	May 2003	LISTS OF HAZARDS IS REVIEWED AND UPDATED REGULARLY	
Struck/Crushed by Transport	Skid site work	Yes	Eliminate Eliminate Isolate Isolate Minimise Minimise Minimise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan work to reduce/avoid machines working next to chainsaw operators. 2. Plan skid sites to allow adequate space for safe machine and chainsaw operator work. 3. Segregate extraction and fleeting phases on skid sites. 4. Clearly identify & segregate a safety zone – mark out with tree stems. 5. Wear hi-vis PPE. 6. Reversing beepers/flashing lights on machines. 7. Info/instruction/training. 	Daily – crew Monthly – Manager Daily/Monthly Training Register	May 2003		
Lacerations and Kickback	Chainsaw work	Yes	Minimise Minimise Minimise Minimise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintenance – saw in good working order, all safety features operational, and chain properly sharpened. 2. Follow Safe Operating Procedures (FIT Best Practice Guidelines). 3. PPE (Hi-visibility helmet, with ear muffs and visor, hi-vis shirt, safety trousers, safety boots). 4. Information, Instruction, Training. 	Daily – crew Monthly – Manager Daily/Monthly Training Register	May 2003		
THE EMPLOYER AND STAFF HAVE WORKED TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY HAZARDS AND FIND WORKABLE SOLUTIONS		NB. Refer to definition of serious harm.						

HAZARD RECORDED FOR

DATE

HAZARD

Hazard and harm

Where or what task

Significant Yes/No

SIGNIFICANT?

Does the action eliminate, isolate or minimise the risk?

Action

ACTION

How often action is monitored

REVIEW

Date of last review

HAZARD		SIGNIFICANT?		ACTION		REVIEW	
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→ Further resources for forestry

ACC WorkSafe series for forestry

- Improving workplace safety and health
- **How to manage hazards**
- Training and supervision
- Emergencies and incident investigation

visit → www.acc.co.nz/injury-prevention

or call → 0800 THINKSAFE (0800 844 657)

