

Human Resources, Health, Safety and  
Employee Well-Being

# HAZARD RECOGNITION AND REPORTING PROGRAM

**A guide to recognizing and reporting workplace health and  
safety hazards and concerns**

Initial release date: January 2021

Last review date: January 2021

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## INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Hazard Recognition and Reporting Program is to promote hazard awareness, early identification and proactive resolution of workplace hazards in support of the University's Healthy Workplace Policy.

The process will enable prompt reporting and subsequent corrective actions without waiting for the next round of regular workplace inspections or an injury to be sustained. As well, it is a continuous improvement initiative that will empower everyone to address hazards in a systematic way, with the ultimate goal of eliminating and/or controlling the risk of injury, illness, or property damage.

The goals will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Defining roles and responsibilities for hazard reporting and proper corrective actions
- Providing guidance on hazard recognition
- Outlining a simple process for employees to report hazards and resolving the concern (*See Appendix A*)

This Program is not intended to extinguish rights, remedies and responsibilities under a collective agreement.

## SCOPE

This program applies to all persons working for York University including faculty, staff and volunteers; all workers as defined under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

## BACKGROUND

The identification and correction of hazards before an incident occurs is true prevention, and the goal of York University's Healthy Workplace Policy.

- At York University, all members play a part in promoting, creating and maintaining a healthy workplace. Workplace hazards, if left unaddressed, may lead to incidents causing injury or illness.
- The immediate hazard reporting process allows employees/faculty to report hazardous conditions or practices as they notice them.
- This process is intended to increase due diligence, minimize personal injury and property loss in the workplace, in accordance with the Healthy Workplace Policy.

Through the utilization of this process, any community member can report health and safety concerns and any incidents to their management supervisor.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act (sec.28(1))* requires a worker to "report to his or her employer or supervisor the absence of or defect in any equipment or protective device of which the worker is aware and which may endanger himself, herself or another worker" and "report to his or her employer or supervisor any contravention of this Act or the regulations or the existence of any hazard of which he or she knows."

## DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

**Employee/faculty:** All persons working for York University including faculty, staff and volunteers; all workers as defined under the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**Hazard:** source with a potential to cause injury and ill health (CSA Z45001-19).

**Healthy workplace:** Is one that actively works to: (1) prevent harm to an employee's physical and psychological health and safety and (2) promote physical and psychological well-being.

**HRBP** - Human Resources Business Partner

**HSEWB** – Health, Safety & Employee Well-Being

**HSO** – Health and Safety Officer

**JHSC** – Joint Health and Safety Committee

**Management Supervisor:** In all cases, the person to whom an employee reports. In the case of academic employees, it is normally understood as follows: full-time faculty – the Dean; Teaching Assistants, Contract Faculty and Graduate Assistants - the Associate Dean.

**Risk** - The effect of uncertainty (CSA Z45001-19)

**WIR**- Workplace Incident Report

**Workplace:** The physical location(s) where employees/faculty are assigned to perform work or such other university sanctioned activities and where their behaviour may have a subsequent impact on work relationships, environment and/or performance. Incidents that occur by way of electronic communication (e.g. unwelcome phone calls, email or voice mail, and the display of offensive materials) may be considered to have occurred in the Workplace.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Shared Responsibility

- All employees/faculty have the duty to contribute to workplace health and safety. One of the ways they can contribute to the workplace health and safety is by reporting and where safe to do so implementing corrective action for any hazard they become aware of, or encounter.

**Divisional/ Department Head or Delegate (President, Vice-President, Associate/Assistant Vice-President, Executive Director, Dean, Principal, Senior Executive Officers, Director)**

- Lead by example by identifying and correcting hazards.
- Communicate this program to employees/faculty within their Faculty/Department.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this program and applicable procedure(s) on an ongoing basis.

**Management Supervisor or Academic Leader i.e. anyone who has individuals reporting to them**

- Lead by example by identifying and correcting hazards.
- Communicate the requirement to report hazards to employees/faculty that report to them.
- Responding to reports of hazards or health and safety concerns as outlined in this Program.
- Identify training needs and coordinate training for employees/faculty.
- Address any incidences of non-compliance.
- Oversee/monitor the application of this program for the area/department.

**Local Contact (e.g., Associate Dean, Executive Officer, HRBP/Administrative Officer, Director, HR Advisor, HSO, etc.)**

- Assist area management supervisor in fulfilling their responsibilities with respect to this program.

**Employee/faculty**

- Report any/all workplace hazards of which the staff and faculty are aware and which may endanger themselves or another staff and/or faculty, as outlined in this Program.
- Participate in training as required.

**Union(s)**

- Provide representation to employees/faculty in accordance with the applicable collective agreement and legislative requirements.
- Participate in the review of this program through the Joint Health and Safety Committees.

**Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being (HSEWB)**

- Lead the development and assist with implementation including ongoing management/coordination of this Program.
- Liaise with relevant external governmental agencies (e.g. Ontario Ministry of Labour) where required.
- Document and keeps records of hazard investigations not resolved internally.
- Coordinate a review every three years of the Hazard Recognition and Reporting Program and make revisions where needed.
- Provide support, education and counsel to employees and Management Supervisors with respect to this Program.
- Act as a technical resource in hazard assessment and recommendations for correction.
- Monitor data collected from hazard reports to trend analysis for continuous improvement.

**Health and Safety Officers (HSOs)**

- Promote and be a role model in creating and sustaining a healthy workplace.
- Act as a resource on matters related to health and safety for the divisional/department head or delegate and the area JHSC(s).
- Assist the department/Faculty in fulfilling the intent of the University's Healthy Workplace Policy, related policies, programs and other applicable health and safety requirements.
- Assist Management Supervisors with investigation of incidents and/or employee concerns, as outlined in the Incident Reporting and Investigation Program.
- Support Management Supervisors in addressing their staff or area health and concerns.

**PART A: PREVENTION AND EDUCATION****Recognizing the hazard**

The first step to prevention is identification. Hazards and their associated risk factors can be identified through various means, including:

- Workplace inspections – formal or informal
- Concerns reported by employees and/or management
- Job hazard analysis
- Incident data (i.e. incident patterns, frequency/severity rates)
- Documentation (i.e. Safety Data Sheets (SDSs), manufacturer's operating manuals)

**Table 1** presents a summary of the types of hazards and examples that may be present in the workplace:

**Table 1: Hazards and related examples**

<b>Hazard Type</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Safety Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate machine guards, defective equipment.</li> <li>• Unsafe workplace conditions (e.g., Slips, trips and falls, etc.).</li> <li>• Unsafe work practices (e.g., operating equipment without training/orientation, not wearing personal protective equipment, etc.).</li> </ul>
Biological Hazards (viruses, bacteria, fungi, parasites)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mould (e.g., water damage on carpet, ceiling tile, dry wall, etc.).</li> <li>• Contact with human or animal tissues or fluids containing virus/disease.</li> </ul>
Chemical Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chemicals in a form of solid, liquid, vapour, gas, dust, fume, mist (e.g., welding in an open area, using industrial cleaning solvents, not working in the fumehood, spills etc.).</li> </ul>
Ergonomic Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caused by demands on employees, such as repetitive and forceful movements, vibration, awkward postures arising</li> </ul>

Hazard Type	Examples
	from improper work methods or improperly designed workstations, tools or equipment.
Physical Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hazardous noise, vibration, heat, cold, electricity, radiation, pressure, lighting, etc.</li> </ul>
Psychosocial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violence, workplace stress, workplace traumatic events etc.</li> </ul>

### Assessing the Hazard

After identification is made, the hazard is analyzed and evaluated based on how likely and severe the risk is. Risk is the chance or probability that a person will be harmed or experience an adverse health effect if exposed to a hazard. Risk is assessed using two main criteria: probability and consequence. Probability refers to the likelihood of something occurring and consequence refers to the severity of the outcome of an event or incident.

**Table 2** considers the relationship between the probability of an event occurring, and its related consequences. The color code in this table corresponds to level of risk, with red being highest level of risk, and white being lowest level of risk.

**Table 2: Risk matrix**

Probability	High			
	Med.			
	Low			
		Low	Med.	High
		Severity		

Where an employee/faculty or, management supervisor identifies a hazard and needs assistance with assessing the risk, the area Health and Safety Advisor is available to assist.

### Controlling the hazard

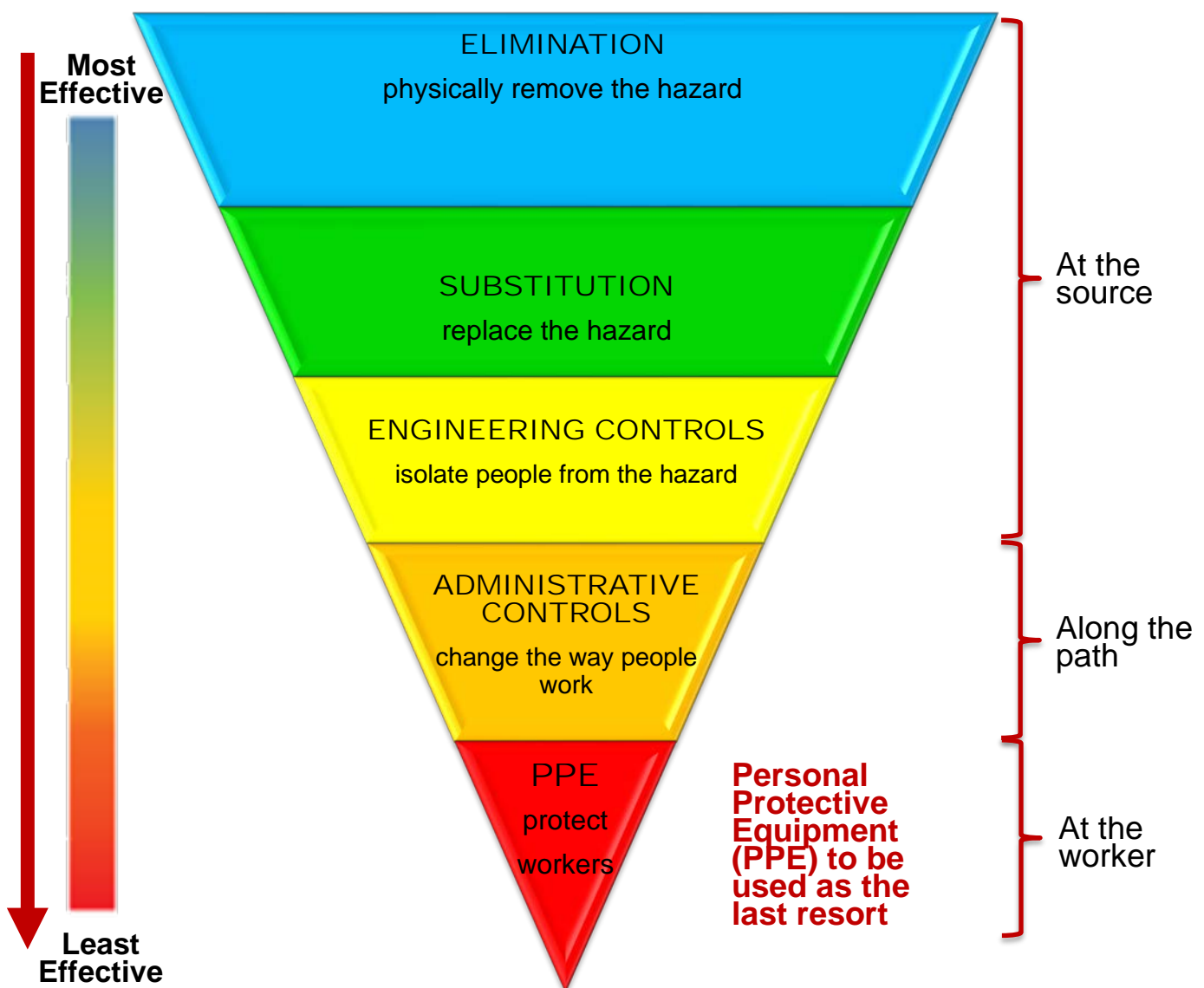
The third step involves developing and implementing strategies and plans to minimize and control the hazard. There are three methods for controlling hazard:

- **At the source:** This is the preferred control because it removes the hazard from the workplace (e.g. find a less hazardous chemical for a defined task). However, it is not always practical to remove the hazard at the source, given the nature of work.
- **Along the path:** These controls are placed between the source of the hazard and where the work is being performed (e.g. local ventilation such as a fumehood or salting icy walkways)
- **At the worker:** This is the least preferred method of control; however, there are situations where this is the only feasible option of control for a given hazard. (e.g. use of personal protective equipment, work/rest arrangements or work rotations)

A hierarchy of controls is always used as a means of determining how to implement the most effective and feasible solutions, as represented in the figure below. The idea behind this hierarchy in **Figure 1** is that the control methods at the top of graphic are more effective and protective than those at the bottom. It is also important to note that a particular hazard may require more than one method of control to reduce the risk adequately and not all methods of controls are suitable for every hazard.

Figure 1: Hierarchy of controls

# HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS



Evaluate the hazard



In order to facilitate continuous improvements in the workplace, it is important to determine how well the hazard control(s) are working, examples of evaluation include:

- Talking to the employee/faculty about the tasks and its controls.
- Observation of the usage of the controls
- Listening to the employees/faculty and improving controls when practical.

### **Training and education**

The process for identifying and reporting hazards is included in the required Health and Safety Orientation for Faculty & Staff training. A communication plan has also been developed to educate the current employees/faculty and community about this program. Health, Safety and Employee Well-Being has resources and hazard specific information and programs on [YU Link](#). Additionally, HSEWB staff are available to provide additional information and/or training/education at team meetings upon request.

## **PART B: PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES**

This procedure is a two part process. The employee/faculty member would complete section A of the Hazard Reporting Form to document and report the hazard to their Management Supervisor. The Management Supervisor, who receives the form, investigates and responds back by completing section B of the Hazard Report Form. See *Appendix A* for the hazard recognition and reporting process.

1. Every employee/faculty is responsible for the identification, immediate reporting and where possible and safe to do so, elimination and control of hazards in the workplace, according to the internal responsibility system (IRS).
2. Some workplace hazards are easy to correct. If it is possible and safe to do so for you eliminate an/or control the hazard (i.e remove a trip hazard from a walking surface) then do so. This action should still be reported to the management supervisor for record keeping purposes using the Hazard Report Form (*See Appendix B*).
3. Hazards that individual employees/faculty are unable to correct or eliminate themselves, must be reported. For those hazards they believe are major, or where the response to the hazard from the employee/faculty is inadequate or time sensitive, the Hazard Report Form is to be completed and brought to the attention of their immediate Management Supervisor.
4. Upon submission of the Hazard Report Form by the employee/faculty, the immediate Management Supervisor is to complete section B:
  - a) Assess the hazard, investigate and initiate a corrective action under their own control or through another department (i.e. Facilities Services) immediately, with the intent to eliminate or control the hazard.
  - b) Every precaution reasonable under the circumstances must be taken for the protection of the employee and/or faculty. The Management Supervisor will identify on the form if training is required to protect employees/faculty from the hazard and if controls are in place and are adequate. The higher the significance of the hazard and the less adequate

the controls, the Management Supervisor must take more immediate action.

- **Class A** Hazard: could result in death, permanent disability, loss of body part or extensive loss of structure, equipment or material.
  - **Class B** Hazard: where serious injury or illness could result in temporary disability, property damage that is disruptive, but less severe than Class A.
  - **Class C** Hazard: may result in minor injury or illness that is non-disabling
- b) Make a notation of the action taken in the Hazard Report Form. At any stage, the employee/faculty reporting the hazard may enlist the support of their JHSC or area HSO, whose role it is to facilitate discussions between the employee/faculty and supervisory level in remedying the hazard. At all times, the JHSC/HSO and employee/faculty must first allow the Management Supervisor the opportunity to address the hazard.
5. To ensure communication and follow up, the Management Supervisor will review corrective action with the concerned employee/faculty within a reasonable time frame, but no longer than 1 week of receipt of receiving the notification depending on the type of the hazard being reported. A copy will be provided to the employee/faculty for record keeping, and another kept on Management Supervisor's file for records.
  6. If unable to resolve internally, the Management Supervisor is to provide a copy to the applicable Health and Safety Officer, and Health and Safety Advisor ([hsewb@yorku.ca](mailto:hsewb@yorku.ca)).
  7. The Health and Safety Advisor investigates the complaint of the hazard and notifies the Management Supervisor of findings. If further risk assessment is conducted as a result of the complaint, the Health and Safety Advisor notifies the appropriate JHSC and HSO.

## NO REPRISAL

This program prohibits reprisals against employees/faculty who exercise their rights or bring forward concerns pertaining to their health and safety. Employees/faculty who engage in reprisals or threats of reprisals may be disciplined up to and including termination from employment.

Reprisal includes:

- Any act of retaliation that occurs because an employee/faculty has complained or provided information about an incident or concern;
- Intentionally pressuring a person to ignore or not report an incident or concern; and
- Intentionally pressuring a person to lie or provide less than full cooperation with an investigation.

## NON-COMPLIANCE

Any employee/faculty who violates this program, and/or management supervisor or academic leader who fail to take action when advised of a violation, will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Disciplinary action will also be taken if a complaint is found to have been made fraudulently and with malicious intent.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

Both the employee/faculty and management supervisor are responsible for keeping copies of Hazard Report Forms, along with any documentation pertaining to corrective actions. HSEWB will document and keep records of hazard investigations not resolved internally.

## **REVIEWED BY**

The York University Hazard Recognition and Reporting Program shall be reviewed once every three years in consultation with the JHSC, Area HSOs and other partners as appropriate.

This program was reviewed by the following parties/areas:

- Facilities Services
- Risk Management Services

## **REFERENCES**

- [York University Healthy Workplace Policy](#)
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
- CSA Z45001-19 Occupational health and safety management systems

## **APPENDIX**

- Appendix A: Hazard Recognition and Reporting Process
- Appendix B: Hazard Report Form