

ASK AN RSA

With Travis Robertson, Lower Mainland

In this monthly feature, we invite readers to submit a question for a BCCSA Regional Safety Advisor (RSA) to address. This month's RSA is Travis Robertson, who serves the Lower Mainland.

Question:
How often do I need to complete or update a hazard and risk assessment?

Answer:
WorkSafeBC requires employers to ensure that all work is carried out without undue risk of injury or occupational disease. Hazard and risk assessments should be part of a continuous process to identify, evaluate, and control hazards before they can cause harm. Although the regulation does not mandate a fixed interval for reassessment, assessments should be reviewed and updated whenever conditions change, such as the introduction of new equipment, processes, tasks, materials and worksites — and at practicable intervals to ensure they remain accurate and effective. Assessments should also be conducted before starting new projects and following incidents or near-misses.

An effective hazard and risk assessment program includes both formal assessments, such as an employer's company-wide evaluation, other assessments required by regulation, and ongoing assessments, such as field-level hazard assessments, applied according to the context and nature of the work.

Hazard and risk assessments should involve workers and supervisors to capture hazards comprehensively. Assessments should also be documented as part of a health and safety program to demonstrate due diligence. All results must be communicated to workers, and controls must be implemented and monitored for their effectiveness.

What Employers Should Do

- Establish a systematic, ongoing, and documented hazard assessment process.
- Ensure assessments are completed before new projects or major changes.
- Integrate hazard assessments into a broader risk management program, including inspections, monitoring, and training.

What Workers Should Do

- Participate in hazard and risk assessments and report hazards.
- Follow all hazard controls identified and provided.
- Use hazard assessment information to guide general safe work practices.

Regulatory References & Additional Resources

The references below identify a few of the key areas where assessments are specifically required, according to the OHS Regulation.

- Workers Compensation Act, Part 2, Division 4, Section 21 – General Duties of Employer
- OHS Regulation Part 2.2 – General Duty
- OHS Regulation Part 4 –General Conditions (emergency preparedness, ergonomics, violence, working alone, etc.)
- OHS Regulation Part 6 – Substance Specific Requirements
- OHS Regulation Part 9 – Confined Spaces
- Managing Risk - WorkSafeBC
- Hazard ID and Risk Assessment Guide: BCCSA - BCCSA's new Hazard Identification Web App is a mobile-friendly tool that helps BC construction workers identify workplace hazards, find control measures, and access relevant WorkSafeBC regulations by trade, task, or hazard type.

Have a question? Need help?
Your Regional Safety Advisor is available at no cost.

Contact us at: rsa@bccsa.ca or Regional Safety Advisors, BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA).