

This newsletter is to inform you of recent changes & trends regarding health and safety.

The Turning Point is a monthly newsletter covering topics from various industries and sectors. The Turning Point will respond to your inquiries and inform you of current services and updates regarding

Raising the Standard Consulting Inc.



RAISING THE STANDARD CONSULTING

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CONSULTANT ARTICLE FEATURE

STANFORD BROWN

OWNER/PRESIDENT OF RAISING THE STANDARD CONSULTING

STANFORD BROWN HAS A PROVEN RECORD OF EXCELLENCE IN PROVIDING COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS IN A SPECTRUM OF ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES REGARDING CLIENT-SPECIFIC COMPLIANCE AUDITS, PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND SITE-SPECIFIC TRAINING FOR THE LAST 35 YEARS.

HE HAS ATTAINED EXCELLENCE IN VARIOUS INDUSTRIES INCLUDING AUTOMOTIVE, RETAIL PRODUCT DISTRIBUTION, THE FOOD INDUSTRY, CONSTRUCTION, DRY CHEMICAL MANUFACTURING, MINING AND STEEL MANUFACTURING.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND CONTROL

Purpose

Management needs to identify and eliminate workplace hazards. This includes knowing how to do a safety and health analysis, what to do after completion of the analysis, and how to implement and communicate safety information.

In my years of experience in a variety of industries and business cultures I have found that this step has done a great deal in ensuring a mature and effective safety program. Below is an example of a methodology for a very simple organization with very limited resources.

The purpose of the Hazard Identification and Control is to ensure all employees are protected against Safety and Health hazards, and work in a healthy and safe environment.

Results can include:

- Increased knowledge of the dangers inherent in the tasks of employees
- Enhanced safety awareness and improved safety dialogue and communication amongst employees
- Improved focus for workplace safety inspections
- Improved risk management leading to increased accident prevention
- Compliance with HIOSH/OSHA

Standards / Procedures

Recognizing and assessing hazards is the first step to controlling or eliminating risk. Methods of doing this include observation and reporting, inspection, task analysis, and trend identification.

Factors that contribute to making a job hazardous are identified as physical hazards, mechanical hazards, structural hazards, health hazards, chemical hazards, biological hazards, ergonomic hazards, physical hazards and psychological hazards. A more simplistic approach is known as PEMEP:

- People (training)
- Equipment
- Materials
- Environment
- Process (the way the work is done)

The degree of hazard or risk can be estimated using knowledge of the potential for a major injury (severity) and knowledge of probability of occurrence (For example: an inexperienced worker or a new job or one done often or rarely that requires high competence).

How to do a Hazard Assessment

1. Select a job or occupation or common hazard. Ideally, you should start with an item that has been identified as a safety and health problem.
2. Break down the tasks of this job into steps. Describe and list each step in sequence of how they occur in a typical day.
3. Identify the hazards associated with each task/factor combination. Systematically go through every risk factor for every task, and consider what specific hazards might be involved. Make a list of both safety and health hazards.

Hazard Types:

- **Chemical:** compressed gases, flammables
- **Physical:** noise, weather, heat, cold
- **Biological:** exposure to blood, diseases, insect bites, plants
- **Ergonomic:** computer work stations incorrectly adjusted, repetitive motions
- **Safety:** housekeeping, inadequate machine guarding, material handling and energy
- **Etc:** industry specific

Hazard Sources:

- **People:** actions, behaviours
- **Equipment:** tools, production equipment
- **Material:** raw materials, chemicals
- **Environment:** noise, air quality
- **Processes:** combination of the above

4. Assess the hazard. Evaluate the degree of risk that is the extent to which the hazard is likely to cause loss of life, permanent disability or serious injury as well as the probability of occurrence. When considering health hazards, you can consider the number of persons exposed and the duration of exposure. Where there is exposure to hazardous chemical, biological or physical agents, you may need to include workplace and personal exposure monitoring to ensure that exposures do not exceed regulated or recommended limits.

Rate the risk of the hazard as if the controls were not in place.

The following classification system could be used to assess the level of risk for all hazards:

- Class A (major) = high risk, danger of death or permanent disability
- Class B (moderate) = medium risk, non-life threatening injury or illness
- Class C (minor) = low risk, slight injury or illness

All Class A risks /hazards have safe operating procedures and training is completed for workers exposed to these hazards.

The hierarchy in which controls should be considered are:

- Elimination (stop what's creating the hazard)
- Substitution (replace with something less likely to harm/damage)
- Isolation (separate what can be harmed/damaged from the hazard)
- Engineering (change the way of doing what is creating the hazard)
- Administrative/PPE (reduce exposure to the hazard)

5. Identify controls. Identify procedures or modifications needed to eliminate or control the hazards further if required. This may require changes to people factors, equipment, materials, procedures, tools, systems or processes. Some controls can include:

- Preventative maintenance
- Existing Procedures or policies – e.g. universal precautions, safe lifting protocol
- Training
- Personal Protective equipment – gloves
- Job rotation
- Engineering
- Pre-shift inspection

6. Validate the analysis. Implement the additional required controls, if any, and then validate the analysis by observing the task in operation. Make sure that new hazards have not been introduced. Get feedback and include knowledgeable employees doing the job or a representative at every stage of the process to get adequate hazard identification, assessments, and controls.

Points Worth Mentioning and Repeating

Inform and instruct workers performing the activities that include major (A category) hazard of the high risk and need to adopt and maintain adequate controls in place.

A hazard analysis should involve the workers who perform the job as well as their supervisors.

Safety and health specialists should also participate to highlight industry trends, legislation and benchmark controls.

People familiar with the job should be asked about events that may affect normal operations. Equipment breakdowns, shift changes, or other intermittent events may lead to a sequence of steps different from the one being analyzed. By including their feedback, you are demonstrating that the workers have a say in their job and are more likely to get buy-in to the safe work procedures that are implemented.

Explain the purpose of the hazard identification and control to ensure full cooperation and participation of the employee. Assure the employee that the purpose is to make the job safer and not an evaluation of their work performance.

Observe jobs during normal working hours and situations. For example, if the job is normally done on the night shift, perform the analysis at night.

The following steps are required to conduct a hazard identification and control, leading

ultimately to the determination of level of risk for all hazards:

Identifying the hazards is critical because if the hazards associated to the job steps are not identified then they will not be assessed or controlled. Identify activities/processes that have potential for injury/illness and identify specific hazards that exist in these processes/activities. **All** areas and facets of the workplace are required to be reviewed for the identification of hazards.

Resources that could be used in conducting a hazard assessment:

- Legislation
- Existing practices and procedures
- Industry best practices
- Normal and abnormal operations
- Previous accident reports
- Physical inspection of the workplace
- Brainstorming (“ask what if...”)
- Employee knowledge (unsafe conditions, known hazards)

Stanford Brown, Owner/President RTSC

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**HAZARD
IDENTIFICATION**



PUSHING FOR NATIONAL SAFETY STANDARDS AMID ECONOMIC SHIFTS

As Canada moves to streamline labour mobility with the One Canadian Economy Act, safety professionals are seizing the moment to demand national consistency in workplace protections. At the Canadian Safety Summit in Brampton, Ontario on Tuesday a panel of industry leaders called for bold reforms to address inconsistent standards, persistent fatality rates, and the challenges of modern workforce safety.

Moderated by WSIB’s Rod Cook, the panel featured leaders from EllisDon, Toyota, QM Environmental, and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS). Together, they emphasized that economic volatility should not delay progress on safety—rather, it’s a catalyst for change.

“Worker protections can’t depend on your postal code,” said CCOHS vice president of operations, Janet Mannella. “We need to break down regulatory silos and raise the floor.”

Building resilience through culture

Steve Chaplin, EllisDon’s senior vice president of health, safety and environment stressed

the importance of embedding safety into culture long before a crisis hits. “There’s always something—tariffs, slumps, pandemics. But safety must stand above all of it,” he said.

EllisDon began its safety culture overhaul seven years ago, guided by leading and lagging indicators and committed leadership. “It takes three to five years to get culture right,” Chaplin added.

Toyota’s senior safety manager, Adam Pearson, echoed that change is possible—if it starts small. “We focus on relationships between supervisors and team members. That’s where safety culture takes root.”

Agnes Wietrzynski, CEO of QM Environmental, emphasized integrating safety into business continuity planning: “When safety is part of your decision-making DNA, you’re ready for anything.”

Standardization imperative

Interjurisdictional inconsistency quickly emerged as a focal point.

Mannella highlighted how training standards like first aid vary widely between provinces. “That’s a barrier to worker mobility—and a risk,” she said, drawing applause when she suggested starting harmonization efforts there.

Chaplin noted that EllisDon has joined 12 other contractors in a national coalition to voluntarily align key safety protocols. “We’re not waiting for regulators,” he said, citing PPE standards and fall protection rules as early focus areas.

Wietrzynski stressed the economic burden of non-standardized safety requirements. “Every provincial variation adds cost. Standardization isn’t a luxury—it’s essential,” she said.

Policy window opens

Introduced weeks before the Summit, the One Canadian Economy Act includes mutual recognition provisions that could reshape safety policy. The legislation allows certifications and standards valid in one province to be accepted federally, opening the door for harmonized training and credentialing.

“This gives us a mechanism to align safety standards nationally,” Mannella said.

The Act also establishes a Major Projects Office to streamline infrastructure approvals—potentially integrating safety oversight earlier in project planning.

Confronting fatalities

Despite decades of effort, Canada still records over 1,000 workplace fatalities annually.

Pearson described Toyota’s strategy to “break the cycle” of complacency by emphasizing soft skills and supervisor engagement. “When something goes wrong, don’t ask why they did it—ask what we missed,” he said.

Wietrzynski warned against relying on compliance alone: “Paperwork doesn’t reflect behaviour. One disengaged worker can cause a tragedy.”

Chaplin urged companies to shift away from traditional safety metrics. “Stop tracking Band-Aids. Focus on serious injury and fatality potential,” he said, citing EllisDon’s adoption of high-energy hazard models.

Mental health in the spotlight

Pearson explained how Toyota is expanding beyond EAPs to offer on-site mental health support, including psychological first aid and wellness resources. “If it affects our people, we support them—whether it’s occupational or not,” he said.

QM Environmental revamped benefits after discovering gaps during a series of mental health-related incidents. They now train supervisors to spot psychological risks on-site.

EllisDon went further, hiring two full-time mental health professionals after testing revealed poor response times from third-party providers. “You can’t rely on systems that leave people waiting three weeks,” said Chaplin.

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1 DEAD, 5 INJURED IN 3 WORKPLACE INCIDENTS IN ONE DAY IN TORONTO

One man is dead and five others are injured following three separate workplace incidents across Ontario on Monday.

The fatality occurred at a Metrolinx rail yard in Mississauga, according to CBC News.

Peel Regional Police said they were called to the facility near Goreway Drive and Zahavy Way at approximately 12:10 p.m. The man was pronounced dead at the scene.

Metrolinx confirmed the fatality, stating that the incident took place at its rail yard at 6211 Goreway Drive.

“Our thoughts are with the individual and their loved ones during this difficult time,” Metrolinx said in an email, as reported by CBC.

The agency added that it would not comment further while the incident remains under investigation by police and the Ministry of Labour.

Critical injuries, scaffolding collapse
Meanwhile, two construction workers were

seriously injured in a trench collapse in Toronto on Monday, reported CTV News.

The incident happened around 11:45 a.m. near Edmund Avenue and Weston Road, according to Toronto police.

Toronto Fire Services extricated the workers, who were buried up to their waists in an eight-foot-deep trench. Firefighters used shoring panels to stabilise the site before initiating rescue operations. Both men were conscious and breathing during the extrication.

Paramedics transported a man in his 50s and another in his mid-20s to a trauma centre with life-threatening injuries.

“I don’t know the history of the work site, but it is a pre-existing excavation,” Toronto Fire Division Commander John Davidson told CTV News. “There is a foundation present plus utilities. So, in those circumstances, the trenches are very unstable because it’s redistributed soil.”

Trench stability without proper shoring in place—and the warm weather, which dries up the earth—[can lead to] a substantial trench collapse like we witnessed here today,” Davidson added.

The Ministry of Labour is investigating the incident.

Later in the day, three construction workers were injured after scaffolding collapsed at a residential project in Toronto’s east end, according to CP24.

The incident occurred shortly before 1:45 p.m. near Queen Street East and Silver Birch Avenue in The Beaches neighbourhood.

Emergency crews located three men with serious but non-life-threatening injuries. All were taken to a trauma centre. Police later described their injuries as minor.

Trevor Shand, a contractor with GT Shand Contracting, told CTV News Toronto that two of his workers fell from a height of 18 to 20 feet. One suffered a head injury, while another sprained his wrist. The extent of the third worker’s injuries was not disclosed.

“We don’t know why the scaffolding gave out, but you can see the arms are broken on it,” said Shand. “It could have been old scaffolding. I don’t know, but everyone’s fine, so I’m just a little worried about it.”

Shand added that roofing work has been paused and that he is awaiting a Ministry of Labour inspection before resuming activity.

The Ministry is also investigating this incident.

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MR. MIKE'S PLUMBING FACING 11 CHARGES IN FATAL TRENCH COLLAPSE

The company employing an apprentice plumber who died on the job in 2023 is now facing 11 safety-related charges.

Liam Johnston died on Thursday, June 8, 2023, in a trench collapse in Calgary. The 27-year-old plumber was working for Mr. Mike's Plumbing and, on that tragic day, had been asked to assist with sewer repairs in the city's Charleswood community.

Johnston entered a trench approximately three to six metres deep to access a sewer line. One of the trench walls unexpectedly collapsed, burying him under dirt and debris from the steep slope above.

Mr. Mike's Plumbing is now facing the following charges, according to a CTV News report:

- Section 3(1)(a)(i) of the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, failure to ensure the health, safety and welfare of a worker engaged in the work of that employer, by failing to ensure that they were protected from the collapse of a wall of an excavation;
- Section 3(1)(a)(i) of the OHS Act, failure to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their worker by failing to sufficiently or at all stabilize a wall of an excavation to prevent its collapse;
- Section 3(1)(a)(i) of the OHS Act, failure to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their worker by failing to ensure a wall of an excavation was sufficiently cut back or temporary protective structures were installed to prevent collapse of the wall on the worker;
- Section 3(1)(a)(i) of the OHS Act, failure to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their worker by failing to implement or monitor the implementation of a safe work procedure for the task of working in and around an excavation;
- Section 443(1)(a) of the OHS Code, where provisions of section 443(2) of the OHS Code were not applicable, failed to stabilize the soil in an excavation at its work site by shoring or cutting back, contrary to section 443(1)(a) of the OHS Code;

- Section 446(2) of the OHS Code, failure to ensure a worker did not enter an excavation that did not comply with Part 32 of the OHS Code by failing to comply with section(s) 443(1)(a) and/or 450(1) and/or 456(1), contrary to section 446(2) of the OHS Code;
- Section 450(1) of the OHS Code, failure to ensure that before a worker began working in an excavation that was more than 1.5 metres deep and closer to the wall or bank than the depth of the excavation, that the worker was protected from cave-ins or sliding or rolling material;
- Section 456(1)(b) of the OHS Code, failure to ensure temporary protective structures in an excavation more than three metres deep were designed, constructed and installed in accordance with the specifications of a professional engineer;
- Section 7(2) of the OHS Code, failure to prepare a report of the results of the hazard assessment and the methods used to control and eliminate the hazards identified;
- Section 7(4)(c) of the OHS Code, failure to ensure the hazard assessment was repeated when a work process or operation changed; and
- Section 9(1) of the OHS Code, failure where an existing or potential hazard to workers was identified during a hazard assessment, failed to take measures to eliminate the hazard, or if elimination was not reasonably practicable, to control the hazard.

The last charge against the company, in particular, makes Johnston's family feel "angry and sick," according to CBC.

"It shouldn't have happened," said stepdad Adam Groves, according to the report.

That echoes the sentiment shared by Jon Malley, a coworker of Johnston's, following the incident.

Malley said he asked for a trench box to be used at all future projects to protect employees from a potential collapse.

"I felt sick to my stomach because it was 100 percent preventable," said Malley, who wants to see someone held accountable for Johnston's death. "This is totally (an) avoidable tragedy. Liam wasn't given the opportunity to go to school for first-year plumbing or anything like that. He was robbed of his life and his career."

Mr. Mike's first court appearance is scheduled for July 22, 2025, in the Calgary Court of Justice.

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MR. MIKES
PLUMBING
+ HEATING





ONE PERSON DEAD AFTER COLLAPSE AT CONSTRUCTION SITE NORTH OF MONTREAL

BLAINVILLE, QUE. — The underground walls of a construction site north of Montreal collapsed on Tuesday morning, killing one worker and injuring two others.

Police in Blainville, Que., said they received a call around 11 a.m. after the underground walls of a commercial building under construction gave way. One worker was taken to hospital with a leg injury and another was treated on site.

Lt. Sara Tousignant said the collapse involved two underground retaining walls that fell inward. “We’re talking about the north and northeast walls that collapsed on the workers at that moment,” she said.

The victim was found deceased on site, she said. Police did not release additional information about the worker.

They say a person was also trapped in a mobile construction office that fell into the hole, but they were later rescued and treated for shock.

Photos from the site showed the large excavated hole partly filled with piles of wood and metal from the collapse.

Excavators sat on the bottom, alongside three pickup trucks that were standing on end against the walls after tumbling over the edge.

Tousignant said there were about 20 workers on the site before the collapse, and that all had been accounted for.

Firefighters from Blainville and nearby Boisbriand responded to the collapse along with police officers. A spokesman for the regional ambulance service confirmed that it had sent four ambulances to the site, and that a person had been taken to hospital.

Quebec Labour Minister Jean Boulet issued a statement on X: “It is with sadness that I learn of the death of a worker in the collapse of a structure in Blainville. I offer my sympathies to their loved ones and colleagues, and I am also thinking of the injured workers.”

He said the province’s workplace safety board and the agency that enforces the construction code will investigate what happened.

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Raising The Standard



RTS Hazard Assessment

RTS Consulting can provide Hazard Assessment Consulting. Management needs to identify and eliminate workplace hazards. This includes knowing how to do a health and safety analysis, what to do after completion of the analysis, and how to implement and communicate safety information

RTS Due Diligence Training

Due Diligence means taking every reasonable precaution to protect the Health and Safety of workers. Demystify the process of establishing and maintaining a successful Health & Safety System and ensure your organization's compliance with the Due Diligence Legislative Obligations. We have assisted numerous companies in Workwell audits in the last few years. We have a 100% pass rate. You will be in good hands under our direction.

For more information please contact Hailey Mesner at hmesner@rtsconsulting.com

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With Aloha,

Stanford Brown, B.Sc., CSP, CSHP, CRSP, CHSC, Senior Consultant, President & CEO