

# How to Perform a First Aid Hazard Assessment



OHS laws require employers to provide whatever personnel, equipment, supplies, and facilities necessary to ensure that workers who suffer work illnesses or injuries get adequate and immediate first aid treatment at the site or are transported to the nearest appropriate medical facility. The problem is that the personnel, equipment, supplies, and facilities required to accomplish that objective are different at every workplace, depending on how many workers work there, the hazards posed by the operations performed, how far the site is from a hospital and other factors. **Bottom Line:** Employers must perform a special first aid hazard assessment at each of their workplaces.

Does your company [comply with first aid hazard assessment requirements](#)? Here's a Checklist of what to verify based on OHS regulations, CSA standards and Best Practices.

## 1. First Aid Hazard Assessment Is Performed at the Right Time

Employers must ensure that appropriate first aid arrangements, facilities, and equipment are in place before allowing workers to begin working at a workplace. Result: You must carry out the first aid hazard assessment before operations at the site commence.

## **2. First Aid Hazard Assessment Is Performed by a Competent Person**

The first aid hazard assessment must be in writing and carried out by a competent person. While [OHS law “competent person” definitions](#) vary, “competent” generally means that the person has the knowledge, education, training, and/or experience necessary to carry out the job in a safe and healthy manner.

## **3. JHSC Consults in First Aid Hazard Assessment**

Several jurisdictions, including BC, Nova Scotia, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Prince Edward Island, specifically require the employer to ensure that the first aid hazard assessment is carried out in consultation with the JHSC, Safety Representative or, if there is no JHSC or Safety Rep, the workers at the site.

## **4. First Aid Hazard Assessment Considers All Appropriate Risk Factors**

The first aid needs of a particular workplace depend on a number of crucial risk factors, including:

- The number of workers present at the site at any particular time—the greater the number of workers, the more elaborate the first aid resources necessary.
- The nature and extent of the hazards to which workers are exposed at the site.
- The likelihood that those hazards will actually lead to injury or illness.
- How severe those resulting injuries and illnesses are likely to be.
- The location of the workplace, specifically how close it is to a hospital or medical facility that's suitable to treat workers who get ill or injured.

- Potential barriers that may impede prompt delivery of required first aid, such as weather or lack of suitable roads.
- The time that may be required to call and obtain transportation and transport an injured worker to medical treatment.
- The methods of transport available.

## **5. First Aid Hazard Assessment Is Appropriately Documented**

You should create a [special form](#) for performing first aid hazard assessment to ensure that the assessment is carried out properly and that its results are documented to enable subsequent review and demonstrate compliance with OHS requirements.

## **6. First Aid Hazard Assessment Is Periodically Reviewed**

Employers must ensure that the first aid hazard assessment is reviewed and, if necessary, revised at periodical intervals. BC and PEI specifically require review at least once a year. You must also perform more frequent review, as needed, in response to changes in operations or other developments that may render the information contained in the previous assessment out of date. Such reviews should be done in consultation with the JHSC, Safety Rep, or workers at the site.

## **7. Special Rules for Construction Sites**

In general, where a worksite is a construction project with workers of multiple employers, the first aid obligations normally assigned to employers become the primary responsibility of the prime contractor or constructor in charge of overall safety and OHS compliance for the work. Such

obligations include the requirement to perform and update the first aid hazard assessment.