FIND AND FIX HAZARDS
Evaluate Safety and Health Processes and Systems

What Is It?

A systematic approach to **finding and fixing hazards** is a proactive, ongoing process to identify and control sources of potential injuries or illnesses. This means establishing procedures to collect and review information about known or potential hazards in the workplace, investigating the root cause of those hazards, and prioritizing hazard controls. Identifying and correcting these hazards before someone gets hurt ensures that workers go home to their families safe and sound after every shift.

How Do You Do It?

You can find and fix hazards during Safe + Sound Week by **evaluating safety and health processes and systems.** Evaluations are the first step in identifying the hazards that could become injuries or illnesses. The following are a few suggestions and resources to get you started. You can select one of these activities or choose a different activity to find and fix hazards in your organization.

☐ **Assess reporting processes for hazards, injuries, illnesses, and "near misses" (i.e., situations or incidents that could have caused an injury):** Safety and health program success hinges on having effective reporting processes. If you don't have reporting processes to collect this information, consider developing them. If you do, the following are some of the ways you can evaluate the effectiveness of your processes:

- Survey workers to test their knowledge of the process for reporting injuries, illnesses, near misses, or concerns.
- Determine how many near miss incidents or hazardous conditions are being reported.

- Examine whether all reports are being investigated in a timely manner and whether workers are kept informed of the investigation status.

☐ **Review chemical usage to minimize exposures and consider the availability of safer alternatives:** Conduct an inventory of chemicals and chemical-based products in your workplace. To get started, you can focus on one operation, department, or product category. Remove and properly dispose of any chemicals and products that are no longer used. Identify products used in large quantities and investigate whether safer alternatives may be available. Manufacturers often reformulate products or redesign processes to eliminate the use of toxic chemicals or replace them with safer alternatives.

- EPA Safer Choice
- OSHA's Transitioning to Safer Chemicals Toolkit

☐ **Identify appropriate safety and health checkpoints in business operations:** Health and safety risks can exist in your workplace in ways that are not immediately apparent. Ask purchasing or contracting staff how your business can incorporate safety and health reviews into product, equipment, and service purchasing decisions. Similarly, work with those responsible for facility decisions to ensure that safety and health factors are considered in the early stages of any renovation, remodeling, or building acquisition.

- OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program
- CPWR's Design for Safety Reports

☐ **Develop incident/near miss investigation procedures and toolkit:** Reacting quickly to an incident or near miss with a prescribed procedure ensures the proper information is

collected in order to prevent future incidents. Develop protocols for who should be involved, what questions they should ask, and how they should document the information obtained. Collect materials you need to be ready to conduct the investigation, such as a camera, measuring devices, flashlight, plastic tape, latex gloves, and clipboard.

- OSHA's [Incident [Accident] Investigations: A Guide for Employers](#) (Appendix B: Incident Investigator's Toolkit)
- NSC's [How to Conduct an Incident Investigation](#)

☐ **Integrate your safety and health program with your environmental management system (EMS) or your sustainability program:** Many organizations have found it efficient to integrate their safety and health program with their EMS or their sustainability program. Consider taking time during Safe + Sound Week to examine how you could integrate these efforts. Identify processes that are common to both, such as your hazard identification procedure and your EMS "significant aspects" identification procedure. Or, look for overlaps in your program review procedures and convene a team to develop procedures that integrate these functions. Doing this can help you prevent impacts to workers and the environment more efficiently and effectively. For example, managing chemicals through an integrated process can reduce hazards to workers and the environment simultaneously while avoiding unintended tradeoffs.

☐ **Or, create your own activity!**

How Do You Make It Effective?

Start at the top: Have the highest-level executive/ leader/manager initiate or participate in the evaluation.

Provide access to information: Make sure the following items are available for the evaluation: injury/illness logs, workers' compensation data, equipment safety manuals, exposure monitoring reports (redacted to ensure privacy), and Safety Data Sheets.

Be prepared to act: If a serious or immediate hazard arises during the evaluation, be prepared to eliminate that system or process if possible, or put controls in place temporarily while a more permanent solution is found.

Be inclusive: Workers are the experts when it comes to the tasks they do and the tools and equipment they use; engage workers from all work areas, shifts, locations, and departments.

Show Your Commitment to Safety and Health

Remember to share your commitment to a safe and healthy workplace with all involved in your operations, including workers, contractors, customers, suppliers, and other stakeholders. Here are a few ways to do that:

- Engage vendors, suppliers, and equipment manufacturers in helping your organization analyze how you are using their products or systems, and how to use them more safely.
- Create a "to do" list of outstanding process and system changes to address and post it in break rooms, in a binder in a common area, or on your intranet site for input.
- Tell people what you learned from the evaluation and what processes or systems have changed in your next company newsletter or communication to workers.
- Compare notes among different locations or work processes to encourage communication and cooperation throughout the organization.

Visit the [Safe + Sound Campaign](#) website to learn more about safety and health programs.