



## Assigning a risk designation

Rating the hazard is one way to help determine which hazard is the most serious and thus which hazard to control first. Priority is usually established by taking into account the severity, probability and frequency of the exposure. By assigning a priority to the hazard, you are creating a rating or an action list. The following factors play an important role:

- Frequency of exposure – how often an employee is exposed to the hazard.
- Severity of exposure – impact when exposed to the hazard.
- Probability of occurrence – likelihood that an incident will occur when exposed to the hazard.

When the hazard is identified, determine the controls which are already in place to ensure this information is taken into account when assigning a risk designation.

Score	1	2	3
Severity - impact of exposure	Class C hazard - likely to cause minor, non-disabling injury or illness, or non-disruptive property damage.	Class B hazard - likely to cause serious injury, illness, resulting in temporary disability or property damage that is disruptive but not extensive.	Class A hazard - likely to cause permanent injury, loss of life or body part and/or extensive loss of structure, equipment or material.
Frequency of exposure	Rarely (<1/month)	Often (3 times/week)	Every day
Probability of exposure	Unlikely	Could occur	Will occur if not attended to

Once each hazard has been assigned a score for severity, frequency and probability based on the chart above, total the 3 items (S + F + P + Total).

Low	Medium	High
Score of 3-4	Score 5-7	Score of 8-9

**Low (3,4)** indicates that risks are considered acceptable. No further action or additional controls are necessary. Any actions to further reduce these risks are assigned a low priority. Regular monitoring should be performed to ensure that the controls are maintained and continued to be effective.

**Medium (5,6,7)** consideration should be as to whether the risks can be lowered, where applicable, to a tolerable level and preferably to an acceptable level. The risk measures should be implemented within a defined time period. Arrangements should be made to ensure that controls are maintained, particularly if the risk levels are associated with harmful consequences.

**High (8, 9)** – These risks are unacceptable. Substantial improvements in risk control measures are necessary so that the risk is reduced to an acceptable level. Risk reduction measures should be implemented urgently and it may be necessary to consider suspending or restricting the activity until short and long term controls are implemented that reduces the risk so that it is no longer high. If it is not possible to reduce the risk, the work should remain prohibited.