

Safety Blind Spots:

Avoiding the costliest mistakes on site

Constructive



Who is Site Safe



Health & Safety
Not-for-Profit



Created by
industry,
for industry



6,000
Members



Category 1
PTE



80,000
learners
per year

Why is health & safety important?

Fatalities
in construction

(1 Jan 2024 – 31 December 2024)

Working days
lost to injury

(1 Jan 2024 – 31 December 2024)

Why is health & safety important?

Benefits

- Go home safe
- Good mental health
- Job satisfaction for your people
- More productive/less delays
- An efficiency driver

Costs

- Loss of life
- Risk of prosecution
- Time/money lost - staff away from work
- Low productivity from injuries
- Low morale/job satisfaction
- Loss of reputation for your business
- Increase in ACC levies and insurance premiums
- Loss of business opportunities
- Loss of quality of life

The current context

- HSWA tightened to focus on critical risks
- Reduced requirements for small, low-risk businesses
- Making responsibilities clearer - resolving overlapping duties.
- Reduced mandatory notification requirements after incidents
- More Approved Codes of Practice (ACOPs) for guidance

Critical risks for residential builds

There's currently no definition of critical risk.

But consider it a risk that would have major negative impact on your business - financial, reputation, people.

What is a hazard?

A hazard is anything that can cause harm.

Whether it's a tool, a task, or the environment—if it can injure someone, damage property, or affect health, it's a hazard

Common Examples on Site:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| Unsecured scaffolding | → | risk of falls |
| Loose cables or debris | → | trip hazard |
| Dust and chemicals | → | breathing hazard |
| Noise from tools | → | hearing damage |
| Live wires | → | electrocution risk |

1. IDENTIFY the hazard

Do regular walk-throughs: Take a good look around—what's changed? What's risky? What needs fixing?

Watch for new high-risk activities: New gear, new processes, or new tasks? They might bring new hazards.

Know who's on site: Other contractors = other risks. Know what they're doing and how it affects your people.

Think beyond the obvious: Not all hazards scream danger. Some—like chemical exposure—creep up over time.

Write it all down: Every site needs a **site-specific safety plan**. If it's not written in a system or on paper, it's not managed.



2. ASSESS the risk

Look at the consequences

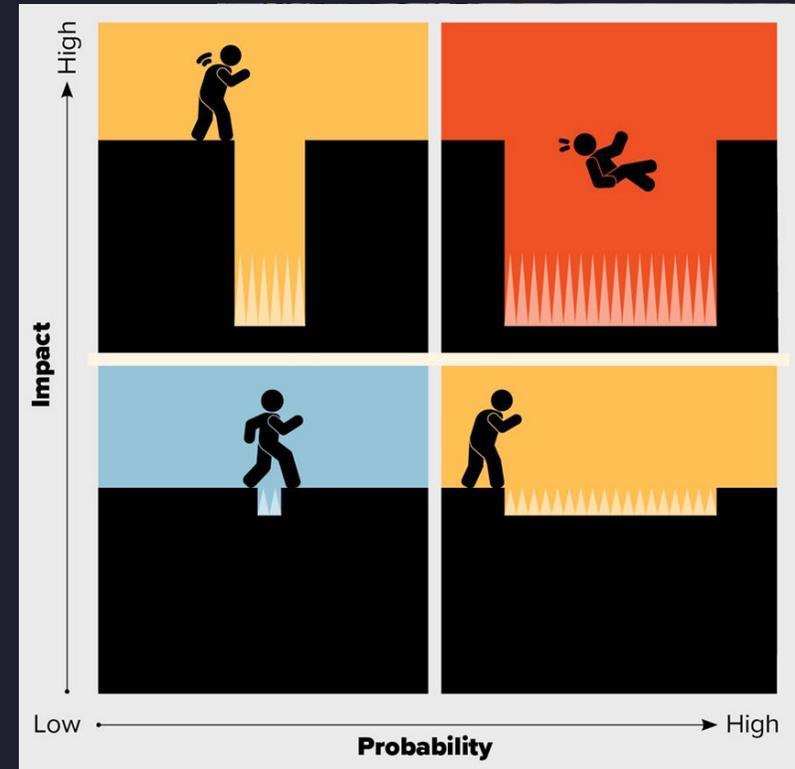
Ask yourself: “If this goes wrong, how bad could it be?”
Think injury, damage, downtime—or worse.

Judge the likelihood

How likely is it to happen?

Prioritise the 'Big Stuff'

If a hazard has serious consequences and is likely to happen, it's a critical risk. Mark it as high priority and deal with it first.



3. MANAGE the risk

Control the risk: Some risks can't be eliminated — just make sure they're managed properly so everyone can work safely.

Act fast: Spot an H&S issue? Don't wait. Raise it. Fix it.

Speak up: Raise concerns with your boss.
Look out for each other.

Know the controls: Everyone on site should understand how risks are managed.

Test the controls: Do they actually work? If not rethink, revise, retest.

Report everything: Incidents, near misses, close calls — log them all.
The more we know the safer we get.

Risk Assessment Matrix		Consider the likelihood of a hazardous event occurring				
		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Very Likely
Consider the severity of injury/illness	Catastrophic (e.g fatal)	Moderate	Moderate	High	Critical	Critical
	Major (e.g Permanent Disability)	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	Critical
	Moderate (e.g Hospitalisation/Short or Long Term Disability)	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
	Minor (e.g First Aid)	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Superficial (e.g No Treatment Required)	Very Low	Very Low	Low	Low	Moderate

Other ways to help

Toolbox talks

Technology

Talk to someone

Panel discussion



Daniel O'Connor,
Company Health and Safety Manager,
LT McGuinness

Coralie Pollard,
Landmark Homes