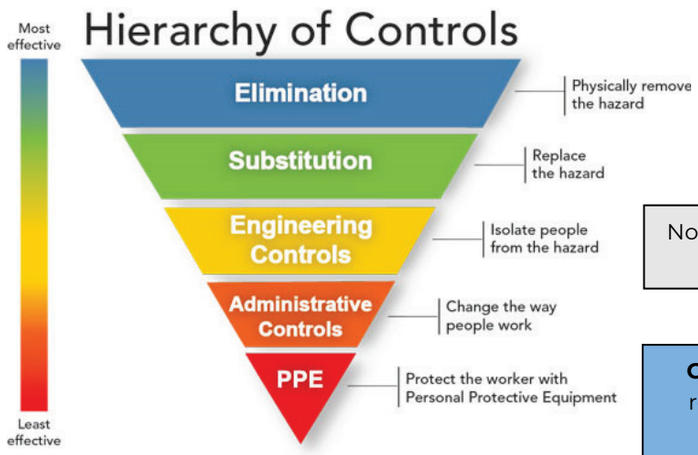
Hierarchy of Controls
Flowchart



Are workers at risk of injury?

- NO → No mitigation is needed. Begin working
- YES → Do not start working and ask:

Can the hazard be eliminated, i.e. can the hazard be removed from the workplace so that workers are not exposed to the hazard?

For example, installing HVAC equipment at ground level instead of on a roof, repairing damaged sidewalk so that workers don't trip on it, or removing flammable materials from an area where hotwork must be performed.

- YES → Eliminate the hazard and begin working.
- NO → Continue the work stoppage and ask:

Can you substitute or replace the hazard with something that is not hazardous, i.e. can you change the work or materials used to make the work safe?

For example, using scaffolding to paint a two-story building instead of ladder, using water based paints instead of solvent based, or using a pellet version of a chemical instead of powder to protect against dust exposure.

- YES → Replace the hazard and begin working.
- NO → Continue the work stoppage and ask:

Can the hazard be engineered out, i.e. can a physical barrier be put in place or a piece of equipment be used that will protect the workers from the hazard?

For example, a physical guard to protect against the blades on a saw, a pallet lift to raise the work up to a safer level, or using a forklift to move heavy materials.

- YES → Engineer out the hazard and begin working.
- NO → Continue the work stoppage and ask:

Can administrative controls be implemented to control the hazard, i.e. can the way the workers are performing the work be changed to make it safer?

For example, changing the start/stop times for outside work to reduce heat exposure, using several workers to move a heavy item instead of one person trying to move it (lowering the risk by spreading it across several people), or writing a policy/procedure on how to perform the work safely.

- YES → Change the way the work is performed and begin working.
- NO → Continue the work stoppage and:

Identify and obtain the Personal Protective Equipment that is needed to perform the work safely; train your workers on its use; require that they wear the PPE; and, enforce that it is worn.

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