

# common types of hazards essay sample

[Health & Medicine](#), [Cancer](#)



Use these notes to help you identify and assess hazards that might occur in your workplace.

### Chemical hazards

Chemicals can affect the skin by contact or the body either through the digestive system or through the lungs if air is contaminated with chemicals, vapour, mist or dust. There can be an acute (immediate) effect, or a chronic (medium to long-term) effect from the accumulation of chemicals or substances in or on the body.

### Noise hazards

Excessive noise can disrupt concentration, interfere with communication, and result in loss of hearing. High impact noises are particularly damaging. Noise can also mask out signals, affecting communication or danger warnings.

### Radiation hazards

Equipment such as radioactive gauging devices or the radioactive trace element used in analytical chemistry produce ionising radiation. Non-ionising radiation covers infrared radiation (heat-producing processes), lasers, ultraviolet radiation (welding, sunlight), and microwaves (high-frequency welders, freeze drying).

### Electrical hazards

These include the risk of injury from all forms of electrical energy.

### Lighting hazards

Inadequate lighting levels are a potential safety hazard. A common problem

area is the reaction time needed for the eyes to adjust from a brightly lit to a darker environment — such as a forklift driver coming indoors from bright sunlight. Temporary lighting is often inadequate.

#### Vibration hazards

This includes whole-body vibration — for example, truck drivers, people standing on vibrating platforms, and operators of mobile equipment — and also more localised vibration effects from such equipment as hand tools, chainsaws, and pneumatic hammers.

#### Temperature hazards

Extremes of cold or heat can cause problems such as tiredness, vulnerability to infections or reduced capacity to work.

#### Biological hazards

These include insects, bacteria, fungi, plants, worms, animals and viruses. For example, poultry workers exposed to bird feathers and droppings to which they are allergic can contract a medical condition. Brucellosis is a well known problem in New Zealand associated with people handling meat and meat products infected with brucella. Hepatitis and the AIDS virus are other biological hazards.

#### Ergonomic hazards

Ergonomics (the 'fit' between people and their work) covers risk of injury from manual handling procedures, incorrectly designed desks or workstations, audio and visual alarms, and colour coding control mechanisms.

### Physical hazards

These include a wide range of injury risks— as diverse as being caught in or by machinery, buried in trenches or hurt by collapsing machinery. This category also includes the hazards from working in confined spaces, being hit by flying objects, caught in explosions, falling from heights and tripping on obstacles.

### Other hazards

Include stress, fatigue, the effects of shift work, and even assaults from other people.