

Common Hazards & Risks – Toolbox Talk

SUBJECT	COMMON HAZARDS & RISKS FACED BY A REMOVALIST DURING THE RELOCATION PROCESS
RESOURCES	PowerPoint Presentation AFRA Identifying Hazards Fact Sheet Prohibited Dangerous Goods Sheet

COMMON HAZARDS & RISKS FACED BY A REMOVALIST

Facilitator

Ask the trainees a general question:

What are some common risks and hazards you may face as a removalist...

- Before leaving the depot
- While driving
- At the client's property
- Inside the client's residence

Record the responses on a whiteboard or butcher's paper. Inform them that you will compare their answers with the session content at the end to assess their understanding of the topic.

Ask them: **What is the difference between a hazard and risk?**

Answer:

A **hazard** is a source of potential harm.

A **risk** is the chance of an incident or event occurring that could cause:

- damage or loss of equipment, or
- injury, sickness or death of people

Before you leave your workplace depot until you return, there are many different numerous risks and hazards. It is important to remain alert and observant of your surroundings, the environment, and potential situations that may arise.

Wherever feasible, conduct a risk assessment before the relocation, whether through a workplace inspection checklist or a hazard report. This assessment can be performed by the estimator visiting the site or by the customer service person who may have the client complete a questionnaire, provide details and photos of the site, or ask a series of questions over the phone. In addition, upon arrival at the client's property, the removalist conducts a hazard and risk assessment before commencing work.

It is essential for everyone to recognise hazards in both internal and external work environments, as well as when using vehicles, equipment, and traveling on the road.

Let work step by step through what might need to be checked or considered and think about what the impacts of some of these risks and hazards:

Prior to leaving the depot

Truck and equipment maintenance required for the job

- Daily vehicle check, eg: brake is in good working orders, lights are working, tyres are safe
- Equipment has been checked, eg: straps are in good condition, not frayed or worn, trolley wheels are in working order, traffic cones (also known as witches' hats)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE), drivers and offsiders have been assigned hi-vis vests, gloves for handling rough or sharp objects or assigned correct tools of trade for a removalist.

Driver

- Ability to drive may be compromised due to fatigue, being unfit for work, influence of alcohol, illegal substances, or certain prescribed medications.

Consequences

Truck has not been regularly maintained and serviced or driver's fitness to drive could cause:

- Accident on the road, injury, major trauma or death
- Truck rollover
- Damage to other vehicles, environment and infrastructure

Equipment has not been regularly maintained, serviced or issued:

- Frayed or worn straps
 - can cause load to shift whilst driving and cause truck rollover
 - load to fall off truck cause damage or injury or harm someone
- Traffic cones
 - Truck breaks down or required traffic cones are required when client's home is located on a busy road so drivers do not accidentally hit a removalist whilst they are working.
- PPE
 - Hi-vis vests so removalist is noticed if they are working on a busy road and do not get hit by a moving vehicle
 - Gloves when moving sharp items so they do not cut or injury their hands

On the road

Unpredictable weather conditions

- Bad weather conditions, fog, bad storms and very heavy rain impacting on driving visibility, flooding, broken powerlines, fallen tree etc.

Traffic

- Road work causing roadblocks and re-routing of journey
- Traffic jams

Accidents

- Caused by driver fatigue, speeding, distractions, other drivers etc.

Consequences

- Limited visibility, slippery roads, etc. can cause accidents
- Delays in reaching destinations can lead to stress, anxiety, and impaired decision-making

Outside client's property

- Overhead or low powerlines - the risk of hitting them
- Overhanging trees

- Adequate parking for a truck, is it a traffic clearway, a narrow street and so on
- The property is located on a steep hill, elevated site or lots of stairs making access difficult to the residence
- Ornamental gardens, damaged or blocked pathways, eg: hoses lying across pathways, paraphernalia lying on the ground eg: garden tools
- Puddles, wet paths and slippery walkways
- Pets and children can easily get in the way

Consequences

- Damaged powerlines causing potential injury to contact with live wires, such as electric shock, electrocution, fires and power outages
- Trees can cause serious body harm, damage to vehicles and property, block roads or pathways and disruption of utility services
- Damaged, blocked pathways, puddles, slippery walkways can cause slips, trips and falls
- Steep hills, elevated driveways or lots of stairs to residence can cause physical strain or injury for carrying heavy items, slips, trips or falls, manoeuvring or balance while carrying items up or down the incline.

Inside the client's residence

- Low or overhanging lights
- Staircases, type of staircase, eg: spiral, narrow, carpeted stairs
- Rugs, mats or uneven carpet
- Electrical codes lying across the floor
- Adequate workspace to pack or unpack objects, location of objects to be accessed or lifted
- Mechanical devices, such as trolleys, furniture straps for handling of large items, eg: fridges, washing machines to prevent back injuries, etc.
- Manual handling, correct lifting techniques not to cause back injury or using team lifting
- Balconies

Consequences

- Low or overhanging lights, if hit can cause risks of electrocution, fire or are irreplaceable
- Staircases can be potential strain or injury to individuals due to heavy lifting, risk of tripping or slipping on stairs, damage to furniture or walls
- Rugs, mats or uneven carpet causing slips, trips or falls
- Not using the correct mechanical devices to move heavy furniture can cause loss of balance, back strain or other types of physical injury, plus dropping items and causing damage
- Incorrect handling of items can cause, pulled muscles or other injuries.
- Balconies can have weak or unstable railings, weather related issues or the structure has not been maintained, eg: timber balcony that may have decayed or deteriorated wood panels

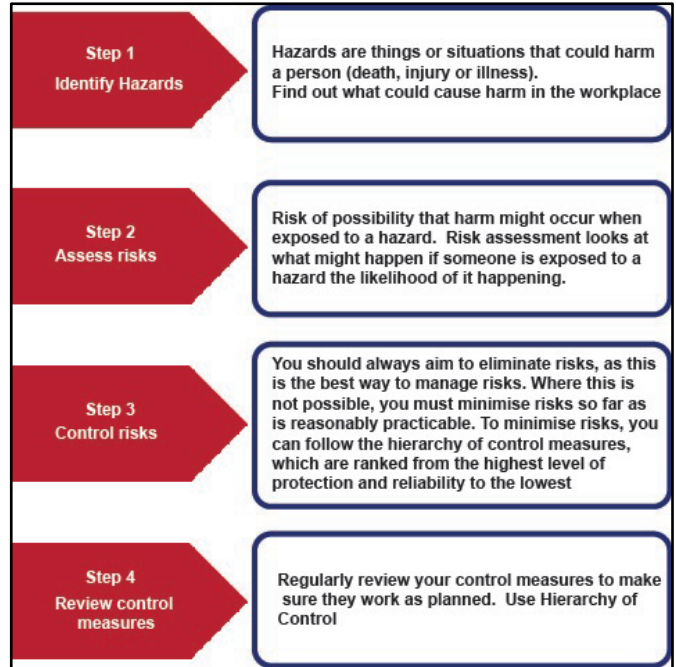
ITEMS YOU CANNOT MOVE THAT MUST BE MOVED BY A QUALIFIED OR PROFESSIONAL

- Prohibited dangerous goods, eg: explosives, flammable items, corrosive substances, etc.
- Plants (Certificate may be required)
- Animals done by professional pet movers
- Collections and special interest items. (Depending on company policy)
- Items in an unclean condition
- You are required to understand your company's policy regarding these items.
- Tradesman to perform tasks that the removalists are not qualified to carry out, eg: uninstalling or installing certain appliances that require a qualified tradesperson, eg: electrician.

REMEMBER

Use the risk management process to help identify risks and hazards by:

- Identify hazards and risk factors that have the potential to cause harm (hazard identification).
- Analyse and evaluate the risk associated with that hazard (risk analysis, and risk evaluation).
- Determine appropriate ways to eliminate the hazard or control the risk when the hazard cannot be eliminated (risk control).
- It is important that you make sure you have surveyed the area in which you are going to work and remove any risks or hazards you may encounter during the day both externally and internally. There should be a risk assessment sheet with your paperwork. At least one team member must fill this form out before you begin your work to identify where there could be potential dangers.
- Once the hazards have been identified, you need to neutralise their danger, either by moving them out of the way, or placing protective material around them to avoid damaging yourself or your teammates. Example: You will need to ask the client to attend to their pets and their children explaining clearly and politely why it is imperative they be kept out of the way.



Finally,

- Be aware of hazards around you

Remember safety first!



Items Raised/Corrective Action	Action By	Action completed	
		Sign off	Date

DATE:

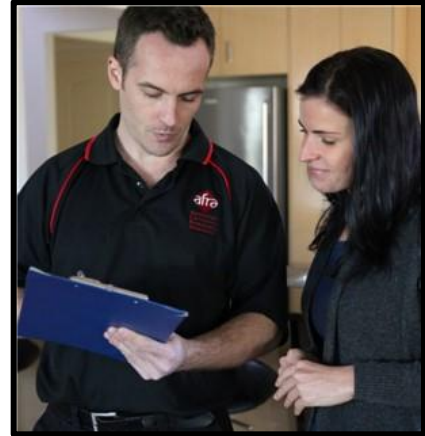
FACILITATOR SIGNATURE



IDENTIFYING HAZARDS

DISCUSS WITH CLIENT

Always discuss any areas of concern that you identify with the client and do a walk around the interior and exterior of the house with them. While conducting the walk around you can discuss the possible hazards, how to remove or avoid it and they may be able to point out some unknown hazards to you.



INTERIOR HAZARDS

Hazards exist inside the house as well. As you can imagine when moving things become a bit chaotic and hazards can be overlooked. Some of the interior hazards to look for are:



- Slippery floors
- Low or overhanging lighting
- Staircases
- Balconies
- Boxes and other packing materials
- Pets
- Children

EXTERIOR HAZARDS

Hazards exist in every workplace. It is important to identify and ensure the hazards are removed before carrying out the removal. Some of the exterior hazards to look for include:

- Overhead power lines
- Trees overhanging
- Spiked iron fences
- Ornamental gardens and pathways
- Water features
- Puddles, wet paths and stairs
- Uneven surfaces
- Pets
- Children
- Toys
- Garden tools



Prohibited Dangerous Goods



Some commodities cannot be accepted for transport by air, sea or road under general conditions. The following, in their classes, are a few examples.

Class 1: Explosives	Class 2: Flammable gases
1. Ammunition	1. Oxygen
2. Flares	2. Acetylene
3. Fireworks	3. LPG
4. Black powder	4. Methane
Class 3: Flammable liquids	Class 4: Flammable solids
1. Petrol	1. Matches
2. Paints	2. Magnesium
3. Turpentine	3. Phosphorous
4. Methylated spirits	4. Fire lighters
Class 5: Oxidising substances	Class 6: Poisonous and toxic substances
1. Calcium Hypochlorite	1. Pesticides
2. Ammonium Nitrate	2. Weed killers
3. Sodium Nitrate	3. Photographic developers
4. Hydrogen Peroxide	4. Arsenic
Class 7: Corrosive substances	Class 8: Miscellaneous
1. Oxides	1. Scuba tanks
2. Caustic soda	2. Gas cylinders
3. Hydrochloric acid	3. Aerosol cans
4. Sulphuric acid	4. Explosive devices

NOTE: Gas cylinders are to be carried in accordance with company policy and the appropriate dangerous goods code/legislation.