COMPLETING A RISK ASSESSMENT

Before you start sampling, you'll need to carry out a risk assessment for your location and testing programme.

To help make this as easy as possible, we've provided an example here.

You'll need to adjust this to your specific requirements. Here's a step-by-step guide:

1. Collect important information

Before starting, write down the following details:

- Date of assessment
- Sampling location
- Person responsible for the assessment

2. Understanding risk levels

- Low risk (below 20): safe to proceed with standard precautions.
- Medium risk (21–37): monitor conditions and be prepared to adjust plans.
- High risk (38–100): sampling cannot continue until risks are reduced.
- Extreme risk (over 42): a full review is required, and sampling must be postponed until all risks are addressed.

3. Identifying and evaluating hazards

For each possible hazard:

1. Determine likelihood (0-10): how likely is it to occur?
2. Determine severity (0-10): how serious would the impact be?
3. Calculate overall risk: multiply likelihood by severity.
4. Classify the risk level: low, medium, or high?
5. Identify who could be affected: volunteers, staff, or other participants.
6. List safety measures: actions to reduce the risk.
7. Check if risk is controlled: are the precautions effective?
8. Monitor and update: if conditions change, adjust the assessment.

5. Stay aware with ongoing dynamic risk assessments

Outdoor conditions change quickly, so always reassess the environment before and during sampling. If conditions worsen, sample on a different day instead and make a note as to why.

6. Regularly review and update the assessment

When you sample, look out for new hazards, and adjust plans when necessary.