



## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

BY KELLY TREVINO,  
MS, LAT, ATC

Not all hazards are easy to spot. We can make a point to be more aware of dangers we see, but some tend to be a little more elusive. Some hide in the air we breathe, the ground we stand on, or even the sounds around us. Recognizing environmental hazards isn't just about what we see. It's about what we hear, smell, and feel, too. These unseen risks can affect our health, the work we do, and the environment around us.

### ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

We might not always notice environmental hazards until they start causing problems. Some key risks include:

- **Air Quality Issues:** Dust, mold spores, and chemical fumes can irritate our lungs and impact our breathing. Poor air quality and ventilation has been linked to respiratory issues, making proper ventilation and dust control essential.
- **Water Contamination:** Spills, leaks, and runoff can pollute water sources without visible warning signs. Improper material handling can introduce chemicals into local waterways, impacting both workers and surrounding communities.
- **Soil Hazards:** Heavy equipment use can erode the ground, and older sites may hold hidden contaminants. Many worksites are built on previously polluted land, meaning hazardous substances may still be present underground.
- **Noise & Odor Pollution:** Loud machinery can damage hearing over time, and strong chemical odors may signal airborne hazards.



### THE HARM THAT FOLLOWS

Ignoring environmental hazards can take a toll on our health and safety:

- ⚠ Breathing problems from poor air quality.
- ⚠ Headaches and nausea from chemical exposure.
- ⚠ Hearing damage from prolonged noise.
- ⚠ Unexpected worksite issues like unstable ground or flooding.

### PREVENTION FAVORS THE PREPARED

Environmental hazards don't have to catch us off guard. Staying aware, proactive, and responsive can make all the difference.



- **Pay attention to the unseen.** If something smells off, sounds too loud, or causes discomfort, it's a sign to take a closer look.
- **Use protective measures.** Masks, ear protection, and ventilation help minimize exposure.
- **Control dust and debris.** Managing dust, fumes, and waste helps reduce exposure risks. Keeping work areas clean reduces air hazards.
- **Work together.** Speaking up about potential risks makes the site safer for everyone. It's important to report these potential hazards right away. Alerting the team and site management helps address hazards before they turn into bigger problems, keeping both workers and the worksite protected.

By using all our senses (not just our eyes) we can recognize risks before they impact our health and safety. There's always more than meets the eye when it comes to workplace safety, and the best way to stay ahead is through awareness, action, and teamwork. Prevention Favors the PREPARED, so let's stay aware and keep each other safe. 🌱



**Kelly Trevino, MS, LAT, ATC** || Kelly has been practicing athletic training since 2018. She currently lives in Rio Rancho, NM with her wife, Shelby, and two dogs, Harvey and Storm. In her free time she enjoys Legos, working out, and going for rides on her motorcycle.



**Work Right** is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.