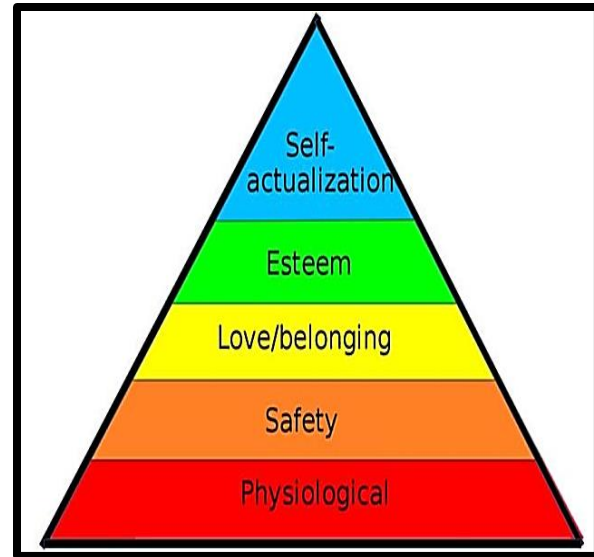


Maslow's hierarchy of needs states that humans must fulfill five levels of needs in a specific order, which is typically depicted in the pyramid shown to the right. After fulfilling basic physiological needs like food and water, humans feel a desire to be safe. Humans must be protected from physical danger to achieve a sense of wellbeing; however, transportation and construction workers face potential dangers on a daily basis. This exposure to high-risk situations while at work can lead to mental health concerns, which if not addressed or treated could result in self-harm.



According to the CDC, employees in the construction industry encounter considerable safety and health hazards that result in increased rates of injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. Common examples include:

- Falls from Heights
- Electrical Hazards
- Struck By Hazards (vehicles and equipment)
- Pinch Point/Crushing Hazards
- Chemical Exposure Hazards
- Confined Space Hazards
- Sensory Hazards (exposure to vibrations/noises for extended periods of time)
- Workplace Violence Situations (from the public).

**Continued exposures to these hazards in the workplace, in addition to experiencing and/or witnessing injuries can cause employees to experience significant psychological and mental health distress.**

### **Psychosocial Factors in Construction/Transportation Work – The Connection**

The constant exposure to high-risk hazards often leads employees to develop health and psychosocial disorders, including but not limited to:

- Workplace Violence
- Substance Use/Abuse
- Anxiety
- Post-Traumatic Stress
- Suicidal Ideations

### **Tips to Address Mental Health Concerns In Construction/Transportation**

- Access to Mental Health Resources: Many state entities have Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) or the State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP). Employees are encouraged to use these resources.
- Communication of Information: Having an assistance program is key. However, ensuring people have access to information is just as important. Supervisors and

managers are encouraged to provide information to employees via business cards, posters, and other regular communications.

- **Supervisor and Management Training:** Supervisors and managers are the first line of defense to help with referring employees to resources. They work with employees every day and are most likely to see the signs of potential issues with the employees.
- **Employee Training:** Co-workers are another resource that can be used to report concerns to supervisors.
- **Open Door Policy:** Employers should encourage managers and co-workers to report situations where they feel their co-workers may need assistance. If you see something, say something.
- **Administrative Policies and Protocols:** Ensure that policies are in place and reviewed with employees during onboarding, supervisory/management training, foreman's training, etc. and should be reviewed as a part of routine training during the course of an employee's work career.
- **Paid Leave Time Options:** Use of Paid Leave, FMLA, and Workers Compensation (dependent of the situation) can and should be made available for employees to get the treatment that they need to be able to work effectively.

**By reviewing this information, we hope to raise awareness among all employees in the construction and transportation industries.**

**Remember, if you or a loved one are experiencing mental health-related distress:**

- **Contact Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP).**
- **If you do not have access to an EAP program:**
  - **Contact the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.**
  - **Call or text 988**
  - **Chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org)**
  - **Connect with a trained crisis counselor.**
  - **988 is confidential, free, and available 24/7/365.**
  - **Visit the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline for more information at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).**

**With this increased awareness, employers can take steps to ensure that their employees are safe physically, emotionally, and psychologically.**