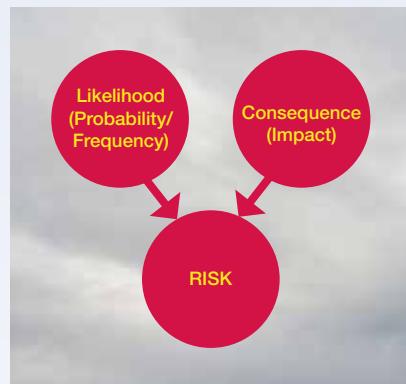


What Is the Process Risk?

The November and December 2014 issues of the Process Safety Beacon marked the 30th anniversary of two of the worst industrial disasters in history — the November 1984 explosions and fires at a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) terminal in San Juan Ixhuatépec, Mexico City, Mexico (photo 1) and the December 1984 toxic gas release in Bhopal, India (photo 2). These incidents were catastrophes that impacted tens of thousands of people. The “What can you do?” sections of those Beacons encouraged you to understand the worst thing that might possibly happen in your plant, and your role in making sure that event does not happen.

However, you should also be aware that the worst process incident that can happen in your plant may not be the same as the highest process risk. Risk is a combination of how likely an incident is and how bad the consequences could be. The process incident in your plant with the worst consequences may be very unlikely to occur. Other less-severe incidents may be more likely, making the risk of these events higher than the incident with the worst consequences. You should be aware of all process risks in your plant, and your role in managing all of them.



What Can You Do?

Ask similar questions to those suggested in the December 2014 Beacon for all of the process risks in your plant:

- What are all of the process risks in the area where I work and in my job?
- What are the systems in place to manage these risks — both to prevent process incidents and for reducing the consequences if they do happen?
- How do I know that these process-risk-management systems are adequate and working properly?
- What is my role in making sure that the systems for managing all of the process risks in my plant are functioning properly?

Understand all process risks in your plant and your role in managing them!

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