

McGill Education Garden - Risk Assessment

July 2018

Identification of Potential Risks

- ❖ Beehive
- ❖ Hammock hanging from Chestnut trees
- ❖ Hills surrounding the garden area
- ❖ Ingestion of garden products
- ❖ Garden tools (Rake, Shovel, Clippers, Wheelbarrow etc)
- ❖ Garden boxes (Raised wood boxes; ground rock gardens)
- ❖ General garden terrain (Array of rocks, sticks, chestnut seeds and other natural irregularities)

Chart Characterizing the Severity and probability of a risk.

Possibility of Scenario Occurrence	Severity of Consequence			
	Low	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Unlikely	Low Unlikely	Mild unlikely	Moderate unlikely	Severe unlikely
Somewhat possible	Low, somewhat	Mild somewhat	Moderate somewhat	Severe somewhat
Likely	Low likely	Mild likely	Moderate likely	Severe likely
High Probability	Low high	Mild high	Moderate high	Severe high

Identification of Hazards Rank:

- Hammock on a hill - Mild somewhat GREEN
- Hills - Mild likely BROWN
- Beehive - Mild likely BROWN
- General garden terrain (Rocks, tree roots etc) - Mild high BROWN
- Ingestion of garden products - Mild somewhat BROWN
- Garden boxes and surrounding wire caging - Moderate Likely BROWN
- Garden tools - Severe somewhat RED

Assessment of Risks:

Anything in green is considered an acceptable risk, as they have low to mild severity of consequence with a low probability of occurrence.

Anything in brown would require minimal assessment, caution and potential mitigation.

Anything in red requires extreme care, and strongly suggested mitigation and alteration. They should only be accessible by trained and assigned individuals.

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Assessment for General Public:

Notes: In relation to the assessment for a Vulnerable Population; i.e. Children, elderly, differently abled; it must be considered that risks become greater. Cautionary measures such as use of footwear, avoidance of running, appropriate lighting and constant supervision is strongly suggested.

McGill Community Garden possess mainly risk in the brown rating. There was also the presence of one green and one red rate.

Note: As it is an outdoor space, attempting to replicate natural growth and essence, there are natural hazards and risk factors. Common sense should be used as well as the following suggested safety guidelines.

- The use of footwear at all times
- Avoidance of excessive use of any form of cognitive inebriator in the garden space.
- Avoidance of running, jumping or excessive fast movements in the space.

This is a shared space with fellow animals, plants and other wildlife. Respect is the safest choice.

Specification and Clarification:

Hammock near the hill falls under green and so requires no major alteration or concern. As noted above, with the presence of a vulnerable population extra caution should be used. The presence of a supervisor or garden staff is strongly suggested for the use of this technology.

- Maximum of two bodies in the hammock at one time is suggested.

General garden terrain, such as sticks, insects, chestnut seeds, tree branches and rocks, was rated in brown. To ensure that this risk stays as minimal as possible continual tidying, raking, trimming and upkeep is performed on the garden space. This is to ensure that the space stays as clear and safe as possible.

The beehive poses a potential concern. Risk possibilities range from a single sting to a strong allergic reaction. While bee's are normally quite tame, to aggravate them could result in multiple stings, or an attempt to flee from the bees could result in injury due to running in a small space. To attempt to alleviate this occurrence there should be limited access to bees section and hive. Involvement in the hive use and care should be completed by trained individuals.

Hills surrounding the garden space also falls under brown. As the garden itself is built on a hill, this risk factor is difficult to avoid. None of the hills are exceptionally high or steep, most are a slow incline/decline. They still, however, pose potential risk especially for falling down, specifically on occasion involving vulnerable populations or an abundance of garden visitors. Most hill areas are quite visible, the entrance

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being one of them. Although this poses a potential risk, as it is a natural incline, with scattered rocks and roots to help as grips, it should be deemed an acceptable risk.

- It must be noted that for vulnerable populations, proper assistance and supervision when managing the hills should be offered.

Ingesting items from the garden possess as two main risks, surprise allergic reaction to eating an unknown substance, cross-contamination with a poisonous and unknown substance or a potential choking hazard. Ingestion of plant items should be done to the discretion of the individual. As stated above, in the presence of vulnerable populus extra supervision should be used. It is strongly suggested that individuals never ingest plants of which they are not sure the edibility. There is no known poisonous plant life within the garden space, however, there is still always a small possibility of accidental plant growth.

Garden boxes, as well as garden rock spaces, pose as a moderate risk. It is suggested that this is the case due to the foot-level nature of the boxes along with large wire fencing surrounding many of them. While these do pose as a moderate risk it is difficult and often unnecessary to mitigate use. It can be suggested that offering supervision along with the use of an abundance of common sense, would deem the level of risk associated acceptable.

Garden tools pose as the highest risk in the garden area. Many of the tools are heavy and sharp. While these tools are necessary and useful, without the proper care and training the possibility of risk increases and the damage could be severe. The tools are also quite easily accessible to the community and any personage who enters the garden. It does mitigate the risks to keep all tools in a set location away from the common traffic area, i.e. underneath the maple tree, however, it does not completely remove risks, especially as the garden expands and is nearing the tree.

Present Mitigation:

- Sturdy string is used to surround the beehive and clearly outline a wide parameter
- Protective gear is available for the individual taking care of the bees. Use of the gear is to the discretion of the individual.
- Constant clean-up of garden terrain mitigates and alleviates much of the concerns that comes with garden space, boxes and hills. This is due to the reduced roughness in terrain and reduces the possibility of slips, trip or other foot-focused accidents.
- Trimming of the surrounding trees during the clean-up stated above offers a reduction in possible head related injuries as well.
- Potential supervision, specifically when there will be vulnerable persons present in the garden space. It is strongly suggested that garden supervision is offered by someone who knows of the gardens general structure as well as the local plant and animal life.

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- Removal of any plants which are deemed unnecessary harmful, poisonous or dangerous. There are not, nor have been in many years, the presence of non-edible and poisonous plants in the McGill garden. Due to this, risk of cross-contamination or poisonings are deemed unlikely and the risk is acceptable. This being said, when eating local plant life, discretion is strongly suggested.
- There are now two epipen's on hand when garden staff is present, to alleviate the concerns with both ingestion of garden food as well as the presence of bees in instances relating to allergic reactions.

Future Suggested Mitigations:

- A shed or shelf area to place and store unused garden tools. This would inhibit non-access or non-staff individuals from intentionally or accidentally finding and inappropriately using the tools.
- A First-Aid kit being placed in the garden shed and/or near the garden space. This could mitigate the risk of garden based injuries, depending on severity.
- Ropes, bushes or further plant life to be used as barriers for the more accessible hill areas. Clear barriers would prohibit people from accidentally missing a step and any injuries/harm that may come from that.