

# HAZARDS

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HAZARD LIST

Learn how to design and create Hazards and Escape Situations. A list of hazards is located at the end of this chapter.

You can fast track this chapter by prioritizing the summaries and text in the yellow highlight panels.

## HAZARDS EXPLAINED

### HAZARDS EXPLAINED SUMMARY

- Hazards are categorized by their **Theme, Activation & Effect**.
- **Theme Category:** Nature, Structure, Mechanical, Chemical, Hi-tech, Supernatural and more...
- **Activation Category:** Traversal - Regular, Traversal - Context, Zone - Entry, Zone - Exit, Zone - Turn Start, Zone - Turn End and more
- **Effect Category:** Stop, Damage, Capture, Alert, Auto, Move and more.
- Hazard Grades & Ratings indicates their difficulty
- Hazards need to be overcome by individual characters' task rolls to evade their effects.
- You can substitute roll for another character using your minor action if you are in the same zone or in the zone the other character is moving into.
- Hazards can be neutralized so that they no longer pose any threats to anyone.

Hazards are objects or circumstances that inhibit units, such as the Player Characters (PCs) from progressing. They can be something as simple as a steep slope or something as complex as an algorithmic laser security panel.

Players may encounter them as tasks to overcome through mission, obstacles during combat situations or other critical situations, namely escape situations. In escape situations, PCs will have to overcome a gauntlet of hazards to reach the safe zone before.

### *Spirit Tokens*

*These are gained by the PCs to unleash their Spirit Bursts*

To help cloudbreakers identify hazards more easily, they are organised according to three main categories, Theme, Activation and Effect. However, these categories do not always fully describe the details of a hazard's function. To know how a hazard truly work, it is necessary to read the details in their entry.

## Theme

Hazards are grouped and listed according to their theme, such as Nature, Hi-tech or Supernatural. A hazard's theme can be used as guidance to help Game Masters decide on the type of hazards they would place in certain locations. A secret base located on a deserted island for example, would likely has plenty of Nature and Hi-tech themed hazards.

- **Chemical** (acid, poison gas, oil spill)
- **Hi-tech** (laser, computer, bioscanner)
- **Magical** (portal net, lightning crystal)
- **Mechanical** (locks, levers, vehicles)
- **Nature** (boulders, quicksand, waterfall)
- **Structure** (buildings, gates, platform)
- **Supernatural** (pit of lost souls, cursed objects)
- **And more...**



Different hazard types have different activation conditions.

## Activation

The activation category represents the method the hazards' effects are triggered. There are two major groups of hazard activation type, **Traversal** and **Zone**.

### Traversal Hazards

These hazards lie between zones. They are activated when units travel through them.

- **Traversal - Regular:** This is the most common type of traversal hazard. The effect of traversing this hazard is the same when done from either side.
- **Traversal - Context:** This hazard behave differently depending on where it is traversed from. Traversing down a steep slope for example, is easier than climbing it. However, it introduces the risk of falling. (See Steep Slope hazard)

### Zone Hazards

These hazards are positioned within a zone. There are many possible methods of activating the effects of this hazard and some zone hazards can be activated in more than one way.

- **Zone - Entry:** Activation upon entry into the zone.
- **Zone - Exit:** Activation upon moving out of the zone.
- **Zone - Turn End:** Activation at the end of unit's turn.
- **Zone - Turn Start:** Activation at the start of unit's turn.
- **Zone - Entry & Start of Turn:** And various combinations.
- **Zone - In contact with spells:** Self explanatory
- And many more...

In addition to activation type there is an activation counter. Hazards such as explosives for example, can only be activated once, thus it would have details such as (1 time) next to the activation counter.

## Effects

These are quick descriptions of the hazards' effects. The full effects can be read in the hazard description section. Hazards can have more than one of these following effects.

- **Stop**
- **Damage**
- **Capture**
- **Condition**
- **Auto**
- **Alert**
- **Move**
- **And more...**

## Grade & Hazard Rating

The grade category of Hazards indicate the suitability of the hazards to be used against PCs of the corresponding grade. This is not a hard and fast-rule, and it would be good to include a hazard of higher grade in Escape situations as the finale.

The Hazard Rating indicates how challenging the hazard is, and it helps the GM plan escape situations.

## Overcome or Neutralize

When facing hazards such as steep slope, a PC can choose to overcome them or neutralize them. Overcoming a hazard allows the PC to individually avoid the effects of the hazard, and it's usually the easier option. This can be done by making the relevant task roll when the hazard is triggered. However, some hazards cannot be overcome and you have to bear the full effect when it's triggered. So a prudent approach can be more effective than having high aptitude.

Substitute roll (Instant) - You may use your minor action and your own skill or toolkit bonuses to roll in the stead of another character to help them overcome hazards. You need to be in the same zone as or the zone the other character is moving into to do this. This option can be used out of your own turn. It cannot be used to neutralise hazards.

Neutralizing a hazard on the other hand is more difficult. The Task difficulty is usually 2 or 4 points higher than what is required to overcome them. But a successful attempt renders the hazard harmless to everyone, allowing your party members to pass through safely. So it is up to the players to weight the risk of this option.

The common task difficulty to overcome copper grade hazards is 8. For silver and gold grade hazards it's 9 and 10 respectively.

# CREATING HAZARDS

## CREATING HAZARDS SUMMARY

- GMs are encouraged to create their own Hazards.
- Refer to the Hazard list as guide and use the Base Hazard table to build your very own hazards.
- The Hazard Rating of the Hazards need to be adjusted according to their additional effects
  - **Negative Effects (+0.5):** Stop, Damage, Capture, Condition, Auto, Move and more.
  - **Positive Effects (-0.5):** Heal, Usable Once and more...
  - **Neutral Effects:** Alert, Move.
- Hazards creation is an art. It's more important to pose interesting problems to the players rather than balanced difficulty.

A list of hazards can be found at the end of this chapter. But it's mainly intended to serve as a guide for Game Masters to create their own fabulous or twisted inventions.

Use the guide below to create a base hazard.

	COPPER	SILVER	GOLD	GOLD+
Hazard Rating	1	1.5	2	2.5
TD to overcome	8	9	10	11
TD to neutralise	10	12	14	16
Negative effect	1	1	1	1

The Each hazard starts out with one negative effect, and any additional negative effects increase the hazard's rating by 0.5 and positive effects reduce the hazard rating by 0.5.

### Negative Effects (+0.5 HR)

- **Stop:** This effect prevents a unit from moving and expends the action used.
- **Damage:** This effect deals HP or MP damage to the unit that failed to overcome the hazard. The hazard rating increase proportionally to the damage dealt.
  - 2d6 damage (+0.5 HR)
  - 2d6 + 4 damage (+1.0 HR)
  - 2d6 + 8 damage (+1.5 HR)
- **Capture:** This effect prevents a unit from moving until it's released.
- **Condition:** This effect applies a condition to the unit.
- **Auto:** This hazard affects the unit that activated it automatically, without allowing the unit to overcome it.

### Positive Effects (-0.5 HR)

- **Heal/Buf:** Activation upon entry into the zone.

### Neutral Effects

Neutral effects such as Alert & Move does not change hazard ratings since their effects are context sensitive.

- **Alert:** This hazard may alerts enemies or increase the difficulty of other hazards.
- **Move:** This hazard moves units, the effect can be positive or negative depending on the direction the units is moved to.

## Principles of Hazard Design

Hazards should be designed to pose interesting problems for the players, rather than be chores that needs to be completed. The guide above can help GMs create balanced hazards, but ultimately it's up to the GM's experience and instincts to craft memorable hazards. The following are some consideration that can help you create memorable hazards.

- **Concept & Theme:** Instead of merely piling on the negative effects of a hazard, try to create hazards according to a concept. A swirling pool of damned spirits for example, can be more interesting than your regular pool of acid. It can also be helpful to reskin existing hazards to the general theme of the mission location. An algorithmic laser security panel for example, would not fit a haunted mansion location. So it can be redesigned into giant chessboard with pieces that attack units occupying the zone.
- **Risk & Reward:** Combine positive effects with negative effects to create compelling dilemmas.
- **Complex Solution:** Complex solutions that require teamwork can bring

# ESCAPE SITUATIONS DESIGN

## ESCAPE SITUATIONS DESIGN SUMMARY

- Design a fun experience first before balancing its difficulty.
- Key ingredients for great design are: Risks & Rewards, Options, Information Revelation and Narrative Arc.
- The three components to balance escape situation difficulty are:
  - **Epic Trap:** Set damage according to grade.
  - **Escape Routes:** Measure difficulty according to each player escape route.
  - **Hazards:** Place hazards along routes. Usually place hardest hazard last.
- Final difficulty adjustment can be made by increasing Task Difficulty across the board or Epic Trap Damage.

Escape Situation has clear elements and goals. The PCs need to reach the safe zone within the time limit before the Epic Trap is triggered and their paths are inhibited by a series of hazards. See Chapter 11 (CORE RULES) for more.

The following guide provide the GM with the tools to design an escape situation with moderate degree of challenge and how to adjust its difficulty. But designing an escape situation is more of an art instead of a mechanical process. When in doubt, always go for the cooler option rather than mechanical accuracy.

## Design Principles

The key ingredients of a great escape situations like all game level designs are: **Risks & Rewards, Options, Information Revelation and Narrative Arc.** You can borrow plenty of elements from video game platformer and other video games level designs to create great situations.

Risks and Rewards are intrinsically tied with options. Unlike video game platformers, timed button presses is not part of the play. So it is important to shift the focus to providing the players with interesting options of varying levels of risk. Creating multiple possible routes towards a safe zone, or multiple safe zones, gives the players more options. Unlike video games, Tabletop RPGs like Cloudbreaker Alliance are not bound by the limitations of programming codes. So GMs should accommodate for players's creative solutions even if it's not part of the original methods of overcoming the hazard.

Cunningly timed information revelation can also keep the situation exciting, as players will be kept on their toes, and need to reevaluate their plans as they progress. Hiding a portion of the route behind doors or other obstacles is a common technique to achieve this. This also prevents the trivialization of hazards by teleportation, as most teleportation features and spells requires the user to be able to see their destination. Using enclosed space such as mines prevents flight from trivializing hazards.

Escape situation should also be designed around a narrative arc to provide a coherent experience for the players. This can be done by using the three act story structure or the four part Ki-Sho-Ten-Ketsu structure. In general, the most difficult and complicated hazard should be placed around the final zone before the safe zone, but this is not a solid rule.

## Difficulty Adjustment

There are three components of an escape situation, **Epic Trap, Escape Routes and Hazards.**

The playing field for Escape Situations can be presented as cross section or top down form.

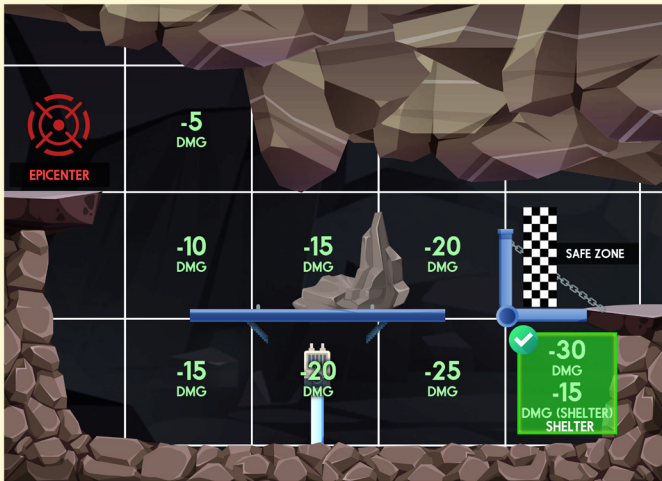


## Epic Trap

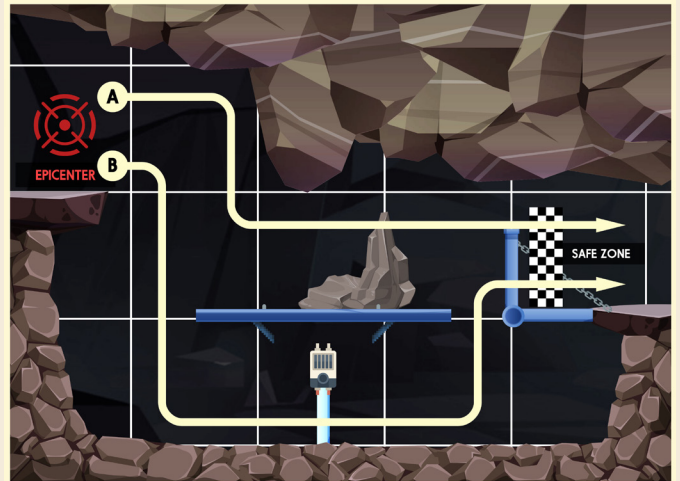
Epic trap damage, whether it's directed towards HP or MP is death at the end of the final round of the time limit. Escape Situations are designed to be compleateable within 3 rounds, so that would be at the end of round 3 after every character has moved.

This table indicates the situation difficulty according to the PCs' grades and epic trap damage.

Shelter zones may be placed in certain spots along the escape course and provides a last resort damage reduction option against Epic Traps.



Moving out of the epicenter of the Epic Trap reduces damage.



Moving out of the epicenter of the Epic Trap reduces damage.

The following are the many methods of reducing the damage from epic traps:

- **Safe Zone:** When you reach the Safe Zone, you do not take any damage from the Epic trap.
- **Distance Damage Reduction (DDR):** Reduce the damage you receive from the Epic Trap by 5 for every zone you're away from the epicenter of the Epic Trap.
- **Shelter Zone:** Shelter Zones further reduces the damage you take from the DDR. The amount of damage varies depending on the situation created by the GM.
- **Magical Construct:** Spells such as Stonewall, Vegetation and Form Ice can create magical constructs that can be used to reduce the damage you receive from Epic Traps. One zone can only benefit from one of such spell, but the reduction of this spell stacks with Shelter Zone and DDR.

DIFFICULTY	COPPER GRADE	SILVER GRADE	GOLD GRADE
Very Easy	$(2d6 + 10) \times 1$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 2$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 3$
Easy	$(2d6 + 10) \times 2$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 3$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 4$
Medium	$(2d6 + 10) \times 3$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 4$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 5$
Hard	$(2d6 + 10) \times 4$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 5$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 6$
Very Hard	$(2d6 + 10) \times 5$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 6$	$(2d6 + 10) \times 7$

DAMAGE	MINIMUM	AVERAGE	MAXIMUM	SHELTER
$(2d6 + 10) \times 1$	12	17	22	5
$(2d6 + 10) \times 2$	24	34	44	10
$(2d6 + 10) \times 3$	36	51	66	15
$(2d6 + 10) \times 4$	48	68	88	20
$(2d6 + 10) \times 5$	60	85	110	25
$(2d6 + 10) \times 6$	72	102	132	30
$(2d6 + 10) \times 7$	84	119	154	35

## Escape Routes

Escape routes are paths PCs can take to reach reach the safe zone. In a single escape situation it is common to have multiple escape routes. As you can see, the sample Escape situation has two possible escape routes. This provides players with options, but more options means more work for the designer. Don't worry about PCs going off route with their own solution. This is part of the fun.

To balance the difficulty of each route, follow the guide below for each grade. Things can get complicated if there are too many converging and diverging routes.

	COPPER GRADE	SILVER GRADE	GOLD GRADE
Move Count	4	5	6
Hazard Number	3	4	5
Hazard Rating Total	4	7	11

### Move Count

PCs of different grades has different number of actions per turn. At lower grades, failing to overcome a hazard can be much more consequential. Thus, it is suggested that copper grade characters should be able to reach the safe zone within 4 move actions, allowing for potential failures at overcoming hazards.

It is possible to have an escape route that is longer than 4 zones away provided there are hazards that can move the PCs closer towards the safe zone to still fit the 4 moves quota.

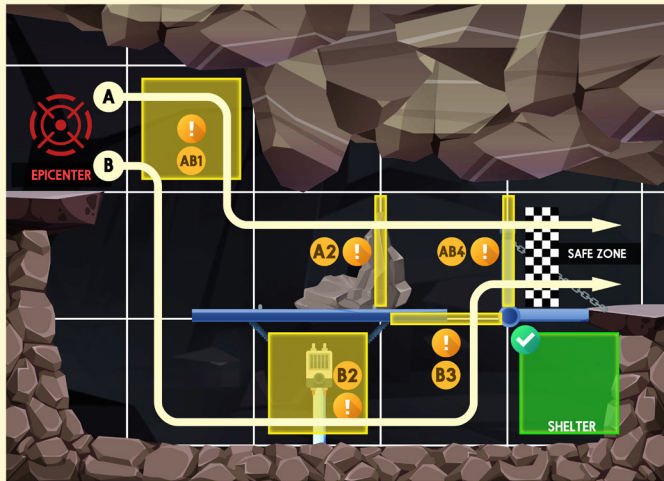
Obviously, similar rules apply to higher grades.

### Hazard Number

This is the suggested number of hazards the route should have, but there can be less. Having too many hazards can easily turn into a chore. It is better to have a few complex and interesting hazard.

## Hazard Rating Total

This is the recommended sum of the hazard ratings of all the hazards along a single route. A route that branches into 2 are considered as two separate routes.



*Calculate Hazard Rating Total for each route.*

## Final Difficulty Adjustment

There are two ways to adjust an escape situation's difficulty. The first is to increase the Epic Trap damage and the second one is raising the Task Difficulty of all rolls across the board.

Every level of difficulty increase or reduction by Task Difficulty modifier or Epic Trap damage, adds up to the overall difficulty. For example, a Gold Grade escape situation with +1 Task Difficulty modifier and Epic Trap Damage of  $(2d7 + 10) \times 6$  would be considered to be Very Hard. A Gold Grade escape situation with +2 Task Difficulty modifier and Epic Trap Damage of  $(2d7 + 10) \times 4$  would be considered to be Hard.

## Creating Other Situations

You can modify the design principles of Escape Situation, to create other non-combat situations, such as Chase Situation and Search Situation. Instead of being punished by an epic trap at the end of the time limit, failure to reach the designated zone may cause the next critical situation to be harder or fail the mission altogether.

# HAZARD LIST

## Playtest Hazard List

### Chemical

*Recommended Toolkits: Chemist Kit, Arcanist Kit*

HR 1 - Burning Coal (Zone)

### Hi-tech

*Recommended Toolkits: Infiltration Kit, Impersonification Kit*

HR 3 - Algorithmic Laser Security Panel (Zone)

### Magical

*Recommended Toolkits: Arcanist Kit, Thaumaturgist Kit*

HR 2 - Portal Net (Traversal)

HR 3.5 - Elemental Sentry (Traversal)

### Mechanical

*Recommended Toolkits: Mechanics Kit, Navigation Kit*

HR 1.5 - Pendulum Blade (Traversal)

HR 1.5 - Snare Trap (Zone)

HR 1.5 - Land Mines (Zone)

HR 3 - Triple Security Switch (Zone)

### Nature

*Recommended Toolkits: Climbing Kit, Infiltration Kit*

HR 1 - Steep Slope (Traversal)

HR 1.5 - Quicksand (Zone)

### Structure

*Recommended Toolkits: Climbing Kit, Mechanics Kit*

HR 2 - Oiled Wall (Traversal)

### Supernatural

*Recommended Toolkits: Thaumaturgist Kit, Impersonification Kit*

HR 4.5 - Pool of Damned Spirits (Zone)

# CHEMICAL

*Recommended Toolkits: Chemist Kit, Arcanist Kit*

## BURNING COAL (Zone)

*Copper Grade Hazard*

**Theme:** Chemical

**Hazard Rating:** 1

**Activation:** Zone Entry, Start of Turn

**Effect:** Damage

**Task Difficulties:** Overcome 8, Neutralize 10

### DETAILS

Units entering this zone or starting their turn in this zone automatically takes 2d6 Fire Damage.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Use fire retardant from 0 - 1 zone away: *Chemist Kit 10.*

# HI-TECH

*Recommended Toolkits: Infiltration Kit, Impersonification Kit*

## ALGORITHMIC LASER SECURITY PANEL (Zone)

*Gold Grade Hazard*

**Theme:** Hi-tech

**Hazard Rating:** 3

**Activation:** Zone Entry, Start of Turn

**Effect:** Damage

**Task Difficulties:** Overcome 10, Neutralize 14

### DETAILS

Units entering this zone can roll Information 10, Infiltration Kit 10 or Sports 14 to dodge the lasers. Otherwise, it takes takes 2d6+8 Fire Weapon Damage. This roll is repeated at the start of the unit's turn.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Hack system while in zone: *Infiltration Kit 14*

# MAGICAL

Recommended Toolkits: Arcanist Kit, Thaumaturgist Kit

## PORTAL NET (Traversal)

Gold Grade Hazard

Theme: Magical

Hazard Rating: 2

Activation: Traversal

Effect: Move

Task Difficulties: Overcome 10, Neutralize 14

### DETAILS

A creature can sneak past this trap safely with Thievery 10 or Infiltration Kit 10. Failing this roll, the unit's is teleported to a specified zone.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Shut portal while in connecting zone: *Thaumaturgist Kit 12.*

## ELEMENTAL SENTRY (Traversal)

Gold Grade Hazard

Theme: Magical

Hazard Rating: 3.5

Activation: Traversal

Effect: Stop Damage

Task Difficulties: Overcome 10, Neutralize 14

### DETAILS

A creature can sneak past this trap safely with Thievery 10, Infiltration Kit 10. Failing this roll, the unit will be pushed back to its original position and takes 2d6 + 8 HP damage. The damage type depends on the elemental sentry's type.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Deactivate Elemental Sentry while in connecting zone: *Arcanist Kit 12.*

# MECHANICAL

Recommended Toolkits: Mechanics Kit, Navigation Kit

## PENDULUM BLADE (Traversal)

Silver Grade Hazard

Theme: Mechanical

Hazard Rating: 1.5

Activation: Traversal

Effect: Damage

Task Difficulties: Overcome 9, Neutralize 12

### DETAILS

A unit can jump past the pendulum safely with Sports 9, Climbing Kit 9 or Infiltration Kit 9. Failing the roll, the unit will take 2d6 + 4 HP Weapon damage.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Dismantle while in connecting zone: *Mechanics Kit 12.*

## SNARE TRAP (Zone)

Copper Grade Hazard

Theme: Mechanical

Hazard Rating: 1.5

Activation: Zone Entry

Effect: Capture, Auto, Hidden

Task Difficulties: Overcome 8, Neutralize 10

### DETAILS

Snare traps are hidden until they're activated or detected. A Large or smaller sized unit moving into this zone by land is automatically grappled and hung upside down, if it's unaware of the existence of the trap. The victim make all rolls with setback until released. The unit can be released by demolishing the trap or have someone in the same zone as the trap use their minor action to roll Thievery 8 or Infiltration Kit 8 to disarm it.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Demolish: *10HP, 8 defence & 8 fortitudes.*

Spot Trap (minor action) from 0 - 1 zone away: *Detect 10; warn your party member of the location of the snare trap.*



# NATURE

Recommended Toolkits: Climbing Kit, Infiltration Kit

## LAND MINES (Zone)

Silver Grade Hazard

Theme: Mechanical

Hazard Rating: 1.5

Activation: Zone Entry (Once)

Effect: Damage

Task Difficulties: Overcome 9, Neutralize 12

### DETAILS

A unit moving into this zone needs to sneak in carefully by succeeding on Thievery 9 or Infiltration kit 9 roll or set off the mines. When the mine explodes it deals 2d6 + 8 fire damage to all target in the zone.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Spot from 0 - 3 zones away: Detect 12; warn your party member about the position of the mines.

Disarm while in zone: Thievery 12, Infiltration Kit 12

## TRIPLE SECURITY SWITCH (Zone)

Gold Grade Hazard

Theme: Mechanical

Hazard Rating: 1.5

Activation: Zone Exit

Effect: Stop

Task Difficulties: Neutralize 16

### DETAILS

The three switches that open this door are located in three different zones. Units must use their minor actions to press the switch within the same round or the process is reset.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Jam switch (to each switch): Mechanics 16.

## STEEP SLOPE (Traversal)

Copper Grade Hazard

Theme: Nature

Hazard Rating: 1

Activation: Traversal Context

Effect: Stop Damage

Task Difficulties: Overcome 8, Neutralize 10

### DETAILS

This is a contextual hazard. A unit traversing this hazard to climb up the slope to a higher zone needs to roll Sports 8 or Climbing Kit 8 to succeed. At failure, the unit's movement is cancelled and action wasted. Jumping down the slope requires rolling Sports 8 or Climbing Kit 8, otherwise the unit falls and take 2d6 HP Blunt Environment damage.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Attach rope ladder while in connecting zone: Climbing Kit 12.

## QUICKSAND (Zone)

Silver Grade Hazard

Theme: Nature

Hazard Rating: 1.5

Activation: Zone Entry

Effect: Capture (Auto)

Task Difficulties: Overcome 9, Neutralize 12

### DETAILS

A unit moving into this zone would automatically be captured by the quicksand. The unit can be released by rolling Sports 9 or Climbing Kit 9.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Spot from 0 - 3 zones away: Detect 12; warn your party member about the location of the snare trap.

Disarm while in zone: Thievery 12, Infiltration Kit 12

# STRUCTURE

Recommended Toolkits: Climbing Kit, Mechanics Kit

## OILED WALL (Traversal)

Silver Grade Hazard

Theme: Structure

Hazard Rating: 2

Activation: Traversal Context

Effect: Stop, Damage

Task Difficulties: Overcome 9, Neutralize 12

### DETAILS

A unit can jump over this wall with Sports 9 or Climbing Kit 9. Failing this roll, the unit's movement is cancelled and action wasted. If set on fire, the difficulty is raised to Sports 10 or Climbing Kit 10 and failure also deals 2d6 HP fire damage.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Demolish: 25HP, 9 defence & 9 fortitudes.

Punch Hole: Brute 12, Mechanics Kit 12.

Attach rope ladder while in connecting zone: Climbing Kit 12. (Can't be done if on fire.)

# SUPERNATURAL

Recommended Toolkits: Thaumaturgist Kit, Impersonification Kit

## POOL OF DAMNED SPIRITS (Zone)

Gold+ Grade Hazard

Theme: Structure

Hazard Rating: 4.5

Activation: Zone Entry, Start of Turn

Effect: Capture, Damage

Task Difficulties: Overcome 11, Neutralize 16

### DETAILS

To move out of this zone, a unit need to roll Psychology 11 or Navigation Kit 11. At failure, the unit's movement is cancelled and action wasted. If you start your turn in this zone, you need to roll Psychology 11 or Reason 11. Failing this roll, you take 2d6 + 12 MP damage.

### NEUTRALIZATION

Exorcise while in zone: Thaumaturgist Kit 12.