

# Employee Accident Reporting

**Instructor:** Use your own examples wherever possible in the talk that follows. An incident is similar to an accident except that it does not necessarily result in injury or damage. No matter how trivial they are, incidents should be reported to supervision just as accidents are. Employees should be encouraged and reminded periodically to report incidents that occur, so conclusions can be drawn about preventing a recurrence resulting in a serious injury. Incidents are commonly called near misses. Ask the question at the top of each section of the group and encourage discussion before suggesting the alternatives given here.

## Why should employees report incidents?

Nothing is learned from unreported incidents. Hazards, causes and contributing circumstances are lost if not reported. Employees who don't take the time to report near misses they are involved in may not learn from them. The fact that many incidents come within inches of being disabling injury accidents makes failing to report them all the more serious.

When incidents are not reported, their causes usually go uncorrected. That means they may happen again, perhaps producing tomorrow's disabling injury or fatality. This can be illustrated by the case of the employee who slipped on a floor made slippery by a small leak in a hydraulic line. The employee did not suffer an injury. Two days later, the line was still leaking. Another employee slipped on the liquid and fell and broke her leg. The first employee volunteered his experience to the company investigating the accident. Had the worker reported his own experience promptly, the chances are that the defective hydraulic line would have been corrected before the accident happened.

## Why don't workers report incidents?

- Fear of the supervisor's disapproval.
- Not wanting to lose time from the job on piece-work assignments.
- Not wanting the incident on their work records.
- Not wanting to be embarrassed by co-worker, ridicule or sarcasm.
- Reluctance to spoil the unit's safety record.
- Dislike for the red tape involved.
- Failure to understand why incident should be reported.
- Not recognizing the damage that could result.
- Not wanting to be the subject of an incident investigation.

### **Ask these Questions:**

What causes the incident/near miss?

What are the circumstances surrounding the near miss?

Is there a safety rule covering the situation?

Did the almost-victim know the rule?

Were any safety devices, clothing or equipment used improperly or not used at all when they were called for?

Have there been other near-misses of the same type?

Was the employee aware of the hazard?

Did the employee know the safe procedure?

The answers to these questions should be included in the incident report. They will suggest ways to prevent a recurrence. They may suggest some substitutions a protective device more certain than luck, for instance.

Bring out incidents or near misses that you have experienced or know of, or ask the group for some of their experiences.

## **GENERAL SAFETY REVIEW**

This is a time to review all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during and after the safety meeting.

Are you aware of any safety hazards from any other crews? Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.

Do we have any other safety business? Discuss any past issues or problems. Report any progress of investigations and action taken.

Have there been any accidents, near misses or complaints? Discuss any accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.

Please remember, we want to hear from you about any health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.

## **ENDING THE MEETING**

Circulate Sign-Off Form.

Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.

Refer action items for follow-up.

Do you have any Safety Recommendations?

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Do you have any Job Specific Topics you would like us to discuss?

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Comments:

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