

THE PacificComp TRAINER

REPORTING WORKPLACE HAZARDS AND INJURIES

As a team, organizations can study near misses and accidents in order to prevent future injuries and recurring incidents. But first, employees need to understand the importance of communicating with a supervisor when an injury, illness, or near miss incident occurs. This Training provides helpful information to assist you and your team in learning effective communication techniques because EVERYONE plays a role in workplace safety.

What is an injury?

An injury is damage or harm to the structure or function of a person's body caused by an outside force resulting from an event in the work environment.

What is an illness?

An illness is a disease or health disorder, sickness, or unhealthy condition. Some examples are skin diseases, respiratory conditions, poisoning, hearing loss, heat stress, or other conditions caused by exposure in the work environment.

What is a near miss?

A near miss is an event that only by chance did not cause an injury or illness.

Why is reporting important?

Hazardous conditions affect everyone in the workplace. If a condition or incident is ignored, not reported or corrected, then it can lead to serious consequences.

Why don't employees report hazards, near miss incidents, and injuries?

- Belief that it is not important to the organization
- Fear of negative consequences to their employee status
- Fear of disciplinary action
- Fear of harassment by co-workers or supervisors
- Fear of termination
- Fear of embarrassment – the incident may have been caused by a short cut or bad decision

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How to improve reporting?

- Establish policies and procedures for reporting
- Train all employees about the policy and procedures
- Establish a point person at each facility for heading up investigations
- Investigate all reports
- Develop corrective actions and let employees know what actions were taken and why, if none let them know why
- Praise reporting employee and if they desire let them assist with the investigation and development of controls

What details of an injury or near miss should be reported?

- Where and when did the incident occur?
- Was it an unsafe act, condition or equipment or combination of these?
- What happened – description of events leading up to incident?
- What were the causes?
- What can be done to reduce the possibility of reoccurrence?

Organizations have the responsibility of documenting an incident, interviewing witnesses, collecting facts to determine the cause and developing solutions. A proper reporting and investigation system will help to improve safety through the development of corrective actions. Minor accidents and near misses can reveal hazards that may not otherwise have been noticed, and the best outcome will be a safer work environment for everyone.