



Tracking Small Incidents Could Prevent Fatalities



Often safety incidents on worksites are only tracked when the worst happens: a major injury or a fatality. But experts suggest that it is crucial to be tracking any and all incidents, from near misses to minor injuries, in an attempt to track potentially serious dangers before the worst happens.

In Business Insurance's article "Small Incidents Lend Clues to Fatality Risks," the idea of looking at workplace incidents collectively as a pyramid is discussed with a "small number of fatalities at the top and droves of non-injury accidents at the bottom." The idea is that "an increased focus on those less serious incidents could help identify hazards that could be mitigated or eliminated, reducing the potential for more serious incidents that could result in fatalities." If safety issues are reported and analyzed when a minor incident happens, they can be corrected before a major injury or fatality occurs.

Not only is tracking incidents of varying degrees important but writing effective incident reports with complete information could help ensure there are resources to help those looking to improve the safety of worksites. Essentially, incident reports can function as an effective roadmap to find opportunities for improvement before the worst-case scenario happens.

So, what does the process of writing an effective and comprehensive incident report look like? Atlantic Training suggests 5 main steps to follow in this process to ensure you are effectively recording and handling incidents.

1. Timely Response

Immediately after an event happens, no matter how minor or serious, you should begin to gather information while the incident is fresh in everyone's mind and any physical evidence is still present.

2. Gather All Details and Facts

Make sure you get all the pertinent information regarding the incident. These details include:

- Date & Time of incident
- Location of incident
- People involved in the incident, their department(s), and supervisor(s)
- Witnesses
- Events leading up to the incident
- What employees were doing at the time of the incident
- Environmental Conditions
- Materials or Equipment involved
- Specific Injuries
- Treatment of Injuries
- Damage to Equipment/Materials/Worksite
- Photos, if possible

3. Assemble Sequence of Events

Put together a timeline of what happened before, during, and after the incident and include any details related to the incident.

4. Analyze Findings

Once you have collected all the details surrounding the incident, you can begin to analyze what happened to figure out why this incident happened. You should be able to find out the primary and secondary causes and the additional factors that contributed to the incident.

5. Create a Preventative Action Plan

Once you have analyzed the incident and discovered what caused it, you should look to correct the issues that led up to the incident. This may include anything from training to procedures to equipment.

You should take the time to document and analyze any incident, no matter how large or small. Doing so will empower you to take the details of the situation and correct any issues before something more serious happens.

Sourced From:

Business Insurance "[Small Incidents Lend Clues to Fatality Risks](#)" by Louise Esola

Atlantic Training "[Write an Effective Incident Report in 5 Steps](#)" by Jess Smith