

SAFETY

Company Name

Meeting Date

Employees Present:

SUBJECT OF THE MONTH: ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION & REPORTING

An accident is an unexpected event, which results or could result in bodily injury and/or property damage. A near-miss is an incident which results in no injuries or damage, but has the potential for injury. All accidents, **including** near-misses, should be investigated routinely. This month's article gives you some guidelines on how these investigations should proceed.

CHECKLIST ITEMS

- _____ Electrical Cords Checked & GFCI's to protect employees
- _____ Required Jobsite Postings:
 - (Emergency Phone #'s and "Safety & Health Protection on the Job" Poster
- _____ Fall Protection
- _____ Emergency Medical Plan
- _____ Fire Protection/Prevention
- _____ Hazard Communication Program
- _____ Tool Guards
- _____ First Aid Kit

JOBSITE REVIEW: Inspection Notes/Concerns/Action Plan

Company Safety Officer: _____

NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Oregon Home Builders Association Safety Committee's purpose is to provide safety guidelines, information and resources to help our members work more safely and reduce jobsite accidents. Full and active monthly participation in safety meetings using the OHBA Safety Committee's agendas, topics and checklists will only meet safety committee requirements. It remains your responsibility to comply with all aspects of safety rules and regulations.



Safety Committee

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Completing an Investigation:

When an accident is reported to you, conduct an in-house investigation at once. You might want to use something similar to the SAIF Report of Accident Form. It is important to complete an accident investigation form while the facts are fresh. If a claim is going to be filed, the Report of Occupational Injury or Disease form (Department of Insurance and Finance Form 801) must be submitted to the insurance carrier within **five days**. OAR 437-40-050, paragraph 1, requires investigations for all accidents resulting in time-loss injuries.

In addition to completing an accident investigation form, take detailed notes. Ask open-ended questions to establish the who, what, why, when, where and how of the accident. Be persistent; if things don't make sense, ask additional questions for clarification.

When practical, take the worker to the scene of the accident to reconstruct what happened, step-by-step. Put the worker at ease by not placing the blame. You should be a fact-finder, not a fault-finder.

Talk to coworkers or witnesses in private about what happened. Again, take notes. Find out if they have any information regarding the injured worker's possible pre-existing medical condition or off-the-job activities that may have played a part in the accident.

Prevention and Follow-up:

A thorough investigation should make it easy to determine the causes of the accident. Once these causes have been pinpointed, it is important that you take appropriate corrective action to prevent a recurrence of this type of accident.

Top management should review the investigation and agree upon corrective actions. A target date for completion of the corrective actions should be set, and the actual completion dates should be noted on the accident investigation form.

Compensability:

It is possible that an accident investigation could lead to doubts about whether the accident occurred on the job and thus is compensable.

If a worker is uncertain about the circumstances surrounding an accident, ask the reason for wanting to file a claim. If the worker still wishes to file the claim, it must be done. Validity of a claim may be in question when there is a delay in reporting an injury to a supervisor.

If you doubt the validity of the claim, additional questions should be asked:

1. Why was there a delay in reporting the accident?
2. Did the worker know procedures for reporting accidents?
3. Why does the worker feel that his/her present physical condition is the result of the reported accident?

If there is a reason to doubt the validity of the claim, write a summary of the findings. Study the notes, on-the-job investigation report and other relevant information. Write down even remotely relevant facts. Send a copy of your accident investigation report and summary with Form 801 to your insurance carrier. (Do not delay the 801 reporting requirements for this purpose, however. The accident investigation report and summary can be sent later, depending on circumstances.) Retain copies of **ALL** documents for your files.

