

By: Steve Chase-Circuit Rider

July 2013

REPORTING INCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES

A safe workplace starts with you. Immediately report safety-related incidents and near misses in which you are involved. A near miss is an incident that did not result in any personal injury, property damage, or production interruption. It is a very important indicator of potentially harmful future accidents. The reporting of a near miss is not an admission of guilt or error, but rather a method of identifying future problems.

If you witness an injury, send someone for help if necessary. Help and reassure the victim, but do not move an injured person unless the threat of further injury exists. Exercise caution in these situation to avoid injuries or exposure to blood-borne pathogens.

If feasible, do not move anything in the area of the incident. Report the appropriate person quickly and clearly. Offer to help in any way you can. Prompt action can help protect you or a co-worker.

Be sure to report all near misses. The next occurrence could cause an injury unless preventive action is taken. Try to determine what caused the incident and whether safety procedures were followed. A few moments of attention now can prevent future injuries. Do your part to reduce injuries by :

- Learning how to prevent dangerous situations.
- Using safe practices.
- Reporting incidents and near misses.
- Learn to recognize when you've had a near miss. Anyone who has thought, "That was a close call!", has had one.
- Always report near misses as soon as possible. A near miss one time could be an injury incident the next time.
- Inform supervisors of unsafe acts or unsafe conditions immediately.
- Don't take shortcuts. Follow safety rules and procedures to help prevent near misses and injury incidents.

Supervisors need to investigate reported near misses and note corrective action taken or recommended. Management will review the report to ensure the proper corrective action is implemented to prevent occurrence. The value of reporting is to learn from our mistakes. Accidents are caused by unsafe acts and conditions, or a combination of both. Investigation, analysis, and interpretation of the facts surrounding accidents and near misses are used to prevent them from happening again. Completed reports provide answers to the question of where, when, who, how, and why it occurred.

Content Source: Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) (Users of Safety Talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations).