



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

Reporting & Investigating an Accident

A good accident investigation tries to answer these questions:

- Who was involved?
- What happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Why did it happen?
- How can it be prevented from happening again?

Discovering Preventable Causes. When these questions are answered for all accidents and near misses, patterns often emerge and preventable causes are often discovered. But the patterns may not be true unless information acquired during the investigation is complete and accurate. The observations of co-workers, as well as from employees that were directly involved, can be critical. It helps if everyone will:

- Make mental or written notes about the accident before the investigation starts.
- Avoid talking to others before talking to the investigator, since this may confuse the facts.
- Answer all questions about the incident as accurately as possible.
- Take the investigation seriously--give it your best.

First Things First. The *first* thing to do when an accident happens is make sure the worker's injuries are treated. The next step is to carefully investigate the events surrounding the accident. The reason for investigations is not to place blame on anyone, but to learn what happened--so similar incidents can be prevented in the future. All employees play an important role in this.

Near Misses. Should *all* accidents be reported and investigated? Ideally, not only accidents, but also *near misses* should be reported. The study of near misses can help prevent more serious incidents, where someone is actually injured. Such investigations needn't always be extensive, but records of near misses often indicate trends or hazardous conditions that can be corrected.

Roles & Responsibilities. The actual investigation is generally carried out by personnel who have been trained for this. Nevertheless, all employees play an important role in the accident prevention process and in preventing future mishaps. Once employees understand why it's important for them to report all accidents and near misses, and to cooperate fully with investigations, management can benefit from their experience and input.

Always Be Alert. Be alert to potential causes of accidents -- before they happen. All unsafe acts or conditions should be reported to your supervisor immediately, whether or not someone has actually been hurt.

Users of this tailgate 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.