

Accident Investigation & Reporting

OHBA Safety Pages

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 Safety Page gives you some guidelines on how these investigations should proceed.

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 any information 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 the 801Form 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.

Note: The SAIF Report of Accident Form and the 801 Form are on the www.oregonhba.com web site



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Project Name: _____ Location: _____

Employer: _____ Supervisor: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Shift: _____

Number in crew: _____ Number attending: _____

Safety or Health issues discussed. Include recent accident investigations and hazards involving tools, equipment, the work environment, work practices and any Safety or Health recommendations:

Follow up on recommendations from last safety meeting:

Record of those attending:

Name: (please print)	Signature:	Company:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		

Supervisor's remarks: _____

Supervisor: _____
(Signature)