



COUNTY OF NORTHERN LIGHTS

POLICY

MAJOR INCIDENT INVESTIGATION & REPORTING- OBLIGATIONS FOR OHS

CREATED: 2/9/2025

REVISED:

TOTAL PAGES: 14

INTRODUCTION

It is essential that all incidents are thoroughly investigated, reported, and reviewed. These incidents provide valuable insights for auditing and trend analysis, helping us evaluate the effectiveness of the Safety Management System (SMS).

The purpose of this program is to establish consistent and effective methods for reporting, assessing, and investigating incidents and deviations from standard procedures. The primary objective is to prevent similar occurrences in the future. The first and most critical step in this process is to ensure that any injured individual(s) receive prompt and appropriate medical care. Employee health and immediate treatment are always the top priority.

When an incident occurs, it is crucial to investigate the root causes. The goal of incident investigations is to identify previously uncontrolled hazards that may have contributed to the incident and prevent them from continuing. The investigation also determines whether changes to training, personal protective equipment (PPE), or procedures are necessary to improve workplace safety. It is important to emphasize that incident investigations are conducted not to assign blame but to identify preventive measures that can be implemented.

Investigating incidents—from close calls to fatalities—is not only a legal requirement but also a critical tool for improving workplace safety. Investigators are tasked with collecting and analyzing data to identify the root causes of the incident. Once these causes are determined, corrective actions are developed and implemented to prevent similar incidents in the future.

One of the key challenges in conducting objective health, safety, or environmental investigations is understanding how those involved in the incident perceived their actions as rational based on their awareness of the situational factors.

For clarity, the following definitions apply:

- **Incident:** An undesired event that results in physical or psychological harm to a person or damage to property.
- **Close Call (Near Miss):** An undesired event that had the potential to cause harm to a person or damage to property but did not.

EMPLOYER OBLIGATIONS FOR REPORTING SERIOUS INCIDENTS TO ALBERTA OHS

Employers are required to notify Alberta Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) at 1-866-415-8690 as soon as possible in the following circumstances:

- **Workplace Fatality:** A worker has died due to a work-related injury or illness.
- **Serious Injury or Hospitalization:** A worker is, or is expected to be, admitted to a hospital (not limited to emergency room or urgent care treatment) due to a workplace injury, illness, or incident.
- **Serious Incident:** A person has been injured or become ill due to any of the following:
 - An unplanned or uncontrolled explosion, fire, or flood.
 - A crane, derrick or hoist collapse or upset.
 - A (full or partial) building or structural collapse or failure.

In cases where employers are uncertain whether an incident requires reporting to OHS, it is advised that they report the incident to ensure compliance.



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Incident Scene Preservation

Following a serious incident, illness, or injury as described above, the **scene of the incident** must not be disturbed unless specific conditions are met. This is a legal requirement to allow for proper investigation and to maintain the integrity of the evidence. The scene must remain untouched unless:

- **Authorization** is provided by an OHS officer or police officer.
- It is necessary to **attend to a person** who is ill, injured, or deceased.
- Actions are required to **prevent further injuries**, illnesses, or incidents.
- Measures are needed to **protect property** that is at risk due to the incident.

The term "incident scene" refers to the immediate area where the injury, illness, or incident occurred. Employers are prohibited from altering, moving, or removing any equipment, documents, or other related materials that may be critical for the investigation.

In situations where there is uncertainty about preserving the scene, employers should contact the OHS Contact Centre at 1-866-415-8690 for further guidance.

Investigation Reports

Under the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, the prime contractor at the worksite, or the employer if there is no prime contractor, is responsible for preparing and distributing a comprehensive investigation report following any incident involving injury, illness, or worker exposure. This report is critical for analyzing the circumstances of the incident and implementing corrective actions to prevent future occurrences.

The investigation report must include:

- **Details of the Incident:** A thorough description of the events leading up to the incident, the nature of the incident, and any contributing factors.
- **Corrective Actions:** Information on the corrective actions taken, or planned, to address the cause of the incident and prevent a recurrence. These actions should be practical, measurable, and aimed at mitigating risks.

To protect the privacy of individuals, the investigation report must not include any personal information such as the names or identities of workers, witnesses, or investigators. This ensures compliance with privacy laws and protects the confidentiality of all parties involved.

Report Distribution

When an incident occurs at a worksite, the distribution of the investigation report must follow specific guidelines to ensure transparency and compliance with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) regulations.

- **Health and Safety Committee or Representative:** If the worksite is required to have a health and safety committee (HSC) or a health and safety representative (HSR), the employer must provide them with a copy of the investigation report. This allows the committee or representative to review the findings and contribute to ongoing safety improvements.
- **Worksite Without a Health and Safety Committee or Representative:** In worksites where there is no HSC or HSR, the employer is responsible for making the investigation report available to all workers. This ensures that all workers are informed about the incident and the corrective actions taken to prevent future occurrences.
- **OHS Officer Requests:** Additionally, the employer must provide a copy of the investigation report to an OHS officer upon request. This ensures that OHS authorities can review the details of the incident and verify that appropriate corrective actions have been implemented to comply with safety regulations.



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OHS Officer Investigative and Enforcement Powers

Once an incident is reported to Alberta Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), OHS officers may conduct follow-up investigations involving individuals or organizations connected to the incident. OHS officers are granted extensive investigative powers to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. These powers enable them to thoroughly investigate the causes of incidents and ensure corrective actions are taken to prevent future occurrences.

Investigative Actions by OHS Officers

OHS officers may take the following actions during the investigation:

- **Visiting the Incident Scene:** Officers may visit the location where the injury, illness, or incident occurred to gather evidence and assess the site conditions.
- **Collecting Information:** Officers may request and collect any documents or electronic records that relate to the health and safety of workers. They can also interview individuals and take formal statements as needed.
- **Seizing or Sampling Materials:** Officers are authorized to seize or take samples of any substances, materials, products, tools, appliances, or equipment that were present or involved in the incident. These items may be used as evidence to help determine the cause of the incident.
- **Entering Premises:** Officers may enter any part of the worksite where the incident occurred, or where they believe relevant information is stored, to conduct their investigation.
- **Accessing Digital Information:** Officers can use the employer's information systems, such as data storage and retrieval devices, to examine or retrieve electronic information relevant to the investigation.
- **Requesting Documentation:** Officers can require any person with information related to the incident to provide necessary documentation for review.
- **Exercising Inspection Authority:** Officers may carry out any inspection activities permitted by law to ensure the worksite complies with OHS regulations.

OHS Enforcement Powers

OHS officers are empowered to enforce compliance with occupational health and safety laws through a variety of methods. These include:

- **Issuing Orders:** Officers may issue orders that require the employer to correct unsafe conditions or practices at the worksite.
- **Writing Tickets:** For minor violations, officers may issue tickets to individuals or organizations found to be in breach of health and safety requirements.
- **Administrative Penalties:** For more serious infractions, officers may impose administrative penalties, which could involve financial consequences for non-compliance.
- **Prosecution Referrals:** If there are significant violations, officers may refer the matter to the appropriate authorities for prosecution, which could result in legal penalties, including fines or other disciplinary actions.

Prohibited Actions: Interference with OHS Officers

It is a legal violation to obstruct or interfere with an OHS officer in the performance of their duties. Employers and their representatives must comply fully with the officer's requests and investigations. Prohibited actions include:

- **Denying Access:** Employers must not deny an OHS officer access to any part of the worksite.
- **Requiring Appointments:** Employers cannot require an OHS officer to make an appointment before completing their investigation or conducting their inspection.
- **Refusing Private Interviews:** Employers must not prevent an officer from interviewing a worker privately.
- **Withholding Documents or Information:** Employers are required to provide any documents or information requested by the officer during the investigation.

Failure to comply with these legal obligations can result in additional penalties and enforcement actions. Employers are expected to cooperate fully with OHS officers to ensure a thorough investigation and to uphold health and safety standards in the workplace.



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Potentially Serious Incident Reporting

A potentially serious incident refers to any event where a reasonable and informed person could determine that, under slightly different circumstances, there would have been a high likelihood of a serious injury occurring. Even if no injury resulted from the incident, it is critical to report such events because they indicate risks that need to be addressed to prevent future harm.

Employers are required to report potentially serious incidents online after completing the investigation at the following portal: <https://oirportal.labour.alberta.ca/pre-screening/>

Criteria for Reporting Potentially Serious Incidents

Section 33(5) of the OHS Act defines two key criteria that make an incident reportable as a potentially serious incident:

- **Likelihood of Serious Injury or Illness:** The incident had a high potential for causing serious injury or illness, even if this outcome was avoided by chance or other mitigating factors.
- **Corrective Action May Be Needed:** There is reasonable cause to believe that corrective actions are necessary to prevent a recurrence of the incident under similar circumstances.

Applicability

A potentially serious incident does not need to result in an actual injury or involve only workers. If someone who isn't a worker is involved, the incident is still considered potentially serious if:

- It occurred as a result of **work activities** at the site.
- It **could have affected a worker** if circumstances were different.

These incidents provide crucial information for improving workplace safety. Details collected from reports are used by OHS for educational and informational purposes. OHS may also follow up on the report if there is evidence of an ongoing or serious health and safety concern at the worksite.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Clear roles and responsibilities for reporting and investigating incidents or close calls must be established and communicated to all employees, contractors, and relevant personnel before any incident occurs. This ensures that the investigation process is carried out promptly and thoroughly, and that corrective actions are effectively implemented.

Managers and Supervisory Staff Responsibilities

Managers and supervisors hold the primary responsibility for overseeing the investigation process and ensuring that incidents and close calls are appropriately addressed. Their key responsibilities include:

- **Conducting Investigations:** Ensure that incident investigations are conducted thoroughly, following established procedures, and identifying both immediate and root causes.
- **Training:** Ensure that all affected workers, including contractors, are familiar with reporting and investigation procedures, and provide ongoing training on the importance of accurate and timely reporting.
- **Enforcing Procedures:** Enforce the use of all company policies, procedures, and safety protocols across the workforce and contractor teams to ensure compliance.
- **Accountability:** Managers and supervisors are responsible for the overall outcomes of the investigation and will be held accountable for:
 - Timely completion of the investigation process.
 - Accurate identification of relevant root causes.
 - Implementation of corrective actions to mitigate the risk of future incidents.
- **Monitoring and Follow-Up:** Ensure that corrective actions resulting from investigations are implemented and that their effectiveness is monitored over time to prevent recurrence.

Worker Responsibilities



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All workers, including contractors, play an essential role in incident reporting and investigation. Their responsibilities include:

- **Immediate Reporting:** Workers must report any incidents or unsafe conditions as soon as they occur. This includes reporting incidents that may not have resulted in injury but had the potential to cause harm or damage (close calls).
- **Incident Response:** Workers are required to take immediate corrective actions to secure the area and prevent further harm, where possible, following an incident.
- **Medical Attention:** If the incident results in an injury that requires medical treatment, such as a hospital or emergency room visit, the worker must notify management or supervisory staff before leaving the worksite. Workers must also return with any relevant documentation, such as WCB forms and any modified work restrictions prescribed by a medical professional.
- **Participation in Investigations:** Workers directly involved in or witness to an incident are required to participate in the investigation process. This may include providing detailed statements, assisting in identifying the events leading up to the incident, and offering insight into possible causes and preventive measures. Supervisors or Management, must conduct an investigation and report if the Incident is Harassment or Violence.

Contractor Responsibilities

Contractors working on company sites must adhere to the same incident reporting and investigation procedures as company employees. Their responsibilities include:

- **Incident Reporting:** Contractors must report any incidents or close calls immediately to their designated site supervisor and cooperate fully with the investigation process.
- **Participation in Investigations:** Contractors must participate in the investigation process, providing all necessary information to help identify causes and prevent future incidents.
- **Compliance with Corrective Actions:** Contractors are expected to comply with and implement any corrective actions resulting from an investigation to prevent future occurrences.

By clearly defining the roles and responsibilities for incident reporting and investigation, the company ensures a collaborative approach to maintaining a safe and compliant work environment for all employees and contractors.

PROCEDURE FOR POST-INCIDENT RESPONSE AND PREVENTION OF FURTHER LOSS

Once immediate rescue efforts have been completed and the safety of all personnel has been ensured, additional actions must be taken to prevent further loss or damage. These actions will only occur if the scene is confirmed to be safe for responders to proceed. The following steps outline the procedure:

Assess the Safety of the Scene:

- Before any additional personnel or resources are deployed, the scene must be evaluated to ensure there are no ongoing hazards, such as structural instability, hazardous materials exposure, or fire risks.
- If the scene is unsafe, proper measures must be taken to secure the area before proceeding with further response activities.

Summon Specialized Personnel:

- **Maintenance Personnel:** Call in maintenance staff to assess the integrity of buildings, equipment, and infrastructure. They will inspect damaged equipment or structures to determine if repairs or further protective measures are needed.
- **Engineering Personnel:** In cases of structural damage or potential collapse, engineering staff should evaluate whether structures need to be braced or reinforced to prevent further degradation. Their assessment is critical to ensure that additional damage or injury does not occur.



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- **Environmental and Hazardous Material Response:** If hazardous materials, chemicals, or explosives are involved, specialized personnel must be called in to safely neutralize and remove any dangerous substances. These experts will handle proper containment and cleanup to prevent any additional harm to workers or the environment.

Secure the Area:

- If necessary, establish barriers or restricted zones to prevent unauthorized personnel from entering areas that are deemed unsafe or hazardous. This will help prevent additional injuries or incidents.
- Ensure that all responders and personnel working in or near the area are using the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

Assess Special Equipment Needs:

- Determine if special tools, machinery, or response teams are needed to manage the situation effectively. This may include:
- Cranes or other heavy machinery for structural support.
- Hazardous material containment and cleanup equipment.
- Firefighting or other emergency response equipment.
- Temporary lighting or shelter if the incident occurred during adverse weather or low-light conditions.

Monitor for Changes:

- Continuously monitor the area for any further developments or changes in conditions that could exacerbate the situation, such as shifting debris, fire outbreaks, or equipment malfunctions.
- Conduct periodic safety assessments to ensure that any new risks are identified and managed promptly.

Coordinate with External Agencies:

- If external assistance is required, such as from fire departments, environmental agencies, or law enforcement, ensure that all communication and coordination is clear. Provide external agencies with necessary site information, including hazards present and ongoing safety concerns.

This procedure ensures that, after an initial incident, the site is managed to prevent further loss or damage while maintaining the safety of all personnel involved.

REPORTING & INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENTS & NON-CONFORMANCES

The company is committed to maintaining a safe and compliant work environment by ensuring that all incidents, close calls, and non-conformances are reported, thoroughly investigated, and corrective actions implemented. This process is essential for improving workplace safety, addressing hazards, and ensuring the effectiveness of our Safety Management System (SMS).

The following incidents must be reported and investigated:

- **Personal Injury Incidents:** Any event resulting in a personal injury, including first aid cases, medical aid cases, lost time incidents, or fatalities.
- **Close Calls:** Any near-miss or close call that had the potential to cause injury, damage, or loss.
- **Occupational Health Occurrences:** Incidents involving exposure to hazards such as noise, dust, chemicals, temperature extremes, vibrations, radiation, biological hazards (e.g., mold, bacteria), and physical agents that exceed safe thresholds (e.g., hearing, sight).
- **Property or Equipment Damage:** Any incident that causes significant damage to property or equipment exceeding \$1,000 in value.
- **Motor Vehicle Incidents (MVIs):** All motor vehicle accidents, including road departures or any other vehicular incidents involving company or contracted vehicles.



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- **Environmental Incidents:** Any environmental impact, such as spills or releases, that exceeds reporting thresholds or has the potential to cause harm.
- **Work Refusals:** Any refusal by an employee to perform work they deem unsafe, reported to their supervisor or management.
- **Acts of Violence or Harassment:** Any incidents involving violence or harassment within the company.
- **Non-Conformance:** Any instance of non-compliance with company-specific SMS protocols, OHS requirements, or other regulatory standards.
- **Hazards and Upset Conditions:** Any hazard or upset condition (e.g., equipment malfunctions, process deviations, interruptions in service or production) observed or encountered in the workplace.

Anonymity and Protection

To protect the privacy and well-being of employees, the company provides an anonymous reporting option for individuals who may feel uncomfortable reporting incidents openly or fear retaliation. All incident reports will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality, and the company ensures protection against any form of reprisal or negative consequences.

Reporting Process

- All incidents and close calls must be reported immediately to a direct supervisor, manager, or company owner. Immediate reporting allows timely intervention, investigation, and corrective actions.
- In cases of major incidents involving serious injury, damage, or hazardous exposure, the incident scene must be secured and left undisturbed to preserve evidence for the investigation.

Incident Investigation Process

The company follows a structured approach to incident investigations, which includes:

Preliminary Investigation: A preliminary investigation must be conducted within 48 hours of the incident to identify immediate hazards and ensure corrective actions are implemented to prevent further harm. During this phase, any unsafe conditions, actions, or procedures identified should be documented and addressed to allow work to resume safely.

Root Cause Analysis: The investigation must identify the underlying causes of the incident to understand why it occurred. This process should focus on assessing potential gaps in training, personal protective equipment (PPE), safety procedures, and compliance with OHS standards.

Documentation: All investigation findings must be documented in a detailed report that includes:

- A description of the incident.
- A list of all contributing factors.
- Root cause analysis.
- Recommended corrective actions.
- Evidence such as witness statements, photos, and any relevant records.

Corrective Action Implementation: Based on the investigation findings, the company will implement corrective actions to eliminate or mitigate the identified risks. These actions may include revising work procedures, improving training programs, reinforcing the use of PPE, or modifying equipment.

Involvement of Health and Safety Committee (HSC): Where an HSC is present, they must be involved in the investigation process for non-violence or harassment-related incidents. For incidents of violence or harassment, confidentiality is prioritized, and the HSC's involvement is limited unless the incident results in a fatality or hospitalization of a worker.

Corrective Action and Follow-up



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Interim Corrective Actions: If immediate corrective actions are necessary, they should be implemented promptly following the preliminary investigation. This includes any short-term measures to eliminate the immediate threat and ensure worker safety.

Final Corrective Actions: The final report and investigation must be completed within 30 days of the incident, and all permanent corrective actions must be implemented and tracked to prevent recurrence.

Legal and Compliance Requirements

Investigating incidents is not only a legal requirement but also a vital tool for improving workplace safety. The company must comply with applicable laws and regulations, including notifying regulatory authorities (such as Workplace Health and Safety or Workers' Compensation Board) when required by law.

In incidents where fatalities, serious injuries, or environmental damage occurs, regulatory authorities must be informed immediately, and a detailed investigation must follow within the stipulated timelines.

By thoroughly investigating all incidents, non-conformances, and close calls, the company aims to ensure that preventive measures are taken, reducing the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in the future. The continuous improvement of safety practices is a key objective, ensuring a safer working environment for all.

INCIDENT REPORTING MATRIX

The Incident Reporting Matrix outlines the appropriate notifications and reporting procedures for different types of incidents, specifying who within corporate management should be verbally notified, when the notification must occur, and which type of incident report must be completed. Reporting must align with site-specific requirements and adhere to established timelines to ensure prompt and thorough management of incidents.

External Incident Notification Matrix

TYPE OF INCIDENT	WHO TO NOTIFY VERBALLY	WHEN	INCIDENT REPORT FORM
Minor First Aid	Owner Client	24 hrs.	Yes
Injury Above Minor First Aid	911 / Site Medical Response / Owner Client	ASAP	Yes
Injury Reporting	Workers Compensation Board	Within 72 hrs.	Yes
Fire / Explosion	911 / Site Fire Response / Owner Client	ASAP	Yes
Reportable Spill	Site Environmental / Owner Client / AB Environment	Within 24 hrs.	Yes
Property/Vehicle Damage	Owner Client	Within 24 hrs.	Yes



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Internal Incident Notification Matrix

TYPE OF INCIDENT	WHO TO NOTIFY VERBALLY	WHEN	INCIDENT REPORT FORM
Close Call	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
Minor First Aid	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
Occupational Health Occurrences	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
Injury Above Minor First Aid	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
As Required Injury Reporting	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
Fire / Explosion	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
Reportable Spill	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes
Property/Vehicle Damage	Supervisor/Manager	ASAP	Yes

Key Definitions and Responsibilities:

- **Minor First Aid:** Incidents requiring basic medical attention that can be administered on-site.
- **Injury Above Minor First Aid:** Incidents requiring professional medical assistance or emergency response.
- **Fire / Explosion:** Any incident involving fire or explosion at the worksite that requires an immediate emergency response.
- **Reportable Spill:** Any spill involving hazardous substances that must be reported to the appropriate environmental authorities.
- **Close Call:** Incidents where no injury occurred but, under slightly different circumstances, could have resulted in an injury or damage.
- **Property/Vehicle Damage:** Any incident involving damage to company or client property, including vehicles.

All incidents, regardless of severity, must be reported ASAP to the appropriate internal and external contacts, ensuring that the necessary investigations and corrective actions can be initiated promptly. By adhering to this matrix, the company ensures compliance with health, safety, and environmental regulations and maintains clear communication channels in the event of an incident.

WCB INCIDENT REPORTING GUIDELINES

Employers have specific responsibilities under the Workers' Compensation (WCB) Act and the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act when a work-related injury or illness occurs. These responsibilities are designed to ensure the safety and well-being of injured workers, facilitate their return to work at the earliest opportunity, and comply with legal requirements.

WCB REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide First Aid: Employers must provide immediate first aid in accordance with OHS legislation. The goal is to offer appropriate care to the injured worker and prevent further harm.

Provide Transportation to Medical Treatment: If medical treatment is required, the employer must provide and cover the cost of transportation from the injury site to a medical facility. This could include an ambulance or other appropriate means of transport.

Keep a Record: Employers must maintain a confidential record of the injury or illness for a minimum of three years. The record should be provided to the worker and must include the following details:

- **Worker's Name:** The name of the injured or ill worker.
- **Date and Time of the Injury/Illness:** When the injury or illness occurred.
- **Date and Time of Reporting:** When the incident was reported to the employer.



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- **Description of the Injury/Illness:** A detailed description of the injury, where it occurred, and the cause.
- **First Aid Provided:** Any first aid administered at the site.
- **First Aid Provider:** The name and qualifications of the individual providing first aid.

Report to WCB-Alberta/OHS: Employers must report work-related injuries or illnesses to WCB-Alberta within 72 hours of being notified, if any of the following conditions are met:

- The injury results in lost time or necessitates modifying work (either temporarily or permanently) beyond the day of the incident.
- The injury results in death or permanent disability (e.g., amputation, hearing loss).
- The injury or illness involves a disabling or potentially disabling condition caused by occupational exposure or activity (e.g., poisoning, infection, respiratory disease, dermatitis).
- The injury requires medical treatment beyond first aid, including assessment by a physician, chiropractor, or physiotherapist.
- The injury results in medical aid expenses such as dental treatment, eyeglass repair/replacement, or prescription medications.

Exemptions From Reporting

Employers do not need to report minor injuries such as cuts, scrapes, scratches, minor burns, or splinters that only require first aid. However, serious injuries or fatalities must be reported immediately to the OHS Contact Centre at 1-866-415-8690.

INCIDENT REVIEW TEAM AND INCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS

All contributing factors and root causes of incidents must be systematically identified, documented, and thoroughly explained in a formal written incident investigation report. This report must provide a detailed account of the contributing factors or root causes identified during the investigation process, along with supporting evidence and corrective measures.

Every incident is subject to investigation, and the depth of each investigation will be proportional to the seriousness of the incident. A root cause analysis or a comparable method, as determined by management, shall be employed to accurately identify the underlying causes and contributing factors of the incident.

Evidence Collection and Preservation

Immediately following an incident, it is critical to identify, secure, and preserve all relevant evidence. This includes compiling a list of the people involved, the equipment and materials affected, and documenting environmental factors such as weather conditions, lighting, temperature, noise levels, and ventilation. Physical evidence, including the positions of equipment, parts, papers, and individuals, must be preserved and recorded. Evidence should be gathered using detailed notes, photographs, witness statements, flagging of relevant areas, and impoundment of relevant documents and equipment. All evidence must be appropriately dated, cataloged, and secured to prevent tampering or loss.

Witness Interviews and Statements

Witness interviews are a crucial component of the investigation process. Efforts must be made to locate all relevant witnesses, ensure their testimony is unbiased, and provide an appropriate setting for interviews. Trained interviewers should conduct the interviews to ensure consistency and accuracy in the information collected. If necessary, follow-up interviews should be scheduled to clarify or gather additional information. All interviews and witness statements must be properly documented, dated, and securely filed.



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Final Incident Investigation Report

The final incident investigation report must present the findings in a clear, organized format, detailing critical factors, supporting evidence, and the corrective actions to be implemented. The report must identify the parties responsible for each corrective action and establish timelines for the completion of these actions.

Corrective Actions and Accountability

After the incident investigation is completed, the company shall prepare a formal written report. This report must include:

- A detailed description of the incident.
- All evidence collected during the investigation.
- A comprehensive explanation of the contributing factors and root causes.
- Recommendations for corrective actions required to prevent future incidents.
- Assignment of responsibilities for implementing corrective actions.
- Timelines for the completion of corrective measures.

The final report should be shared with all relevant stakeholders, ensuring that corrective actions are implemented effectively. Regular follow-ups may be necessary to ensure that corrective measures have been successfully completed, thus reducing the likelihood of a recurrence of similar incidents.

INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS

All incident investigations must be thoroughly documented. Upon completion of an investigation, management is responsible for preparing a formal written report that includes a detailed description of the incident, the evidence collected during the investigation, an explanation of the causes of the incident, and any corrective actions recommended or required. The report should also contain supporting materials such as photographs, witness statements, and drawings as applicable.

The following steps should be taken when conducting an incident investigation:

- **Provide Emergency Assistance:** If necessary, administer emergency care according to the qualifications of available personnel.
- **Secure the Area:** As quickly as possible, secure the area where the incident occurred to maintain its condition as it was at the time of the incident. This will help preserve evidence for the investigation.
- **Notify Management:** Contact management according to the company's Incident Notification Matrix to ensure timely communication of the event.
- **Identify Witnesses:** Identify all potential witnesses to the incident and any individuals who may have relevant information.
- **Use Investigation Tools:** Utilize any necessary tools for documenting the incident, such as cameras, drawings, or video recordings.
- **Tag Involved Equipment:** Tag and secure any equipment involved in the incident as evidence to prevent its use until the investigation is complete.
- **Conduct Witness Interviews:** Interview all relevant parties, including the employee(s) directly involved. Obtain written, signed witness statements and submit them to management.
- **Prepare the Final Report:** Compile all findings into a comprehensive report and forward it to management for internal review.
- **Review with Workers:** The investigation report should be reviewed with all workers to ensure they are informed about the incident and any contributing factors.
- **Management Sign-Off:** Senior management must sign off on the investigation report after corrective actions have been identified.
- **Implement Immediate Corrective Actions:** Ensure that any necessary immediate corrective actions are promptly implemented to mitigate any ongoing risks.



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INCIDENT NOTIFICATION

It is essential that lessons learned from incident investigations are communicated effectively to all workers to enhance safety awareness and prevent the recurrence of similar incidents. This process includes the dissemination of findings and the implementation of any necessary changes to workplace processes or procedures.

Sharing Investigation Findings

- **Regular Safety Meetings:** The results of the investigation, including any identified root causes and corrective actions, should be discussed in regular safety meetings. This ensures that all workers are informed about the incident, understand the contributing factors, and are aware of the preventive measures being taken.
- **Health and Safety Committee:** If a health and safety committee (HSC) exists at the worksite, members should take an active role in sharing the investigation findings with their peers. The HSC can serve as a bridge between management and workers, facilitating discussions on the lessons learned and any changes to procedures.

Workplace Process or Procedure Changes

- **Implementation of Changes:** If the investigation highlights the need for changes to workplace processes, procedures, or equipment, these changes must be implemented as soon as possible to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.
- **Worker Involvement:** Workers should be engaged in the discussion of new safety procedures or process changes to ensure their understanding and compliance. Supervisors and safety personnel should monitor the adoption of these new procedures to ensure proper implementation.

Posting of Investigation Reports

- **Bulletin Boards:** It is recommended that investigation reports be posted on employee bulletin boards in common areas to ensure easy access for all workers. This ensures that even those who may not have attended safety meetings are still informed of the incident and the actions taken to prevent future occurrences.
- **Ongoing Review in Safety Meetings:** The investigation report and lessons learned should be continuously reviewed in safety meetings until all workers have been fully briefed on the incident, its causes, and the corrective actions implemented. This approach reinforces the importance of the investigation findings and encourages ongoing vigilance in the workplace.

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Corrective actions are critical measures taken to prevent the recurrence of incidents and improve workplace safety. These actions, both immediate and long-term, are identified during the incident investigation process and are implemented to address the root causes of the incident.

Inclusion in the Investigation Report

The written incident investigation report must clearly document:

- **Immediate Corrective Actions:** Actions taken immediately to address the situation and mitigate any further risk.
- **Long-Term Corrective Actions:** Steps required to prevent the incident from recurring in the future. These actions should be aimed at addressing the root cause and ensuring lasting improvements in safety protocols.

Assignment and Accountability

- **Responsibility Assignment:** Specific individuals will be assigned responsibility for implementing the identified corrective actions. Each corrective action must be tracked to ensure it is properly executed.
- **Supervisory Accountability:** Supervisors are accountable for ensuring that assigned corrective actions are completed. They must oversee the timely execution and effectiveness of these measures.



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Tracking and Closure

- **Action Tracking:** Corrective actions are tracked to closure by the designated Safety Officer to ensure that all required measures are followed through in a timely manner.
- **Site-Specific Posting:** Corrective actions are posted at each site to keep all workers informed of the safety improvements being implemented. This transparency promotes accountability and encourages worker involvement in the safety improvement process.

Integration into SMS

- **SMS Revisions:** Corrective actions are used as a basis for revisions to the Safety Management System (SMS). By incorporating these actions into formal safety procedures, the company ensures that improvements are institutionalized and become part of standard operating practices.

TRAINING

All key employees involved in the incident investigation or review team must be qualified and competent to perform their duties effectively. To ensure competency, management is responsible for providing the necessary training in investigation techniques before assigning any investigation responsibilities. This training ensures that team members can thoroughly investigate incidents, identify root causes, and recommend corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

Training Requirements

- **Qualified and Competent Team Members:** Members of the incident investigation team shall be trained to ensure they possess the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct effective investigations. Only individuals who have received appropriate training may be assigned investigation or response duties.
- **Training Frequency:** Training frequency will be determined based on the individual's area of responsibility but must occur at least once every two years to ensure knowledge remains current and aligned with best practices.

Core Training Elements

Training for incident investigation team members must cover the following critical areas:

- **Awareness:** Understanding the importance of incident investigation and the role of each team member in preventing recurrence.
- **First Responder Responsibilities:** Immediate steps to take when responding to an incident, including securing the scene and ensuring the safety of all personnel.
- **The Initial Investigation at the Incident Scene:** Proper procedures for securing the incident scene, gathering initial facts, and preserving evidence to ensure a thorough investigation.
- **Managing the Incident Investigation:** Techniques for organizing and managing the investigation process, including coordination of team efforts and resources.
- **Collecting Data:** Methods for gathering accurate and relevant information, including interviews, documentation review, and evidence collection.
- **Analyzing Data:** Techniques for analyzing collected data to identify root causes, contributing factors, and patterns that led to the incident.
- **Developing Conclusions and Judgments of Need:** Drawing conclusions from the investigation and identifying the key actions needed to prevent a recurrence.
- **Reporting the Results:** Proper methods for documenting the investigation findings and presenting them in a clear, organized report. This includes recommendations for corrective actions and any lessons learned.

Training must occur before any team member is assigned investigation responsibilities, and refresher training must be conducted at least once every three years, or more frequently, if necessary, based on the individual's specific role.



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This ensures all investigation team members remain well-equipped to conduct thorough and effective incident investigations.



Chief Elected Official



Chief Administrative Officer