



Southern California Trade Contractors Association

Bi-annual Safety Presentation 2018

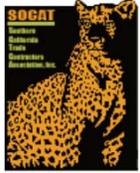
Accident Investigation Basics

*Source: Department of
Labor
And Industries and OSHA*



What You Will Learn

- What is an incident? What is an accident?
- Why should you investigate both?
- How should you investigate?
- What results are you looking for?
- What are you required to do for a OSHA investigation?



What is an Incident?

Unplanned and unwanted event which disrupts the work process and has the potential of resulting in injury, harm, or damage to persons or property.

An incident disrupts the work process, does not result in injury or damage, but should be looked as a “wake up call”. It can be thought of as the first of a series of events which could lead to a situation in which harm or damage occurs. Employers should investigate an incident to determine the root cause and use the information to stop process and behaviors that could just as easily have resulted in an accident.

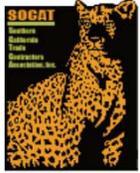
Example of an incident: A 50 lb carton falls off the top shelf of a 12' high rack and lands near a worker. This event is unplanned, unwanted, and has the potential for injury.



What is an Incident?

Unplanned, unwanted, but controllable event which disrupts the work process and causes injury to people.

Most everyone would agree that an accident is unplanned and unwanted. The idea that an accident is controllable might be a new concept. An accident stops the normal course of events and causes property damage, or personal injury, minor or serious and occasionally results in a fatality.



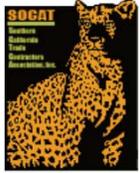
What is an Accident?

- An accident is not “just one of those things”.
- Accidents are predictable and preventable events.

Most workplace injuries and illness are not due to “accidents”. The term accident is defined as an unexpected or unintentional event, that it was “just bad luck”.

More often than not it is a predictable or foreseeable “eventuality”. By “accidents” we mean events where employees are killed, maimed, injured, or become ill from exposure toxic chemicals or microorganisms (TB, Hepatitis, HIV, etc.)

A systematic plan and follow through of investigating incidents or mishaps and altering behaviors can help stop future accidents.

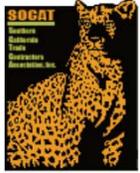


“The Tip of the Iceberg”

- Accidents or injuries are the tip of the iceberg of hazards
- Investigate incidents since they are potential “accidents in progress”

Don't just investigate accidents. Incidents should also be reported and investigated. They were in a sense, “aborted accidents”. Criteria for investigating an incident: What is reasonably the worst outcome, equipment damage, or injury to the worker? What might the severity of the worst outcome have been? If it would have resulted in significant property loss or a serious injury, then the incident should be investigated with same thoroughness as an actual accident investigation.

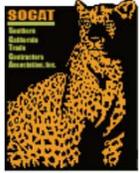
The 50 pound carton falls off the top shelf of a 12' high rack and lands near a worker. The outcome of an investigation might include correction of sloppy storage at several locations in the warehouse, unstable/heavy items will be stored at floor level if possible refresher training of stockers on proper methods is done, supervisors begins doing daily checkups.



What is an “Accident”?

By dictionary definition: “an unforeseen event”, “chance..”, “unexpected happening..”, formerly “Act of God”

- From experience and analysis: they are “caused occurrences”
 - Predictable – the logical outcome of hazards
 - Preventable and avoidable – hazards do not have to exist. They are caused by things people do –or fail to do



Why Investigate?

- Prevent future incidents (leading to accidents)
- Identify and eliminate hazards
- Expose deficiencies in process and/or equipment
- You lose money when regular work shops
- Maintain worker morale
- The rule requires you to investigate serious accidents



How to Investigate

- **Develop a plan:**

The next 6 slides will outline each component you need for effective Accident Investigation.

Then we will look into each component in more detail.

The time to develop your company's Accident Investigation Plan is before you have an incident or an accident.

The who, when, where, what and how should be developed before the incident. Accident Investigation Training, investigation tools and your policies and procedures should be developed before the incident or accident.

One size will not fit all. Your company's motor vehicle investigation reports will differ from your warehouse investigations, as will your off-site investigations.



How to Investigate

- **Assemble an investigation kit**
- **Investigate all incidents and accidents immediately**
- **Collect facts**

It is important to begin your investigation immediately. Evidence disappears, the 50lb carton of material was cleaned up and memory fades....the employee was not encouraged to report the near-miss incident and forgot about the whole thing.

When investigating incidents or accidents be thorough in your capture of all available facts. You might discover that many other items were also improperly stored and that when employees were questioned there had been several other “near misses”



How to Investigate

- **Interview witnesses**

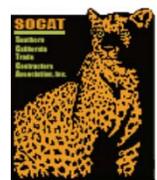
Interview witnesses and victims in a timely manner. LISTEN Don't blame, don't point out poor judgement, be sympathetic....LISTEN. If you know for a fact that someone broke a rule it is not important to point that out to them at this time. Verify with them the training they have received and ask them if they know what happened to cause the accident. Again, it doesn't do anyone any good at this juncture to be told "it was your fault" or "you knew better".

As an investigator, you will often come to the conclusion that someone engaged in an unsafe act. It is important to determine why they engaged in an unsafe act as well as verify that they did or did not know better.



How to Investigate

- **Write a report**
- **The report should include:**
 - An accurate narrative of “what happened”
 - Clear description of unsafe ACT or CONDITION
 - Recommended immediate corrective action
 - Recommended long-term corrective action
 - Recommended follow up to assure fix is in place
 - Recommended review to assure correction is effective



Tips for Developing a Plan

- **Develop your action plan ahead of time**
- **Your plan might include:**
 - Who to notify in the workplace?
 - How to notify outside agencies?
 - Who will conduct the internal investigation?

Preplanning will help you address situations timely, reducing the chance for evidence to be lost and witnesses to forget. All procedures, forms, notifications, etc. need to be listed out as step-by-step procedures. You might wish develop a flow chart to quickly show the major components of your program

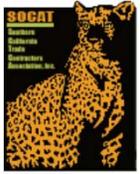


Develop a Plan Tips (continued)

- What level of training is needed?
- Who receives report?
- Who decides what corrections will be taken and when?
- Who writes reports and performs follow ups?

Some expansion questions on the above points are:

- Who will be trained to investigate?
- Who is responsible for the finished report and what is the time frame?
- Who receives copies of the report?
- Who determines which of the recommendations will be implemented?
- Who is responsible for implementing for recommendations?
- Who goes back and assures that fixes are in place
- Who assures that fixes are effective?



What Should Be in the “Investigation Kit”

- Camera Equipment
- Tape recorder
- Tape measure
- High visibility tape
- Scissors
- Scotch tape
- Sample containers with labels
- Personal protective equipment
- First aid kit
- Gloves
- Large envelopes
- Report forms
- Graph paper



Investigate All Incidents/Accidents

- Conduct and document an investigation that answers:
 - Who was present?
 - What activities were occurring?
 - What happened?
 - Where and what time?
 - Why did it happen?

Root causes should be determined. Example: An employee gets cut. What is the cause? It is not just the saw or knife or the sharp nail. Was it a broken tool and no one reported it? Did someone ignore a hazard because of lack of training, or a policy that discourages reporting? What other examples of root causes? Enforcement failure, defective PPE, horseplay, no recognition plan, inadequate labeling.



Investigate All Incidents/Accidents

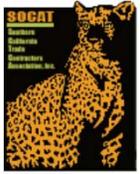
- **Also answer:**
 - Is this a company or industry –recognized hazard?
 - Has the company taken previous action to control this hazard?
 - What are those actions?
 - Is this a training issue?

*Please review your current incident/accident investigations procedures to make sure your company is following these procedures to minimize losses



How Do You Investigate?

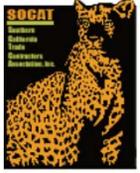
- Notify individuals according to your “plan”
- You must involve an employee representative, the immediate supervisor, and other people with knowledge
- Grab your “investigation kit”
- Approach the scene



Actions At the Accident Scene

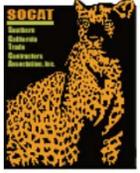
- Check for danger
- Help the injured
- Secure the scene
- Identify and separate witnesses
- Gather the facts

First, make sure you and others don't become victims! Always check for still-present dangerous situations. Then, help the injured as necessary. Secure the scene and initiate chains of custody for physical evidence. Identify witnesses and physical evidence. Separate witnesses from one another if physical evidence is stabilized, then begin as quickly possible with interviews. **REMEMBER, BE A GOOD LISTNER!**



Fact Finding

- Witnesses and physical evidence
- Employees/other witnesses
- Position of tools and equipment
- Equipment operation logs, charts, records
- Equipment identification numbers



Fact Finding

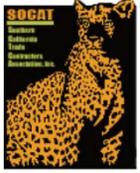
- Take notes on environmental conditions, air quality
- Take samples
- Note housekeeping and general working environment
- Note floor or surface condition
- Take many pictures
- Draw the scene

Some scenes are more delicate than others. If items of physical evidence are time sensitive address those first. If items of evidence are numerous then you may need additional assistance. Some scenes will return to normal very quickly. Are you prepared to be able to recreate the scene from your documentation? Consider creating a photo log. The log should describe the date, time, give a description of what is captured in the photo and directionality.



Interview Witnesses

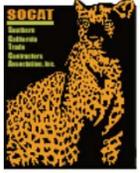
- Listen
- Don't blame, just get facts
- Talk to witnesses as equals
- Keep conversations informal



Interview Witnesses

- Choose a private place to talk
- Ask open ended questions
- Interview promptly after the incident
- Ask some questions you know the answers to

Your method and outcome of interview should include: who is to be interviewed first; who is credible; who can corroborate information you know is accurate; how to ascertain the truth bases on a limitation of numbers of witnesses. Be respectful, are you the best person to conduct the interview? If the issue is highly technical consider a specialist, this may be an internal resource or it may be an outside resource



Write the Report

- How and why did the accident happen?
 - A list of suspected causes and human actions
 - Use information gathered from sketches, photographs, physical evidence, witness statements

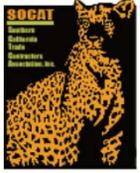
Remember that your report needs to be based on facts. All recommendations should be based on accurate documented findings of facts and all findings and recommendations should be from verifiable sources.



Write the Report

Answer the following in the report:

- When and where did the accident happen?
- What was the sequence of events?
- Who was involved?
- What injuries occurred or what equipment was damaged?
- How were the employees injured?

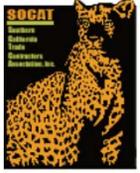


Report Conclusions

- What should happen to prevent future accidents?
- What resources are needed?
- Who is responsible for making the changes?
- Who will follow up and insure implementation of corrections?
- What will be future long-term procedures?

Conclusions must always be based upon facts found during your investigations.

If additional resources are needed during the implementation of recommendations then provide options. Having a comprehensive plan in place will allow for the success of your investigation.



When Accidents Occur, What is Required

- There are four specific requirements:
 - Report a death or hospitalization to OSHA
 - Do not move equipment
 - Assign people to assist in the investigation
 - For all serious injuries conduct preliminary investigation



Report a Death or Hospitalization

- Report the death, probable death, or the in-patient hospitalization of 2 or more employees within 8 hours to: OSHA
- Within 24 hours after the in-patient hospitalization you must report to OSHA
- The required information that must be provided to OSHA
 - Name of the work place
 - Location of the incident
 - Time and death of the incident
 - Number of fatalities or hospitalized employees
 - Contact person
 - Phone number
 - Brief description of the incident
 - Report by phone 888-321-OSHA or on-line www.osha.gov



Do Not Move Equipment

- **IF:** A death or probable death happens or two or more employees are admitted to the hospital
- **THEN:** You must not move any equipment until Labor and Industries says you can
- **UNLESS:** You must move the equipment to remove victims or prevent further injury



Report Conclusions

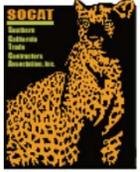
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Conduct a Preliminary Investigation

- Evaluate facts relating to cause of accident by following people:
 - Person assigned by employer
 - Immediate supervisor of injured employee
 - Witnesses
 - Employee representative
 - Any other person who has the experience and skills



What You Learned

- Incident vs. Accident
- What investigations do for you
- Mechanics of investigating
- The rules in reporting any accidents or deaths
 - Always remember that under OSHA Record Keeping regulation (29 CFR 1904), covered employers are required to prepare and maintain records of serious occupational injuries and illnesses, using the OSHA 300 Log.