Recordkeeping and Reporting Quiz



QUESTION

What is the most important reason to report any type of injury?

ANSWER

The most important reason is to ensure the situation or hazard is made safe for not only yourself but for others in the workplace.

WHY IS IT RIGHT

EXEMPTION

Many employers with more than 10 employees are required to keep a record of serious work-related injuries and illnesses. (Certain low-risk industries are exempted.)
Minor injuries requiring first aid only do not need to be recorded.
This information helps employers, workers and occupational health and safety authorities evaluate workplace safety, identify workplace hazards, and implement measures to reduce and eliminate risks and prevent future workplace injuries and illnesses.

MAINTAINING AND POSTING RECORDS

The records must be maintained at the worksite for at least five years. Each February through April, employers must post a summary of the injuries and illnesses recorded the previous year. Also, if requested, copies of the records must be provided to current and former employees, or their representatives.

SEVERE INJURY REPORTING

Employers must report workplace fatalities, critical injuries, occupational illnesses and other reportable incidents in accordance with applicable provincial occupational health and safety and workers’ compensation legislation.

BASIC RECORDING REQUIREMENT

Every employer is required to keep records of work-related fatalities, injuries and illnesses that meet one or more of the general recording criteria, including:

• Death,
• Days away from work,
• Restricted work,
• Transfer to another job,
• Medical treatment beyond first aid,
• Loss of consciousness, or
• A significant injury/illness diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional.

IMPORTANCE OF REPORTING ALL INJURIES SAFETY TALK

We are all trained to report any near misses, injuries, or incidents to a supervisor or safety representative. Often times however many of these incidents, especially first aid type injuries, are not reported. Injuries are not reported because of many different reasons, but it is important to understand why all of them need to be.

REASONS WHY INCIDENTS GO UNREPORTED

There are many reasons why incidents such as property damage, near misses, spills, and injuries go unreported. A major reason is often the individual's pride. Most people do not want to admit their mistakes to others, especially at work. They may also fear the outcome from sharing what occurred with a supervisor. This fear may come from being afraid of being disciplined, what others think, or the repercussions from the incident. Another reason a person may not want to report an incident is because of the paperwork or energy involved in doing so. There are many other reasons why an individual may not want to share what happened to them, but this should never be the case.

SETTING RECORDKEEPING POLICY

Without an effective policy, your accident reporting procedures might fail to meet requirements, and be much less effective in identifying trends or training needs.

The following elements are critical to an effective accident reporting policy:

Purpose. Stress not only legal compliance but also the value of reports in preventing future accidents.

Definition of "accident." Be specific so that those responsible for reporting know exactly what types of accidents must be reported. Encourage the reporting of "near misses" as well, since such incidents are often the precursor to more serious accidents and injuries.
Reporting procedures. Include a brief summary of the information that should be reported (who, what, when, where, how, why), where forms can be obtained, how soon the report must be completed, and other relevant requirements.

Drug testing. If your drug-testing policy requires tests after certain accidents, your accident forms and policies should be coordinated with your drug-testing policy.

Documentation. Attach copies of accident report forms to the policy statement and describe any special certification required.
Responsibilities. Stress the importance of the supervisor's role in reporting accidents, getting medical help for injured employees, filling out report forms, etc.
Confidentiality. Make sure your policy sets out confidentiality requirements and procedures for employee medical information. Keep accident reports separate from personnel files to protect confidential information. In order to foster employees' willingness to report minor injuries, accidents or near misses, it is very important

that confidentiality of witness reports be protected as well.
Workers' compensation. Accident reports are often required for workers' compensation insurance. These forms should also be completed when accidents are reported.

Potential litigation. Be sure to also cover the manner in which the report should be maintained, distributed, and written if there is a potential for litigation. You want to avoid a situation in which an accident report admits liability and is used in future litigation against you. Include only known facts, and avoid inserting opinion, hearsay or conjecture.

The Bottom Line

There is a lot more to recordkeeping and reporting of accidents than simply satisfying OSHA regulations. The reports serve to protect both the company and the employees when used as a tool for prevention and training. The information obtained is useful for follow-up training or the regular updating of safety procedures and policy.

WHY IS EVERYTHING ELSE WRONG

WHEN TO RECORD

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires most employers to maintain OSHA records for all "OSHA recordable" injuries and illnesses. Employers meeting the requirements for a small-employer exemption or who are engaged in what are known as a "partially exempt industry" may be exempt from maintaining these records. Employers who are not exempt must record if:
• An employee is involved.
• Are work-related.
• Are a new case, meaning that the employee has not previously experienced a recorded injury or illness of the same type that affects the same part of the body or that the employee previously experienced such an injury or illness, but completely recovered.
• Result in death, days away from work, restricted work or job transfer, medical treatment beyond first aid, or loss of consciousness.
• Are a significant work-related injury or illness that is diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional.
• Result from a needlestick injury or a cut from a sharp object that is contaminated with another person's blood or other potentially infectious material.
• Result in the medical removal of an employee under the medical surveillance requirements of an OSHA standard.
• Involve occupational hearing loss.
• Involve an occupational exposure to tuberculosis and subsequent development of the infection.
Organizations must maintain workplace injury, illness and incident records in accordance with applicable occupational health and safety, workers' compensation and employment legislation. Records must be maintained, retained and made available to authorized persons or regulatory authorities as required by applicable law.

APPLICABLE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION DEFINES REPORTABLE WORKPLACE INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

• Any work-related injury or illness requiring medical treatment beyond first aid;
• Any work-related injury or illness resulting in a loss of consciousness, days away from work, restricted work, or transfer to another job;
• Any work-related fatality; and
• Any work-related diagnosed case of cancer, chronic irreversible diseases, fractured

or cracked bones or teeth, and punctured eardrums.

There also are special recording criteria for work-related cases involving hearing loss, medical removal, needlesticks and sharps injuries, and tuberculosis.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO REPORT INJURIES

There are many reasons why you should report any type of injury, no matter the severity. The most important reason is to make sure the situation or hazard is made safe for not only yourself, but the others at the worksite. Another reason is to further share your experience or the lessons learned from the incident with others to prevent it from occurring in the future.
With injuries, even just minor ones, it is important to get them looked at by a supervisor or safety representative.

OTHER RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Some employers must keep records besides the injury and illness logs, incident reports, and annual summaries. Recordkeeping requirements for other OSHA standards include:

• Exposure measurements, medical surveillance, and training records for dozens of standards covering workplace exposures to hazardous and toxic substances, such as asbestos, hexavalent chromium, and lead;
• Air quality testing in underground construction;
• Confined space entry permits;
• Crane operator training;
• Fall protection plans and practices;
• Medical evaluation and respirator fit testing under the respiratory protection standard;
• Inspection, testing, and training performed in compliance with the standard for process safety management of highly hazardous chemicals;
• Medical surveillance and training required by the hazardous waste operations and emergency response (HAZWOPER) standard;
• A Hazard Communication (HAZCOM) program and safety data sheets for all hazardous chemicals used or stored at a facility;
• Exposure monitoring and audiometric testing records for occupational noise exposure;
• Inspection and maintenance records for fire suppression systems;
• Inspection and load-testing records for overhead and gantry cranes and crawler locomotive and truck cranes;
• Inspection and maintenance, operator training, and safety system certification records for mechanical power presses, as well as inspection and maintenance records for forging machines;
• Inspection, maintenance, testing, and training records for powered platforms; and
• Inventory records for explosives and blasting agents.

RECORDS YOU WILL NEED TO KEEP (CHECK LAWS GOVERNING HOW LONG EACH ITEM NEEDS TO BE SECURELY STORED):

• hazard reports
• injury reports
• incident reports
• formal assessment details
• consent forms

RECORDKEEPING AND REPORTING

Employers must maintain employee payroll, wage, hour and employment records in accordance with applicable employment standards, payroll, tax and privacy legislation. The following is a listing of the basic records that an employer must maintain:

• Employee’s full name and any employee identification information required under applicable payroll, tax and employment legislation.
• Address, including zip code.
• Birth date, if younger than 19.
• Sex and occupation.
• Time and day of week when employee’s workweek begins. Hours worked each day and total hours worked each workweek.
• Basis on which employee’s wages are paid.
• Regular hourly pay rate.
• Total daily or weekly straight-time earnings.
• Total overtime earnings for the workweek.
• All additions to or deductions from the employee’s wages.
• Total wages paid each pay period.
• Date of payment and the pay period covered by the payment.

Summary

All injuries need to be reported, no matter how small. Not only does it protect workers, but it also protects the company as a whole by possibly preventing a first aid injury developing into an OSHA recordable. You never know when something that seems minor in nature will develop into something more serious. There are also always lessons that can be learned, even from just minor injuries, to prevent others from occurring in the future.