

BuildSafe Safety Bulletin for August 2018

Report All Injuries

Importance of reporting All Injuries

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.

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. While many injuries, such as a small cut or an insect sting, may not seem like a big deal they can turn into one. A quick example: You are bit by some type of insect on a Friday afternoon at work, but decide not to tell anyone for various reasons. You leave work and are home for a few hours when you notice that the bite area is beginning to swell up. Along with the swelling, you notice that you have hives and are having trouble breathing. You realize it is a serious allergic reaction and need medical attention. You tell the doctor you were bit or stung at work and the treatment he gives you ends up being considered "medical attention". Because it happened at work and you needed medical attention beyond first aid it is now an OSHA recordable injury. In this situation there are a few problems since the injury was not reported to someone at work immediately.

1. There is no record or witness to it happening at work which could raise concern by the employer whether or not the injury occurred at work. This may end up in a drawn out dispute since there has been many people in the past who have faked or had injuries off the job, but stated it occurred at work in an attempt for it to be paid through worker's compensation.
2. If the injury was reported immediately someone may have been able to recognize that it may develop into an allergic reaction. There could have been options for first aid instead of medical treatment to treat the issue before it worsened which would have saved you a trip to the hospital and the company an OSHA recordable.

Summary

All injuries need to be reported, no matter how small. Not only does it protect you, 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.