

CRAFTSMAN'S CRIBSHEET

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Accident Incident Response: What to Do When an Accident or Near-Miss Incident Without Injury Occurs in Your Shop

An accident is an unplanned occurrence in a production setting where a person is injured. An incident without injury is what many people call a “near-miss.” Your employer should have an emergency plan to deal with accidents and injuries in your shop. The following list is a refresher in the event that you can’t find your employer’s plan and you encounter an accident involving a coworker:

1. Get assistance, preferably from a supervisor on duty. Many people are tempted to affect a rescue by themselves. This can lead to further injuries. Get assistance first. None of our shop job descriptions read “Hero.”

2. Stop the equipment and lock it out to prevent re-energization.

3. Provide first aid and/or call 911. Your employer or supervisor may have guidelines for calling 911. As a supervisor, I transported a truck driver with an amputated finger once in my personal vehicle, and he was coherent and not in shock. The emergency room was only a mile away. I had first-aid credentials. Today, I would call 911 and insist on no rings in my shop. The man’s ring caught on the rough lumber of his trailer when he jumped off. For the official word on first aid, download the pdf from OSHA at short.productionmachining.com/firstaid.

4. Assign someone to meet the emergency vehicle/responders. This saves time and assures they make their way safely through your plant to the downed employee.

5. Secure the scene. Supervisor should try to get a couple of overall photos for later fact-finding and investigation.

6. Supervisor or employer representative to accompany injured employee to medical facility. The injured employee will be the subject of the medical team, and the supervisor can assist in getting the admission handled and details shared with the providers.

7. Prepare initial injury report. You should know where the forms are located. We keep paper copies adjacent to the first aid kit. There are downloadable forms on the server. Do all your supervisors know where to find them?

8. Notify State and Federal OSHA in accordance to latest requirements. Under the revised rule, employers will be required to notify OSHA of work-related fatalities within eight hours, and work-related in-patient hospitalizations, amputations or losses of an eye within 24 hours. Previously, OSHA’s regulations required an employer to report only work-related fatalities and in-patient hospitalizations of three or more employees. Reporting single hospitalizations, amputations or loss of an eye was not required under the previous rule.

9. Gather facts and convene your incident analysis team. Fact-finding includes getting statements from the injured worker, if possible, or other employees that may have witnessed the occurrence, taking photos and looking for missing machine guards. It also includes checking the status of the lockout, blocking (if maintenance was underway) and the condition of the floors and walkways.

10. Prepare preliminary written investigation report to management. Management will need to approve process changes, guarding improvements and other actions to be taken to prevent recurrence. In addition, they will need all the facts to deal with Workman’s Compensation Bureau officials. If there are other locations with similar processes or equipment, they will also publish lessons learned to prevent this from happening at other shops.

11. Implement necessary corrective remedial actions and training. Don’t forget to redo a hazard analysis to take into account changes in guarding or practices implemented, then modify work instructions and retrain all employees on the new procedure.

12. Welcome employee back to work. As soon as the employee is released to work, have a plan to welcome them back to work. Show that you are glad they are back in the lineup.

13. Follow up to ensure that corrective actions are in place and functioning as expected. You can expect representatives from state or federal OSHA, as well as the insurance company and Workman’s Comp representatives to follow up. Have a plan to demonstrate to them that the root causes were identified, hazards eliminated or guarded, and that all employees have been retrained.