



A MINI TRAINING SESSION FOR INJURY PREVENTION

# Quick Take on Safety

## Reporting Injuries and Near Misses

### TRAINING OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

- Overview: Discusses the importance of timely reporting of injuries, near misses and other hazards.
- Purpose: Inform employees about the negative consequences of not reporting so as to improve communication and reduce injuries.
- Preparation:
- Read and become familiar with this Quick Take. *Change as needed to reflect procedures and personnel in your department.*
  - Review and become familiar with hazard and injury reporting procedures within your organization.
- Handouts:
- Quick Review of Safety: Reporting Injuries and Near Misses
  - Quick Review of Safety: Workplace Injury Hotline
- Notes: Many people avoid reporting injuries due to concerns about having to take unpaid time off for recovery or cover the costs associated with medical care should workers' compensation be denied. Much of this is outside of the control of supervisors or management; however, being familiar with sick leave and paid time off options and including them briefly in the training can help alert employees to options about which they may not have been aware. Consider other obstacles to communication within the organization and make plans to address them prior to giving this training.

### When to Report Injuries and Near Misses

Your safety and health are important to us; we don't want you to get hurt. However, there may be times when you do get hurt or almost hurt on the job and wonder if you should say something.

A common reaction is to just shake it off or wait to see if the injury gets worse. It is important that near misses and accidents be reported as soon as possible. A bee sting, a tick bite or even a cut could seem minor and not worth reporting, but there is always a chance the injury could become more severe in the future. For example, a tick bite could lead to Lyme disease.

[*Instructor Prompt:* This would be a good time to talk about your injury reporting process. Hand out the employee Quick Review of Safety: Workplace Injury Hotline and/or watch the video "How to Use the Workplace Injury Hotline" ([MCIT.org/workers-compensation-coverage/injury-hotline/](http://MCIT.org/workers-compensation-coverage/injury-hotline/)) and discuss.]

### Reporting Near Misses

Besides reporting actual injuries, it is just as important to report near misses. A near miss is a "phew, that was close" situation. Pulling something off a storage shelf and having other materials almost fall on you is a near miss. So is slipping in the parking lot but only wounding your pride.

A near miss could also be considered any hazardous situation that could cause injury, such as a deep crack in the sidewalk or a slippery spot on the floor. If you can't safely remedy the situation yourself, please make sure to say something, as the conditions will still be there and may cause injury to someone else.

### Reasons to Make a Timely Report

I have already touched on some of the reasons it is important to report injuries and near misses right away. Other reasons are:

- It helps us better identify and correct hazards.
- We may need to investigate and take action quickly to not ensure that nobody else gets hurt and to make sure we can gather evidence before conditions change.
- The sooner an injury is reported to our workers' compensation provider, MCIT, the better the case can be managed and the injured employee—maybe you—can get prompt treatment. This leads to quicker and better recoveries.
- It's the law. MNOSHA (Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration) and workers' compensation laws require reporting injuries on a timely basis. We may be subject to citation if we don't report in a given amount of time.

### Why People Don't Report

There are many reasons people may choose not to report rather than alerting others about safety hazards and behaviors. Let's talk about some of the most common reasons and why they should be avoided:

- **Reason No. 1: Fear of being seen as troublesome.** Some people are concerned about being labeled as a complainer or of "rocking the boat." Also, some people will avoid reporting minor injuries for similar reasons or from the thought that a certain amount of pain is part of the job.
  - Turning a blind eye to hazards or unsafe actions does not help anyone and only increases the likelihood of accidents or injuries in the future. There are no repercussions for reporting unsafe conditions or behaviors. Our primary goal is to gather facts to prevent future occurrences, rather than finding fault.
  - You are *not* expected to ignore injuries and push through the pain. Small injuries can grow into larger ones. Minor injuries are much easier to deal with if handled early. Be sure to report, so we can address those injuries or hazards early.

[*Instructor Note:* Hazards need not be reported in person. E-mail, forms or other options can make the process more anonymous. See what options work well for your organization.]
- **Reason No. 2: Unsure how to report or reporting is difficult.** Some people may want to report but do not know how or may find the system too complicated or time consuming to use.
  - Reporting can be as simple as just letting [me/your supervisor] know about an injury or possible hazard. [*Instructor Prompt:* Other reporting procedures should be discussed here.]
- **Reason No. 3: Not recognizing the hazard.** Sometimes hazards are not reported because employees do not recognize them.
  - If you are unsure about whether something is a hazard, it is always best to assume it is. Trust your gut. You are encouraged to ask if something is hazardous or could be done more safely. You may identify a new hazard or safer way to complete a task. This helps us all.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why is timely reporting important?
- What are some other barriers to reporting injuries, near misses and hazards?
- How can we help improve the reporting process?
- What are potential near miss situations you might encounter in your work area?



# Reporting Injuries and Near Misses

## Session Planning and Review

Trainer

Training  
Date

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Department(s)

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### TRAINING GOALS

- Inform employees about the positive impact of timely injury, near miss and hazard reporting.
- Inform employees about the reasons for timely reporting.
- Give some of the most common excuses for not reporting.
- Explain the hazard or injury reporting process to employees.

### RESOURCES

- Workplace Injury Hotline awareness and use materials (posters, video, user guide, Quick Take, magnet): [MCIT.org/workers-compensation-coverage/injury-hotline/](http://MCIT.org/workers-compensation-coverage/injury-hotline/)
- Work Wisely safety culture campaign materials: [MCIT.org/work-wisely/](http://MCIT.org/work-wisely/).

### REVIEW

Did the training meet the stated goals?

How can the training be improved?

### TRAINER COMMENTS

