

PROCEDURE	ACCIDENT & INJURY INVESTIGATION		
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PREAMBLE

Employers have a legal obligation to report accidents, illness and incidents and investigate the facts and circumstances surrounding the event. Investigative findings will identify the contributing factors and root causes to make recommendations for corrective action and prevent reoccurrence. Reporting procedures are required to fulfill legal and regulatory requirements under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* and *Workers Safety & Insurance Board*.

Employers and supervisors have a legal obligation to take reasonable precautions in the protection of the workers and investigate and report accidents and incidents to specific parties. Investigations of accidents and in particular, those causing critical injuries or fatalities, must be investigated by the designated Certified worker member of the Joint Health & Safety Committee. Their investigative findings must be reported to the Ministry of Labour, the JHSC, and Union(s) while lost time injuries must also be reported by the employer to the WSIB in a timely fashion.

PURPOSE

Accident investigation procedures must be in writing to ensure a consistent response to all accidents.

This procedure will outline the necessary steps to:

- perform an effective accident/incident investigation;
- determine the obvious and root cause of an accident or incident and establish remedial action;
- fulfill reporting requirements through formal investigation reports to meet acceptable standards

ACRONYMS

JHSC -Joint Health & Safety Committee
 MOE -Ministry of Environment
 MOL -Ministry of Labour
 OSHA -Occupational Health & Safety Act (or the Act)
 WSIB -Workers Safety & Insurance Board

GLOSSARY OF TERMS/DEFINITIONS

Accident: An accident can be defined as an unplanned, undesirable event that could result in injury, loss of life, interruption in regular workplace activities and/or property damage.

Certified Member: OHS Act Sec 1(1) A certified member means a committee member who is certified by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Employer: OHS Act Sec 1 (1) An employer means a person who employs one or more workers or contracts for the services of one or more workers and includes a contractor or subcontractor who performs work or supplies services and a contractor or subcontractor who undertakes with an owner, constructor, contractor or subcontractor to perform work or supply services.

First Aid: Treatment of minor injuries such as those which can be applied by a worker qualified to handle a workplace first aid station, such as: cleaning minor cuts, scrapes or scratches, treating minor burns, applying bandages, cold compresses/ice bags, applying a splint or the changing of a bandage as follow-up that doesn't result in further treatment. Treatment by the employer's physicians or nurses that doesn't require their professional skills is also considered first aid.

Incident: An incident is an unusual occurrence in the workplace, or while conducting workplace business, that could have resulted in harm or injury to people or property, including near misses.

Medical Care: (or Health Care) Serious injury treatment that requires the specialized skills of medical professional such as a: nurse, physician, dentist, or chiropractor.

Supervisor: OHS Act Sec 1(1) A supervisor means a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker.

NB. Includes Faculty and Support Staff who supervise or have authority over a worker which may include student employees, part-time or contract staff members.

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Worker: OHS Act Sec 1(1) A worker means a person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation

NB. Includes students employed by college staff to perform college work or provide college services.

Critical Injuries:

In Ontario, OHS Regulation 834/90 defines “critical injury” as an injury of a serious nature that:

- places life in jeopardy;
- produces unconsciousness;
- results in substantial loss of blood;
- involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or a toe;
- involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand, or foot but not a finger or a toe;
- consists of burns to a major portion of the body; or
- causes the loss of sight in an eye.

ACCIDENT & INCIDENT INVESTIGATION OBJECTIVES

The objectives of effective accident and incident investigations are to:

- identify the obvious and root or basic causes and determine how these resulted in injury or property damage;
- define ways to prevent similar accidents or incidents from occurring, by determining and documenting immediate action and corrective action with follow-up procedures to ensure that effective controls have been implemented;
- utilize the investigation findings to develop and/or revise policies and procedures and/or training to prevent reoccurrence;
- ensure compliance with legislation as defined by OSHA, WSIB, MOL, MOE etc.
- provide awareness and direction to all workplace parties;
- determine financial implications and process compensation claims.

THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS SHOULD BE PERFORMED FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Critical Injuries (as defined by Reg 834/90) See above (OSHA Sec 51/Critical; Sec 52/Non-critical)
- Disability, Lost time Injury
- Non-disability; professional medical treatment required
- Non-disability; first aid treatment required
- Acute/chronic occupational illness
- Non-injury property damage incidents
- Near accident with potential for serious injury or loss
- Fire and/or explosion
- Chemical spills and/or releases

INVESTIGATION BASIC OVERVIEW:

1. Secure and manage the accident scene.
2. Notify the appropriate people.
3. Investigate accident causes.
4. Prepare report.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

The goal of the investigation process is to determine the immediate and basic causes of an accident, not to find fault or blame, but to determine and put controls in place to prevent reoccurrence. The approach to all

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investigations must ensure that no one else is endangered and that all reporting requirements are met. It is imperative that the investigation begins as soon as possible so that the accident scene conditions remain intact and undisturbed and to identify witnesses.

1.0 SECURE AND MANAGE THE ACCIDENT SCENE

The provision of first aid or medical attention is the first priority for all injured parties.

- 1.1 The accident scene should be secured immediately. Depending on the circumstances, the first one at the scene should ensure this takes place. The employer or supervisor notified is responsible for maintaining the accident scene to preserve evidence and to ensure that there is no further risk of injury or damage. Perishable evidence required for medical response must also be preserved appropriately.
- 1.2 Critical injury or fatality scenes must not be disturbed without permission from an MOL Inspector. No one may disturb, alter, or remove anything at/or connected to the scene or occurrence. Exceptions may apply where lives are endangered, or where the interruption of essential services or further damage to equipment/property is possible. Security support should be considered.

2.0 NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE

- 2.1 Staff member's supervisor, a JHSC representative*
- 2.2 If the accident is serious (critical or fatal), senior management must be notified immediately. It is their responsibility to contact the immediate family of the injured worker(s) and to report the accident to Human Resources who will contact the MOL, and the investigation team. This team should consist of the injured employee's immediate supervisor and/or the supervisor of the accident scene location, the *Certified JHSC member and the Union.

3.0 PHYSICAL INVESTIGATION

3.1 INITIAL DOCUMENTATION

1. Identify witnesses to interview
2. Using the Accident Investigation Kit, record the accident scene and evidence:
 - a) photograph several angles of the scene and close-up details of equipment/material or property damage
 - b) prepare drawings of the scene to clarify written reports and provide assistance when interviewing the witness(s) and the injured party(s)
 - c) note the locations (and viewing angles) of all witnesses, equipment, and materials
 - d) include measurements of objects and locations of witness(s)

3.2 INTERVIEWS

Interviewing the witness(s) is one of the most challenging tasks in performing an accident investigation due to the emotional and traumatic effect it may have on everyone and that's why it is important to perform the interviews as soon as possible. Get preliminary statements from all witnesses.

Interviews should be done individually and preferable at the scene for an accurate recount of positions and events. It may be preferable, to set up a specific time and location for privacy and reduced distraction.

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INTERVIEW ETIQUETTE & OUTLINE

- If a tape recorder is to be used, ask for permission to tape record the interview
- Be courteous, patient and polite
- Put the witness at ease and emphasize that the purpose of the interview, which is to gather facts to determine the cause(s) and important information for the prevention of future accidents.
- Confirm your understanding of what they said.
- Make short notes, record exact wording, and clarify locations on the floor plans
- Allow the witness(s) to recall the entire event
- Record the witness's personal information; full name, address, phone number, occupation and years of experience

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In general, ask open-ended questions that cannot be answered by 'yes' or 'no'. The actual questions that you will ask the witness will vary with each accident/incident, but the following list includes standard questions that should be asked. (Interview forms are included in the Accident Investigation Kit.)

Sequence of Events

- Where were you at the time of the accident?
- What were you doing at the time of the accident?
- What did you see and hear?
- What was (were) the injured person(s) doing at this time?
- In your opinion, what caused the accident? (Note hearsay as such)
- How might similar accidents be prevented in the future?
- Were there any other witnesses?

4.0 ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTING

4.1 ACCIDENT ANALYSIS - CAUSATION/SOURCE – *Cause of Injury vs. Cause of Accident*

Analyzing the accident involves an organized method of solving a problem by breaking it down into its underlying/root causes. The purpose of the analysis is to find all of the contributing factors involving: people, equipment, materials, environment and processes.. Each of these factors must be carefully check against the facts to see if they could have played a role in the accident. This process will also determine how to prevent recurrence and what controls need to be set in place. (See Appendix C; Accident Causation Model.)

The significance of all events should be compiled with the information in a factual manner to represent the complete picture of what happened. When the facts are grouped into the five categories, the contributing factors can then be confirmed, and the sequence of events can be reconstructed. Conclusions must be based on fact, supported by evidence. Charts and diagrams, along with photographs should be used to develop the sequence of events leading up to the accident. The details should be recorded by working backwards from the time of the accident.

4.2 REPORT PROCEDURES

The objective of the report is to describe the accident or illness, identify its causes and consequences, and recommend corrective action. Formal documentation of the accident investigation must identify the causes and especially the root/basic causes and make corrective recommendations to prevent recurrence. This documentation is particularly more important where

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a critical injury or fatality occurs as the employer is required by law to submit a report to the MOL and JHSC.

Accidents causing fatalities or critical injuries: (Sec 51(1) of Reg. 851/90)

The employer is required to immediately contact the MOL, the JHSC*, union and WSIB by phone, fax or any other direct means. The Accident Investigation Report must be submitted to a Director of the MOL within 48 hours of the occurrence, by Human Resources.

Accidents involving explosions, or fire causing disabling but not critical injuries: (Sec 52(1) of Reg. 851/90)

The employer is required to submit an Accident Investigation Report within 48 hours of the occurrence, in addition to the JHSC, respective union and a MOL Director if requested.

Occupational illnesses: (Sec 52(2) of Reg. 851/90)

Upon receipt by or on behalf of an employee that an employee has an occupational illness or that a claim in this respect has been filed with WSIB, the employer is required to submit an Accident Investigation Report within 48 hours. The report shall also be forwarded to the JHSC and respective union.

1. **Accident/Injury Report Form** - found in all Accident Investigation Kits, First Aid Kits, the Health & Wellness Centre, Security and all main offices. This form should be completed for all accidents/injuries that require more than First Aid and one copy should be attached to the Accident Investigation Report. Subsequent copies should be distributed as outlined on the bottom of the form.
2. **Accident Investigation Report** – (see Appendix A) found in all Accident Investigation Kits and Human Resources. This report should include:
 - a description of the accident
 - the consequences
 - the immediate and root causes
 - recommendation for corrective action(s)

This report, along with all other recorded evidence (witness statements, drawings, photographs etc.) must be submitted within 48 hours of the accident to Human Resources, and subsequent copies of this report and Notice of Recommendation to the JHSC and the respective Union.
3. **Notice of Recommendation Form** (See Appendix B) found in all Accident Investigation Kits (See Appendix C) and included in all JHSC members' inspection procedures. Attach this form to the Accident Investigation Form, which will be forwarded to all necessary parties. (see Accident Investigation Form, #2)

Upon confirmation of the contributing factors and root causes of an accident or incident, this form must be completed to:

a) identify all hazards and substandard conditions or equipment and to

b) identify all recommendations for corrective action to prevent recurrence, which may include:

- repair/replacement of equipment/material,
- the elimination/replacement of hazardous materials
- the introduction of PPE and respective training
- the development/revision of operating procedures

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-the development/revision of training

c) for every corrective action, identify a recommended implementation date and by whom. A written response date within 21 days must be clarified on this form and the respective JHSC member must follow-up on the written response and its' contents. The contents of this form must be discussed at the following JHSC meeting to review the recommendations, follow-up on the corrective action, control measures put in place, their effectiveness and outstanding concerns.

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5.0 APPENDIX A – Accident Investigation Report

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORT					
Date of Investigation: / /					
IDENTIFYING INFORMATION					
1.CAMPUS LOCATION:			2.DEPARTMENT: 2b.ACCIDENT LOCATION:		
3.DATE OF INCIDENT:		4.TIME:		5.DATE OF REPORT:	
OCCUPATIONAL INJURY OR ILLNESS					
6.INJURED NAME:			7.OCCUPATION:		
8.PART OF BODY:			9.DAYS LOST:		
10.NATURE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS:					
11.OBJECT/EQUIPMENT/SUBSTANCE INFLECTING HARM:					
12.TASK BEING PERFORMED:			13.TIME ON TASK:		
PROPERTY DAMAGE					
14.PROPERTY DAMAGE:			15.NATURE OF DAMAGE:		
16.COST: Estimated: Actual:			17.OBJECT/EQUIPMENT/SUBSTANCE INFLECTING DAMAGES:		
18.NATURE OF INCIDENT:					
19.OBJECT/EQUIPMENT/SUBSTANCE INFLECTING HARM:					
20.PERSON WITH MOST CONTROL OF #20:					
RISK					
EVALUATION OF LOSS POTENTIAL IF NOT CORRECTED:					
21.LOSS SEVERITY POTENTIAL:			22.PROBABILITY OF REOCCURRENCE:		
<input type="checkbox"/> MAJOR	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS	<input type="checkbox"/> MINOR	<input type="checkbox"/> FREQUENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCASIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> SELDOM
DESCRIPTION					
23.DESCRIBE HOW THE EVENT OCCURRED:					

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CAUSE ANALYSIS

24.IMMEDIATE CAUSES:

What are the obvious causes of this event? What actions, inaction, circumstances or conditions contributed to this event? (Eg. safety regulations, environmental factors, housekeeping, temperature, time of day, horseplay etc.)

25.BASIC OR PRIMARY CAUSES:

Explain the reasons for the presence of the IMMEDIATE CAUSES listed above. (Eg. work station, and equipment design, inadequate policies, supervision, training, or specific personal or job factors etc.)

ACTION PLAN

26. REMEDIAL ACTIONS:

What has and/or should be done to prevent a similar incident? (Eg. establish new procedure or policy, perform task analysis, improve work station design, improve preventative maintenance program, repair/replace equipment and materials, implement effective training procedures, other safeguards etc.)

27.SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR:

28.DATE: / /

29.SIGNATURE OF REVIEWER:

30.DATE: / /

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5.0 APPENDIX B – Notice of Recommendation



**JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF RECOMMENDATION**

Date: ____/____/____

To: _____

of:

(Senior Management)

(Campus Location)

Preamble:

Recommendation(s):

Signed: _____

Worker Co-Chair

Management Co-Chair

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5.0 APPENDIX C – Accident Causation Model

The following model illustrates the five categories of accident causes. Each category should be examined for possible causes. The immediate 'cause' of an accident may already be apparent, but an analysis of each of the factors could identify several contributing factors that could have caused the accident.

PEOPLE (*Consider the processes and actions of all who work or visit the area, and the physical and mental wellness of those involved. People involved may include management, workers, students, contractors and visitors*)

- What was the status of their health?
- Are they adequately trained?
- Can they physically handle the work involved?
- Are/were they under stress or tired?

ENVIRONMENT (*Changes to the "normal" physical environment are the most important aspect to consider.*)

- What are the conditions of all surfaces and are they in good condition? (floors, stairs)
- Is there adequate lighting for the tasks involved?
- Are there substandard conditions such as overcrowding, or poor housekeeping or storage?
- Is the temperature suitable for this environment?
- Are there toxic gases, fumes, or dusts present?
- Is there a noise problem/hazard?

MATERIAL(S) (*Determine possible causes resulting from the equipment and materials used.*)

- Are the materials used in this environment hazardous and properly labeled?
- What are the conditions of the materials in this space that could contribute to a hazardous condition? (ie. spilled materials, corroded, burned, exploded)
- Was PPE being properly used?
- Were any raw materials substandard in quality?
- Were materials properly stored?

EQUIPMENT (*Consider all tools and machinery that people work with or near.*)

- Was the equipment used in a safe, working condition? (ie. barriers or guards in place)
- Are warning signs, labels evident where required?
- Are maintenance schedules available?
- Have staff been adequately trained to inspect equipment and tools prior to use?
- Is PPE in good condition and available to all who require it?
- Is the placement/storage of equipment sufficient to prevent overcrowding or obstruction?

PROCESS(ES) OR TASKS (*Explore the actual work procedure being performed at the time of the accident and also consider the design, organization and the type of work produced including the people, material, equipment and the environment*)

- Was a safe work procedure being used? (Are there written safe operating instructions available?)
- Were there changes in conditions that contributed to unsafe procedures or practices?
- Were appropriate tools/materials being used and available?
- Were safety devices working properly? (Lock-out/Tag-out, emergency stops, deluge showers etc?)