Why Report Hazards Quickly



WHAT'S AT STAKE?

You are not an "island" in your workplace. In many ways you are your "brother's keeper". A safe workplace is in the interests of all workers.

WHAT'S THE DANGER?

If an accident takes place that you could have prevented, you won't be able to forget it. You'll remember every time you see the person or hear about the accident and injury.

Example

Suppose you have just walked by a work station and noticed a small puddle of oil on the floor. You will pass right by it, knowing that whoever spilled it would be back to clean it up. Besides, it's not your job to mop up spilled.

A co-worker happens to walk by a few minutes later carrying a carton. He slips on the oil and falls, his head hitting the concrete floor. He ends up with a severe bruise to the head as well as broken elbow. When you hear of the accident, what questions do you ask yourself?

1. Was it the other guy's fault for not cleaning up the spill in the first place?
2. Was it the injured worker's fault for not watching where he was going?
3. Was it your fault for not cleaning up the spill when you noticed it?

The answer to all three questions is yes! All three people had a hand in allowing the accident to happened.

Here's another example:

You are using a power tool, and you are surprised by a sight electrical shock. You know that means the tool should be repaired or replaced. You intend to remove it from service, but you get busy and move on to another job. A co-worker comes along, picks up to the power tool to use it, a receives a severe electrical shock with results in a heart attack. Because of slightly different circumstances, what was a minor incident for you becomes a major accident for someone else.

If you are the injured person, the feeling of loss or pain can be a constant reminder. Some workplace injuries became disabilities which last for a lifetime. They can affect our ability to work and to enjoy life.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Small safety hazards should be removed as soon as you notice them. More complicated hazards should be reported immediately to someone who can fix the problem. Also, the area or piece of equipment should be blocked off or tagged out.

Keep pro-active about preventing safety hazards. Simply reporting them to your manager or supervisor is not sufficient. You should remind them until the problem is dealt with. After all, it is your well-being at stake here.

Report all hazards immediately and follow up until they are taken care of. It may be necessary to continue with reminders about the hazard until something is done about it.

Also report all close calls. There are incidents that, if not for a bit of luck, could have been accidents. Studies show accidents were preceded by close calls which should have served as warnings of a hazardous situation. These close calls went unreported until they were brought to light by a serious accident.

FINAL WORD

An injury free healthy life is a good life!