Incident reporting toolbox talk

People and emergencies · about 5 minutes · read it out, or say it in your own words

SITE OR JOB	DATE	PRESENTER

Every serious injury on site is usually preceded by near misses that nobody mentioned. South African law requires workers to report injuries before the end of their shift and requires employers to record, investigate and in serious cases report incidents to the Department of Employment and Labour, so hiding an incident can break the law as well as leave the danger in place.

SAY THIS

Incident and near miss

An incident is anything that hurts someone, makes them ill or damages property, from a cut finger to a collapse. A near miss is when it nearly happened: the brick that fell and missed you, the trench side that slipped while nobody was inside, the truck that reversed past someone who stepped back just in time. Luck is the only difference between a near miss and an injury.

Why we want to hear about near misses

A near miss is a free lesson. Nobody got hurt, but it shows us exactly where the next injury will come from. If you tell us, we can fix it today. If you keep quiet, the next person may not be so lucky. On this site nobody will be punished for honestly reporting an incident or a near miss. The law also protects you: an employer may not punish a worker for doing what the safety law requires.

Your duty

If you see something unsafe, report it to your supervisor or health and safety rep as soon as you can. If you are hurt or involved in an incident that may affect your health, report it before the end of that shift, even if it seems small. A small cut can get infected, and a sore back can turn into a long injury. If it is not reported, it is hard to prove later that it happened at work.

What to tell us

Tell us what happened, where, when, who was involved and who saw it. Say what you think caused it. Stick to the facts and do not guess or blame. Photos of the scene help, but only once it is safe. We write it down in the site records the same day.

What happens next

Injuries that need treatment beyond first aid go into the incident record, and the investigation starts within seven days to find the cause and stop it happening again. Serious injuries, including any that will keep someone off work for 14 days or more, are reported to the Department of Employment and Labour on the official form within seven days. A death, a lost limb or someone knocked unconscious is also reported straight away by phone. If someone is killed, is likely to die or loses a limb or part of one, nothing at the scene may be moved without an inspector's permission, except to stop further danger, remove the injured or rescue people.

CHECK ON SITE TODAY

- [ ] Show the crew where incidents and near misses are written down on this site.
- [ ] Make sure everyone knows who to report to: the supervisor and the health and safety rep, by name.
- [ ] Check whether any near misses from the last week have been fixed, and tell the crew what was done.
- [ ] Check that the site has a way to take photos and record witnesses' names after an incident.
- [ ] Ask whether anyone has a small injury from this week that was never reported.

ASK THE CREW

? What near miss have you seen on a site that nobody reported? What could have happened?

? What stops people from reporting small injuries or near misses?

? If you saw a near miss on this site today, who would you tell and how?

? What should we change after the last incident or near miss on this site?

THE LAW

Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, section 14: General duties of employees at work; Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, section 24: Report to inspectors regarding certain incidents; General Administrative Regulations, 2003, regulation 8: Reporting of incidents and occupational diseases; General Administrative Regulations, 2003, regulation 9: Recording and investigation of incidents; Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993, section 26: Victimization forbidden. What each one says, in plain words, with links: sitediary.co.za/toolbox-talks/incident-reporting/

Toolbox talk attendance register

TOPIC

Reporting incidents and near misses

DATE

SITE OR JOB

TIME

PRESENTER

COMPANY

PRESENTER SIGNATURE

By signing, I confirm that I attended this toolbox talk, that it was given in a language I understand, and that I could ask questions.

NO.	NAME AND SURNAME	COMPANY OR TRADE	SIGNATURE
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Keep this register in the site health and safety file. Log the talk in today's site diary with a photo of this page.