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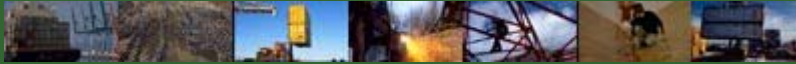
NEAR MISS - THE ONE THAT ALMOST HAPPENED

By SeaBright Insurance Loss Control

What is a "near miss?" Webster defines it as: "A result that is nearly, but not quite, successful." What does this mean to industry? It simply means that a serious accident *almost* occurred. Someone trips over a pallet, but doesn't fall. Two forklifts *almost* collide at a corner. A tool is dropped, but toes are missed…this time.

Statistics tell us that for every 300 near misses there is one serious injury. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), 6.1 million injuries occurred during 1995. If we multiply each injury by 300, the result is 1.8 billion *near misses* for 1995 alone.

So what does this tell us about accidents? Look at the figures. If you reduce the number of near misses, probability tells us you will then reduce the number of injuries that happen.

The Same Things That Cause Accidents Cause Near Misses:

- Unsafe acts, such as improper lifting; walking under an overhead load; cutting, grinding, or chipping without safety glasses; not using proper Personal Protective Equipment, etc.

- Unsafe conditions, such as poorly maintained equipment, oil or grease on floors, welding leads that have been laid in walkways, trash and boxes that have been left in hallways, etc.

- Hurrying and taking risks to get a project done faster, or to wrap up a job at quitting time.

Report Near Misses *Before* They Become Accidents:

- Once a near miss occurs, report it immediately to the nearest foreman or supervisor. The potential for such incidents exists all over the workplace, so *all* employees—not just supervisors-- must help identify them.

- If the near miss is a result of an unsafe condition, don't continue to work under that condition until the problem has been corrected and your supervisor gives the okay to proceed.

- If the incident is a result of unsafe acts, be certain that everyone involved has been alerted to their actions before they continue with the job.

Near Misses Are A Warning:

Letting a near miss go unreported provides an opportunity for a serious accident to occur. Correcting these actions or conditions will enhance the safety within your facility and provide a better working environment for everyone involved. Don't let yourself or co-workers become statistics--report near misses to your supervisor.

Prevent An Accident That's About To Happen!

SAFETY MEETING AGENDA

DEPARTMENT/JOB SITE: _____ **MEETING DATE:** _____

1. **Open Meeting & Present safety topic:** _____
2. Read minutes from previous meeting.
3. **Persons present:**

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

4. **Old Business –** Status of previous recommendations. Discuss pending old business if any.

5. **Accidents –** Discuss accidents and near misses that have occurred since the last meeting. Brief summary of accidents to date by number and type. Note any trends. Discuss corrective action taken, or needed. Concentrate on accident <u>causes</u> to make everyone more aware.

6. **Inspection Reports –** Report on findings and recommendations of any inspection reports made since last meeting.

7. **New Business –** Solicit employee suggestions. Discuss new procedures, changes to company safety policy, etc.

TIME MEETING STARTED:_____ TIME FINISHED: _____

MEETING CHAIRED BY: _____ TITLE:_____