



Safety Meeting Outline



SMO 11-1203

WHAT TO DO ABOUT “NEAR MISSES”?

By SeaBright Insurance Loss Control

Unlike television, real accidents can cause suffering so real and vivid that those persons involved or witnessing rarely forget the flow of blood, broken limbs, crushed bodies, or screams of pain. An accident without injury though is more like the bloodless, painless Hollywood version and therefore easy to forget. In 1931, H.W. Heinrich theorized that for every major accident there are 29 minor accidents and 300 near misses. Commonly referred to as the safety pyramid, this theory has been reevaluated several times including Conoco Phillips in 2003; where it was determined that for every fatality there are 30 lost day injuries, 300 recordable injuries, 3,000 near misses, and 300,000 unsafe acts. What this means to us on the job each day is that minor accidents or “near misses” precede serious accidents. In real life, there is a danger in brushing off accidents that do not hurt, harm, or damage. When these accidents happen, we should immediately run the red warning flag up the pole, because a non-injury accident, like a 104-degree fever, is a positive sign or symptom that something is wrong.

Sometimes we misdiagnose or completely fail to diagnose the symptoms of near misses, because luck or blind chance saved us from injury. We may tend to shrug it off and forget the near miss with a casual kind of ignorance. Hopefully everyone agrees it is not a good practice to rely on luck for effective accident prevention.

One of the best ways to eliminate the likelihood of future accidents is through effective root cause analysis and effective corrective action taken on near misses. A list of near misses can be almost endless: lack of proper machine guarding; improper maintenance or grounding of equipment; missing handrails or guardrails; poor housekeeping; improperly stored material; stubbing a toe on a protruding floor object; bumping up against a sharp object; or tripping over clutter and almost falling down. It is best to learn the real lessons from these near misses, since they are very likely to continue to occur repeatedly until an injury occurs.

How can you help? Report every near miss incident to your supervisor immediately in order to help prompt investigation and follow up actions that will reduce the potential for future near misses. Supervisors must partially rely upon you and your fellow workers to report these to them, as they just cannot see everything. If you see a hazard that you can safely correct, do so, but do not forget to tell your supervisor about the hazard and your corrective actions. Your safety committee could also be included on such communication.

If you are involved with or witness a near miss incident, remember that you or your co-worker may not get a second injury free chance to hoist that red warning flag up the pole. Do your part to help make the workplace safe for everyone involved.

Report those near misses to your supervisor immediately!

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 causes 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: _____