

Workplace Health and Safety Bulletin



Reporting and Investigating Injuries and Incidents

The information in this Safety Bulletin is intended to help employers report and investigate workplace injuries and incidents as required by the *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act*. This is the law that governs workplace health and safety in Alberta.

Injuries may also have to be reported to the Workers' Compensation Board – Alberta as outlined under the *Workers' Compensation Act*, which falls outside the scope of this Bulletin.

Certain workplace injuries and incidents must be reported and investigated.

What types of injuries and incidents have to be reported?

According to the *OHS Act*, injuries and incidents have to be reported to the Government of Alberta if they:

- (a) result in a death;
- (b) cause a worker to be admitted to hospital for more than two days;
- (c) involve an unplanned or uncontrolled explosion, fire or flood that causes or has the potential to cause a serious injury;
- (d) involve the collapse or upset of a crane, derrick or hoist; or
- (e) involve the collapse or failure of any component of a building or structure necessary for the structural integrity of the building or structure.
- (f)

If you are unsure about whether to report the injury or incident, report it.

Government of Alberta ■
Employment and Immigration

For dangerous occurrences at a mine or mine site, there are additional reporting requirements. Refer to section 544 of the Occupational Health and Safety Code for details:

 http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-LEG_ohsc_2009.pdf

Who's responsible for reporting the injury or incident?

It's the responsibility of the prime contractor, or if there is no prime contractor, then the contractor or employer responsible for the work site.

How soon after the injury or incident must it be reported?

Immediately, or as soon as possible given the circumstances.

If an injury is serious enough that it may cause a worker to stay in hospital for more than 2 days, report the injury right away. Do not wait for 2 days to confirm that it is a reportable injury.

To whom do I report the incident or injury?

Notify the Government of Alberta's Workplace Health and Safety Contact Centre by telephone at **1-866-415-8690** (780-415-8690 in the Edmonton local calling area). The Contact Centre is able to accept calls 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Reportable incidents and injuries must be reported to the Workplace Health and Safety Contact Centre.

What information will I be asked to provide?

Be prepared to provide the following information:

- (a) location of incident or injury;

- (b) site contact person's name, job title and phone number(s);
- (c) general details of what happened;
- (d) time and date the incident or injury occurred;
- (e) name of employer;
- (f) employer's relationship to the worksite (owner, prime contractor, contractor or supplier);
- (g) injured worker's name, date of birth, and job title (if applicable); and
- (h) name and location of hospital the worker was taken to (if applicable).

If the incident or injury happened at a well site, be prepared to provide the following additional information:

- (a) name of the rig manager;
- (b) well site supervisor's name and phone number;
- (c) name of the drilling company;
- (d) rig number; and
- (e) rig phone number(s).

If all the information regarding the incident or injury isn't immediately available, call in with the information that is available. Additional information can be provided when it becomes available.

What about reporting other types of incidents or injuries?

The *OHS Act* doesn't require the reporting of other types of incidents or injuries to government. If you're unsure about whether to report the incident or injury, call it in.

What happens after an incident or injury has been reported?

An occupational health and safety officer or investigator may be dispatched to the incident scene to gather additional information or conduct an investigation. An officer or investigator has the authority to:

- (a) visit the scene of the incident,
- (b) ask any questions to determine the causes and circumstances of the incident,
- (c) request information from anyone present at the time of an incident,
- (d) seize or take samples of any substance, material, product, tool, appliance or equipment that was present at, involved in, or related to the incident, and
- (e) stop all or some of the activities at the worksite.

A government investigator may visit the worksite and conduct a formal investigation.

I was told that I can't touch or move anything at the scene of a reportable incident or injury. Is this true?

Yes and no. You can't disturb the scene of a reportable incident or injury unless:

- (a) you have to attend to someone who has been injured or killed;
- (b) you have to take some action to prevent further injuries;
- (c) you have to protect property that is endangered as a result of the incident; or
- (d) you have been given permission to do so by an occupational health and safety officer or a peace officer.

When and by whom does an investigation have to be conducted?

When any reportable incident or injury happens, an investigation has to be conducted and an investigation report completed. An investigation also has to be conducted and an investigation report completed for other incidents that had the potential to cause a serious injury.

It's the responsibility of the prime contractor, or if there is no prime contractor, then the contractor or employer responsible for the work site to investigate and complete an investigation report. The prime contractor, contractor or employer is required to conduct their own independent investigation regardless of whether the government conducts an investigation.

Why bother with an investigation report?

Three reasons. First, it's the law. Second, finding out what happened can help prevent a similar injury or incident from happening. And third, finding out what happened can help prevent future property damage and production losses.

What do I do with the investigation report when it's completed?

The prime contractor's, contractor's or employer's investigation report is an internal company document and must be kept on file for a minimum of two years following the incident or injury. You're not required to send a copy to the government. However, the report has to be readily available for inspection by an occupational health and safety officer when requested.

Can an employer's investigation report or witness statements be used in court as evidence?

The investigation report and witness statements can't be used as evidence in a trial arising out of the incident or injury. Witness statements and reports can only be offered as evidence in a prosecution for perjury (giving false evidence or testimony) or for the giving of contradictory evidence.

What resources are available to assist me in completing an investigation?

The Government of Alberta, in consultation with its industry partners, has created an eLearning program that introduces employers and workers to the basic steps of investigating workplace incidents. The program can be accessed from the following web link:

 <http://employment.alberta.ca/whs/learning/Incident/Incident.htm>

Learning Resource



What does an investigation report look like?

A sample investigation report template that you can use is attached. If you already have an incident report form at your workplace, check that it includes at least the same type of relevant information.

The Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) – Alberta injury report form is not an investigation report. A separate investigation report must be completed.

Sample Incident Investigation Report



1) Type of incident (as described under section 18 of the *Occupational Health and Safety [OHS] Act*). Check all that apply.

Serious injury Serious incident Minor injury

Potential for serious injury (near miss)

Property damage Production loss Other: _____

Requires immediate reporting to the Government of Alberta, Workplace Health and Safety: Yes No 1-866-415-8690 WHS Contact Centre

Date/time reported (if applicable): _____

2) Basic information

Date and time of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Name of employer: _____

3) Injured workers (if any)

Name (worker #1): _____

Position/title: _____

Nature of injury: _____

Severity: Fatal More than 2 days in hospital Medical aid
 First aid Time lost from work Permanent disability

Name (worker #2): _____

Position/title: _____

Nature of injury: _____

Severity: Fatal More than 2 days in hospital Medical aid
 First aid Time lost from work Permanent disability

4) Witnesses (if any)

Were witness statements taken? Yes (attached to report) No

5) Circumstances/description of incident (Accurately describe, in chronological order, the relevant details of what happened immediately before, during, and after the incident. Attach a sketch, diagram or photographs if it will help with the description.) Sketch, diagram or photographs attached?

Yes No

Out of date

6) Causes (What were the **direct, indirect and root causes** of the incident? Figure 1 contains a cause analysis model that may help identify the causes.)



7) Corrective actions (What can be done to prevent a similar incident from occurring in the future? **Be sure to address the root causes.** List the actions that have already been taken (include the date) plus any additional actions that must be taken. Indicate who is responsible for seeing the actions completed and by when.)



8) Investigation team

Name (person #1): _____

Name (person #2): _____

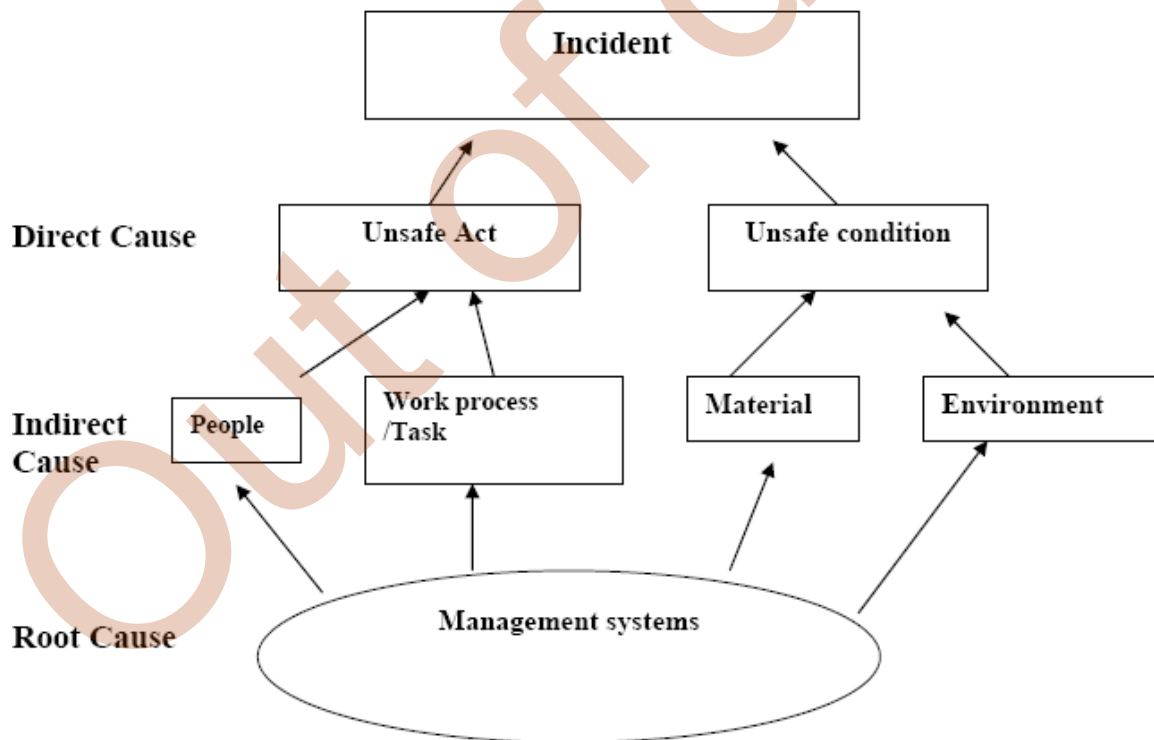
Name (person #3): _____

Date of investigation: _____

9) Follow-up

For the purpose of preventing future injuries, corrective actions must be completed in accordance with the *OHS Act*, Regulation and Code.

Figure 1: Sample Incident Cause Analysis Model



- To learn the basics of how to conduct an incident investigation, complete the Incident Investigation eLearning program, <http://employment.alberta.ca/whs/learning/Incident/Incident.htm>

Sketch, diagram or photos of incident scene



Sample Witness Statement Form



1) Basic information

Name of witness: _____
Position/title: _____
Name of employer: _____
Date of incident: _____
Date of statement: _____

2) Statement of observations and facts

Where were you when the incident occurred? (Draw a sketch on the next page if it is helpful to show where you were in comparison to the incident location.)

Describe what you saw, heard, smelled, felt or tasted **immediately before** the incident.

Describe what you saw, heard, smelled, felt or tasted **during** the incident.

Name of witness: _____

Statement of observations and facts, continued

Describe what you saw, heard, smelled, felt or tasted **immediately after** the incident.

Out of date


3) Sketch of incident scene (Draw a sketch if it is helpful to describe your observations or show where you were when the incident occurred.)


Out of date


4) Other comments about the incident?

Contact us:

Province-Wide Contact Centre

 Edmonton & surrounding area:
780-415-8690

 Throughout Alberta:
1-866-415-8690

 Deaf or hearing impaired

- In Edmonton: **780-427-9999**

or

- **1-800-232-7215** throughout Alberta

Web Site

 www.worksafely.org

Getting copies of OHS Act, Regulation & Code:

Queen's Printer

 www.qp.gov.ab.ca

 Edmonton 780-427-4952

Workplace Health and Safety

 <http://employment.alberta.ca/whs-ohs>

Call any Government of Alberta office toll-free
Dial 310-0000, then the area code and telephone number you want to reach

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