



TOOLBOX TALK #8

ACCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING

We talk about accidents in a very negative sense, as we should. It can be said that *nothing positive can come from an accident*, but this isn't necessarily the case. Don't misunderstand, the best accident is the one we prevent from happening in the first place, but we can also use accidents as an opportunity to learn something.

Before we go further on this topic, we need to understand one important aspect of reporting and investigating accidents. An accident doesn't have to cause an injury or property damage to be reported. In fact, the second best type of accident is the one that doesn't hurt anyone, and doesn't break anything, but gives us a wake-up call and a chance to prevent it from happening again, when we might not be as fortunate.

Your first obligation in the event of an accident is to report it. Never take it upon yourself to assume that it won't happen again or it's just a "freak" event that isn't important. Consider what might happen if a heavy object, such as a toolbox or hammer falls from one level to another, or to the ground. It might land harmlessly, or it might kill someone. Those are two extremes, but they are equally possible. Do we want to rely on 50-50 odds for our lives?

In the example given, we can address what caused the action, how to prevent it from happening again and also how we can modify our work site to prevent an serious injury if something similar but unforeseen were to happen. The same thing applies to any accident.

Report all mishaps. You won't be disciplined for reporting an accident. You will be disciplined if you don't report an accident and we find out. So take the initiative to help us in reporting all circumstances that led to the accident, as well as those that occurred during and immediately afterward. This will help us reach our goal of zero accidents.

Facilitator Notes: Use additional examples beyond the one above. Explain your company investigating procedures and what will take place once an accident is reported. Ask crew members for other examples of events that have happened that would fall into the category of "an accident." Tell them they have immunity for whatever they might share. Don't allow finger pointing or blame, and use this part of your meeting to build teamwork and cooperation into the safety goals of the company.

Additional Notes: _____

Crew Member Comments: _____

Presented By: _____ **Date/Time** _____

Attendees: _____

List additional attendees on back of sheet