

TOOLBOX TALKS

A Quality Service Contractors Publication for Members

September 2016

Anticipate Accidents

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One of the key words in accident prevention is “anticipate”. By anticipating what could happen, it’s possible to take safety steps to prevent an accident.

One of the steps we can take is to investigate all near miss accidents. We should always be on the lookout for unsafe practices and for accidents that do not result in injury.

Injury analyses prove that, in the average case, for every mishap resulting in an injury there are many other similar accidents that cause no injuries.

One study of the problem revealed that for every major injury there is an average of 329 other opportunities to eliminate the problem. This means that an employee, either because of his or her repeated unsafe action or repeated exposure to an unsafe mechanical condition, suffers on the average 300 no-injury accident and 29 minor injuries before a major lost-time injury occurs.

Other studies have indicated the opportunities to prevent a major injury can be as high as 600 incidents.

So we see that accidents do not have to result in injury. But, they are strong indications that something is wrong. If not remedied in time, they may very well result in major lost-time injury.

We know that accidents with personal injury, however minor they may be, occur frequently. They are expensive and add to the cost of production. Preventing these accidents is important.

When an accidental injury does occur, unsafe practices probably had previously been committed. There probably had also been previous narrow escapes. If you stumble, fall, and sustain an injury, chances are that this was not the first time that you stumbled and fell.

If you have a near miss while driving your car, do you take corrective action to prevent the same type of near miss from happening again? If not, you should. If you find yourself hitting your brakes in a panic stop, it may very well be that you are following the car ahead of you too closely. You should take action to prevent this from happening again.



Quality Service Contractors—An Enhanced Service Group of PHCC
180 S Washington St, Falls Church, VA 22046, USA
Phone: (800) 533-7694, Outside USA: (703) 237-8100, Fax: (703) 237-7442
Visit our website www.qsc-phcc.org

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How many times do we have to have a narrow miss before we get the message? If we really believe in safety and want to avoid personal injury, one near miss should be enough. Near misses or no-injury accidents, as well as injuries, must be investigated.



Report all accidents to your supervisor. If you don't, eventually the law of averages will catch up with you – changing that near miss into a serious injury.

So, let's try and anticipate what could happen by being aware of near misses and reporting them. In this way we can play a big part in preventing accidents.

Remember to practice safety. Don't learn it by accident.



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