

Accident Prevention

Accidents don't just happen, there is always a reason for them. You need to plan and control everything that is done in the workplace so that accidents don't occur. It is in your own interest: remember that one serious accident could cost you your business!

The first step to accident prevention is to carry out a risk assessment as described in this pack. You will then need to take action to control any risks that exist, for example, by adding a guard to a dangerous machine, by using a less hazardous chemical, by devising a safe system of work, by training staff, or by providing protective clothing.

Monitor and Investigate

It is essential that you are made aware of all accidents and "near misses" (that may have had serious consequences) so that you can identify hazards and take steps to prevent the incident from happening again.

It makes sense to make employees aware of whom accidents and near misses should be reported to and to ensure that this person records these incidents, investigates the circumstances and recommends appropriate action to stop such accidents occurring in the future. Accident books can be purchased from HMSO.

Reporting of Accidents, Diseases and Incidents

Employers must report any accidents that result in serious injury or a person being absent from work for more than 3 days to their Local Authority Environmental Health Department (non-industrial premises) or to the Department of Economic Development (industrial premises). Certain "work related" diseases and dangerous occurrences must also be reported.

Report immediately by telephone if:

An employee or visitor is involved in an accident which results in:

- Death
- A broken bone
- Loss of sight
- Loss of consciousness due to electric shock or lack of oxygen
- Electric shock requiring immediate medical attention
- Amputation
- Immediate hospitalisation for more than 24 hours

Also if the following incidents occur:

- Collapse of a wall
- Explosion of gas storage containers
- A dangerous occurrence such as a fire which stops work for more than 24 hours



Bird's research showed that for every accident resulting in a major injury, there were 29 resulting in minor injuries and 300 with no injuries.

Accidents may happen due to:

- Lack of safety management, planning and control
- Dangerous systems of work
- Dangerous plant and equipment
- Lack of training
- Poor attitude of employers & employees



Report in writing to:

- Confirm any telephone report
- Notify an accident which results in a member of staff being absent from work for more than 3 days
- Report diseases arising from specific types of work

Written reports should be made within 7 days of the accident on an NI2508 form, which are available from HMSO.

The legislation governing accident reporting is currently being reviewed to simplify the reporting procedure.

Safety Pays