Report it or Regret it



Safety Talk

WHAT'S AT STAKE
Everyone is a safety inspector; it's part of the job to watch out for any hazards.

WHAT'S THE DANGER
An unreported problem today might result in a fatality tomorrow. However, many hazards and injuries go unreported because workers don't know how to report them.

EXAMPLE
Here are examples of what you should report:

- *Incidents*. Sometimes you might hesitate to report an incident because it might ruin an accident-free rating, or lose a safety prize for the crew. The costs of not reporting can be very severe.
- *Close calls*. Again, there is reluctance to report close calls because of embarrassment, or fear of getting into trouble. However, you might save the next person from serious injury or death. In fact, you frequently learn more from close calls than from injury incidents.
- *Broken, damaged or malfunctioning equipment.* You may know that the cord on a tool is damaged, but the next person might not notice it and receive a fatal electric shock. You might know about the crack in that ladder rung, but your unsuspecting coworker may take a bad fall.
- *Spills.* The hazards of spills range from slips and falls to toxic chemical exposure, environmental damage, fires and explosions. Spills of certain materials are a threat to the whole community.
- *Fire hazards.* Everyone needs to watch out for fire hazards such as accumulations of combustible materials.
- *Defective safety equipment.* Damaged personal protective equipment, empty fire extinguishers and smoke detectors that don't work are just a few examples.
- *Unsafe conditions.* Someone has to speak up about job hazards so that something can be done about them. You have a right and an obligation to report problems such as contact with chemicals, hazardous atmospheres and unsafe equipment. This includes reporting the unsafe actions of others.
- *Injuries.* Minor injuries can turn into major ones. There have been cases of

small cuts and punctures that have become so badly infected that amputation was required.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

If you are authorized and qualified to do so, fix hazards yourself. Otherwise, report hazards so they can be corrected.

Report incidents, injuries or close calls, as well as anything which threatens your safety or that of your co-workers or the public.

Be sure to report to the first aid station or medical personnel for all injuries. Recurring minor injuries may be an indication of a bigger safety problem.

FINAL WORD

Learn the procedures for reporting problems in your workplace. Find out whom you should talk to when you have safety concerns.