City Of Round Rock

Accident Investigation Procedure

Revised 8/26/16

A primary tool used to identify and recognize the areas responsible for accidents is a thorough and properly completed accident investigation. It adequately identifies the cause(s) of the accident or near-miss occurrence.

All accidents, incidents, or near misses will be investigated no matter how minor. Minor accidents/incidents probably may not require a long in-depth investigation. However, at the least, the cause, trends and preventive measures need to be determined

I. Accident Investigation policy:

City policy states: All accidents, incidents, near misses, unusual occurrences, and environmental events shall be reported, recorded, and investigated.

II. Accident & Injury Reporting:

All accidents/incidents must be reported using the City of Round Rock Incident Report which is available on Employee Net. This completed form should be forwarded to Safety/Risk Management by the next business day. This will be used by safety staff to assist them in eliminating hazards and preventing similar accidents. The supervisor will fill out sections 5c thru 6 of the incident report. The accident investigation checklist may be used to help with the investigation. Your final findings may be put in a memorandum format.

III. Goal:

Ensure that the Department's accident/incident investigation system is being utilized and incident/accident circumstances are analyzed, evaluated and strategies are developed to prevent recurrence.

IV. Objective:

- Investigate any incidents/accidents, including near misses, medical injuries and illnesses.
- Identify causal factors (i.e., environment, behavior, practices) of loss.
- Analyze and evaluate causal factors noted in incident reports and recommend corrective action.
- Increase the knowledge, skill and ability of managers/supervisors in conducting thorough and quality accident investigations.
- Protect health & safety of all employees.
- Spot trends.
- Make changes to enhance operations and improve morale.
- Create awareness.

V. Procedures:

- Seek medical attention if needed.
- Shut down operations at the accident site.
- Secure the scene.
- Don't move any equipment.
- Make a diagram of the area.
- Take a minimum of three pictures of the area.
- Get witness statements from everyone involved.

- Put your initial findings on the incident report form.
- Once you have the final report a meeting can be held with the injured worker, the crew or the staff, and all supervisors/managers in the division or department, Department Director, Risk Manager and Safety Coordinator as needed. Go over your findings and recommendations based off your investigation. This should be done seven days after the accident. ***Note: this is not always necessary for minor accidents/incidents unless a trend is detected. At the least, conduct your investigation and share your findings and recommendations with the involved parties.***

VI. How to investigate an accident/incident:

1. Prompt Reaction and Response
   - A timely accident investigation is critical.
   - Once the injured parties have received medical attention, the investigation process should begin.
   - In the case of incidents without injuries, the investigation should begin as soon as the scene is secured.
2. Interviews
   - Fact-finding, not fault-finding
   - Obtain accurate information
   - Ask open-ended questions
3. Documentation and Records
   - Training Records
   - Safety Meeting Records
   - Maintenance Schedules
   - Previous Incident Reports
4. Additional Factors
   - Time of shift
   - Time constraints
   - Morale
   - Inadequate staffing
   - Changes in operations

VII. Accident Investigation steps:

Determine the following when conducting an accident investigation:

•what where events taking place before the accident;
•the system of work being carried out and the adequacy or suitability of that system for the job;
•the instructions and/or training given for the work;
•any variation from instructions or standard work practices and the reasons for such variation;
•the workplace conditions, such as lighting, floor surfaces, stair treads and handrails, warning signs, temperature and weather (if the incident occurred outside);
•the exact location of the incident with sufficient detail for the spot to be readily identified by others reading the report;
•the materials in use or being handled;
•the type of transport or equipment in use; and

•whether adequate supervision was provided.

Investigate the facts of the incident itself:
•the state of the system and the actions that occurred at the time;
•the people directly and indirectly involved;
•the tools, equipment, materials and fixtures directly connected; and
•the time the accident or incident occurred.
Investigate facts regarding what occurred immediately after the incident:
•any injuries or damage resulting directly from the accident;
•the people involved, including those rendering aid; and
•any problems in dealing with the injuries or damage, for example faulty extinguisher, isolation switch difficult to locate.
Essential factors and causes:
To conduct an effective accident/incident investigation, it is essential to look for the design, environment/work process, and behavior components, such as procedures and people, rather than trying to isolate a single cause.
Design components:
Poor systems design may result in exposure to hazards such as:
•unguarded dangerous parts of machinery;
•ineffective safety devices;
•provision of makeshift equipment and tools; and
•inadequate ventilation.
Environmental components/work processes:
How people function in the work environment depends on what they experience in it. Environmental factors may be both physical and social.
The way in which people do the job, the procedures they follow and the work process are important factors in incident investigation. Poor work process may lead to hazard exposure.
Behavioral components:
Examples include misuse of safeguards, improper use of tools and equipment, disregard of cautionary notices, failure to wear personal protective equipment, horseplay and poor standards of housekeeping. Poor practices may indicate that improved communication, further training or some other action, such as supervision, are necessary.
The common practice in industrial accident/incident investigation is to look for the cause of any accident/incident. Searching for a single cause of an accident/incident is restrictive. It focuses attention on only one, or at best a very few, of the essential factors while others, which may be more easily controlled, pass unnoticed.
Establish the facts:

1. Who-was involved
2. What-happen and equipment involved.
3. When-did it happen
4. Where-location of the accident.
5. Why-did it happen
6. How- did it happen and how can we prevent the accident from happening again

VIII. The following questions should be asked when conducting an accident investigation:

1. What was the employee doing at the time of the accident?

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DEPARTMENT/LOCATION: _____

INVESTIGATION DATE: _____

INVESITGATOR: _____

Obtain Basic Facts	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**
Condition and location of any equipment			
Any chemicals, substances or materials in use or present			
Layout of area and take photos			
Weather/indoor conditions			
Reasonable suspicion			
Establish Circumstances			
What was being done at the time and what happened			
Immediate causes			
Events leading up to the incident/accident			
How much experience on the job did the people involved have			
What were the established methods of carrying out the task adequate and followed			
Other			
Identify Preventive Measures			
What precautions were taken			
What training was actually given and when			
Check inspection, maintenance, service order, or training records			
Identify the Underlying Causes			
Lack of management or supervision oversight			
Lack of competence or			
Unsafe action occurred			
Inadequate training			
Shortcomings in original design of equipment or facilities			
Absence of a system for maintenance			

Were all policies and procedures being followed			
Other			
Determine Actions Needed to Prevent a Recurrence			
• Improve physical safeguards			
• Review policies, procedures or rules to see if they need to be updated, revised or eliminated			
• Improve work methods			
• Provide and use personal protective equipment			
• Make changes to training requirements			
• Review similar dangers elsewhere in the City's Departments			

Finding and recommendations:

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

2. Was the employee qualified to perform this operation?
3. Were proper procedures being followed?
4. Is the job or process new? Had the employee received training on this operation prior to the accident?
5. Were proper tools or equipment being used?
6. Was the proper supervision being provided?
7. What was the location of the accident?
8. What was the physical condition of the area when the accident occurred? For example, was the temperature of the area hot or cold; if outside, was it wet or muddy; was there debris in the area, was the area clear, etc.?
9. What were witnesses doing at the time of the accident?
10. What immediate or temporary action could have prevented the accident or minimized its effect?
11. What long-term or permanent action could have prevented the accident or minimized its effect?
12. Did any unsafe act contribute to the cause of the accident? If so, is any disciplinary action being recommended?
13. Had any disciplinary action been taken with this individual for unsafe acts in the past?

Once you have completed your investigation, prepare an investigation summary of findings and recommendations.

IX. Things to remember:

- Don't rush your investigation.
- Ask for assistance if you need it.
- The Risk Manager or Safety Coordinator may conduct their own inquiry or investigation into the accident or incident.

We want accident prevention not accident investigation!

Kevin Vaughn

Kevin Vaughn
Safety Coordinator