



MASON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #4

TITLE: INCIDENT INVESTIGATION

CHAPTER: 2000 NUMBER: 2008 APPROVED: _____
POLICY: 4-24-2012

APPROVED: Signature on file Bob Burbridge, Chief

1.1 REFERENCE

WAC 296-305-01503

2.0 POLICY

- 2.1 After the emergency actions following incidents that cause serious injuries that have immediate symptoms, a preliminary investigation of the cause of the incident will be conducted. The investigation will be conducted by a person designated by the Chief of the Department or the Department Safety Officer. The findings of the investigation will be documented for reference at any time following formal investigations.
- 2.1.2 Within eight hours after a fatality or probable fatality of any member from a work-related incident or the inpatient hospitalization of two or more members as a result of a work-related incident. A chief officer will orally report the fatality/multiple hospitalization by telephone or in person, to the Department of Labor and Industries
- 2.1.3 Equipment involved in an incident resulting in an immediate or probably fatality, will not be moved, until a representative of the consultation and compliance services division of the Department of Labor and Industries investigates the incident and releases such equipment, *except* where removal is essential to prevent further injury. When necessary to remove the victim, such equipment may be moved only to the extent of making possible such removal.
- 2.1.4 Upon arrival of the Department of Labor and Industries investigator. The Safety Officer or designee will assign as many personnel are as deemed necessary to assist the Department of Labor and Industries in conducting the investigation.
- 2.2 The Office Manager, Lisa Brengan will preserve all records, photographic materials, audio, video, recordings, or other documentation concerning an accident for a period of seven years.
- 2.3 Injury information will be shared with personnel.



MASON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #4

3.0 DEFINITIONS

NA

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 4.1** The duties of the Safety Officer include ensuring that all reportable incidents are investigated and reported.
- 4.2** The Safety Officer will be responsible to define corrective action. Time tables will be established as to when the corrective action will be completed. Every investigation should include an action plan.
- 4.3** AC Biehl will ensure that incident reporting procedures are initiated as necessary per Department policy.

5.0 GUIDELINES

- 5.1** The purpose of an investigation is to find the cause of an incident and prevent further occurrences, not to fix blame. An unbiased approach is necessary to obtain objective findings.
- 5.1.1** Interview the injured party and available witnesses, as soon as possible, to determine the following:
- a. Circumstances preceding and surrounding the incident - what were underlying and contributing causes, as well as immediate causes?
 - b. What physical hazards existed at the time of the incident, such as unprotected openings, or housekeeping, slippery surfaces, protruding nails, etc.?
 - c. Were defective tools, equipment or materials provided to workers - or were they improperly used?
 - d. Was personal protective equipment provided, was PPE defective, not used, or used improperly?
 - e. Did unsafe work practices contribute to the incident, including improper lifting or handling of materials?
 - f. What safety rules or safety training might have prevented the incident?
 - g. What unsafe conditions or unsafe actions were caused by a third party, i.e., another Department or a contractor?
- 5.1.2** If possible, interview injured individuals at the scene of the incident and "walk through" a re-enactment. Be careful not to repeat the act that caused the injury.



MASON COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT #4

- 5.1.3** Privacy is important during interviews. Interview witnesses one at a time. Talk with anyone who has knowledge of the incident, even if they did not actually witness the mishap. Express sincere appreciation to anyone who helped with the investigation.
- 5.1.4** Record names, addresses and statements of witnesses. Consider taking signed, dated statements if facts are unclear or an element of controversy exists.
- 5.1.5** If a third party or defective product contributed to the incident, save any evidence. It could be critical to the recovery of claim costs.
- 5.1.6** In major incidents, use sketches, diagrams and photos to document details graphically. Take measurements when appropriate.
- 5.1.7** Define corrective actions that should be taken to prevent re-occurrence.