

TOOLBOX TALK: NEAR MISS REPORTING

Job or site _____

Date _____

Led by _____

Open with this

Something nearly went wrong on this site in the last two weeks. I know it did, because something nearly goes wrong on every site. I want to hear one of them, and nobody is in trouble.

The talk

Be clear about the rules first. A near miss where nobody got hurt is not a recordable injury, so no federal rule makes anybody write it down. That is exactly why it disappears.

What is left is the General Duty Clause, which says the employer keeps the workplace free of recognized hazards. A hazard that nearly killed somebody on Tuesday is recognized. That is what a near miss actually does, it turns a hazard into a known one.

A near miss is a dropped tool that landed where nobody was standing. A trench that slumped overnight with nobody in it. A tag line that touched a line and nobody was holding it. If the only thing between that and an injury was luck or timing, it is a near miss.

The reason these go unreported is not laziness. It is that reporting one has historically meant a conversation about whose fault it was, and nobody volunteers for that. So the report has to cost nothing.

On this crew the rule is that reporting a near miss cannot be used against the person reporting it, including when the person reporting it caused it. If that ever stops being true, this stops working the same week.

What we want out of it is one sentence: what nearly happened, and what stopped it. Not a form, not an investigation, not a statement. One sentence to me, today, and then it is my job.

Point at these before anybody starts

- The spot where something nearly went wrong on this site recently.
- The tool or material stored overhead that has not fallen yet.
- The hole, edge or opening that somebody stepped around instead of fixing.
- The cord, hose or bracing that has been walked over all week.

- The task everybody has a workaround for, because the right way is awkward.
- Where you would tell me about one of these, and whether that is private enough.

The rules that apply

- A near miss is anything where only luck, timing or position stopped an injury.
- It gets reported the same day, in one sentence, to the foreman.
- Reporting one is never used against the person reporting it, including when they caused it.
- No name is required on the report for the hazard to get fixed.
- The fix gets said out loud at the next talk, so people can see reporting changed something.
- A near miss that repeats is treated as a failure of the fix, not of the person.

Ask the crew

- Name one thing this month where nobody got hurt but somebody could have.
- What stopped it, and would that same thing stop it again tomorrow?
- Is there anything you have not reported because you thought you would catch heat for it?

Close with this

Every serious injury on this site will have rehearsed itself first. Reporting it is how we get to see the rehearsal.

Attendance

Everybody who was present signs, including subcontractors and anybody visiting the site.

	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature
	Print name and signature

This talk is general safety information for a crew briefing, not legal advice and not a substitute for the training your employees are required to have. Standards are quoted for orientation only. Check the current text of the standard and your own state plan, which may be stricter than the federal rule.