

FIRE DEPARTMENT ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS

ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION:

The detection and possible elimination of any accident hazard through investigation is one of the most effective ways of improving the safety performance of any fire department organization.

If any accident sequence is set in motion, there is little anyone can do to control the degree of severity. The difference between a cut hand or a severed finger is usually a matter of chance. Whether a vehicle tire blowout results in a fatality or not is a matter of when and where it blows. For this reason, any accident that occurs and those even called "NEAR MISSES", should be investigated.

LOGIC IN ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS:

All accident investigations are based on the following logic that:

- A. All accidents that happen have causes.....eliminate or control the cause and the accident is prevented.
- B. Accident causes can be determined;
- C. Proper corrective action, that has been developed and applied, will help eliminate the cause and prevent similar accidents from recurring.

AREAS TO FOCUS UPON:

When investigating any accident, the following areas should be focused on:

- A. **HOW** did the accident or injury occur;
- B. **WHAT** happened and **WHERE** did it happen;
- C. **WHY** did the accident occur and under what circumstances;
- D. **WHAT** can be done to prevent similar accidents.

BENEFITS DERIVED FROM CONDUCTING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS:

Remember, preventing any reoccurrence is always the main goal of any accident investigation. Faultfinding or placing the blame serves no helpful purpose and should not be a part of any accident investigation. Prevention of any future or similar occurrences is accomplished through corrective procedures and conditions, as well as through proper training programs. The following is a list of benefits that will be derived when conducting proper accident investigations.

- + Discover the causes of response interruptions and indicates the corrective action to be taken;
- + Prevent accident recurrence;
- + Helps eliminate the distress and suffering caused by an injury;
- + Demonstrates the Fire Department's and Management's concern for Firefighter Safety;
- + Helps to eliminate costly losses resulting from damaged apparatus, tools and materials;
- + Helps to create an awareness of the problem areas to be addressed in future safety surveys;
- + Relates accident costs and addresses methods of operation and procedures that can be improved;
- + Identifies areas in the current safety program that can be expanded upon and strengthened;
- + Identifies topics that should be incorporated within the department's safety training programs.