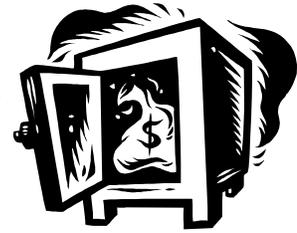


WHAT TYPE OF ACCIDENTS SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED:

As we have said previously, any accident that occurs and even those classed as “NEAR MISSES”, should be investigated. As firefighters, we stress safety every day of our lives. However, we quite often do not practice what we preach. All personnel should be interested in finding the cause of any accident that creates a disruption of services.



The time allocated to investigating an accident will vary according to:

- A. How serious the accident was in terms of operation;
- B. The type of injury(s) sustained from the accident;
- C. Is there potential for any future recurrence;
- D. The complexity and extent of the causes.

A minor accident, whether an injury occurred or not, does call for an in-depth investigation because information gathered may indicate a serious or potential safety problem or hazard exists.

In simple terms - ALL ACCIDENTS SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED TO SOME DEGREE! The broader the definition fire department management selects to term “accident” or “incident”, the better the chances are that the cause will be identified and proper steps will be taken to control or eliminate the problem or hazard before a serious loss occurs.

WHO SHOULD PERFORM THE INVESTIGATION:

Generally, the Supervising Officer of those individuals involved should conduct the investigation. The immediate Supervising Officer will:

- A. Know the most about the firefighter(s) involved and the situation that occurred.
- B. Has a personal interest in identifying accident causes. The Officer views the accident as affecting HIS firefighters, apparatus, equipment and operations.
- C. May be able to take immediate action to prevent the accident from recurring.
- D. Will be able to communicate more effectively with his fellow firefighters.

In addition, there will be direct benefits if the firefighter’s immediate Supervising Officer performs the investigation.

Some of those benefits would include:

- A. The Officer’s involvement will demonstrate their concern for the firefighters;
- B. An effective investigation will reveal the Officer’s ability and capabilities to his supervisors;
- C. When a sound investigation is conducted and corrective measures are taken, this makes the firefighters feel that their Officer is in control of the situation. This translates in pride with working for someone who can do the job.

Furthermore, it is the Officer’s responsibility to ensure the existence of safety relating to operating and working conditions. When the Officer is in contact with the firefighters assigned to them, the Officer becomes aware of the firefighter’s attitudes, problems, and general job performance.

There are other fire department personnel who may also become involved with an investigation sequence. Those individuals that should be included are:

- A. The Fire Department’s Training Officer
- B. The Fire Department’s Safety Officer