



Incidents and Lessons Learned

Every organization should have a documented plan for incident investigation to ensure that near misses and incidents are appropriately addressed. It should include the following information: who will investigate an incident or near miss, what root cause analysis process will be used, when outside assistance is needed, how to develop lessons learned, how findings will be reported, and levels of approvals required to restart an operation or process.

If an incident or near-miss does occur, the incident investigation process should be used to determine the root cause, understand the lessons learned, and develop an incident report. Subject matter experts, safety professionals, peers, and managers should be involved in this "no-blame" process.

Afterward, the organization should create a mitigation plan to address the root cause(s) to prevent future accidents. For example, maintenance frequencies may need to be increased to identify potential incidents before they occur.

The organization should widely disseminate incident reports to maximize organizational learning and create a library of safety reports that are readily accessible to employees in order to help keep lessons learned visible to the organization.

The Center for Hydrogen Safety has created an Incident Recovery Guide which has been crafted with the help of the Hydrogen Safety Panel. The Incident Recovery Guide is designed to provide practical guidance with a checklist to help an organization recover from a hydrogen incident and return to normal operations after the event scene has been stabilized and returned to the organization by the incident commander. You can find this resource at www.h2tools.com, along with a number of other resources to help you with incidents and lessons learned including a searchable database of lessons learned and a tool for submitting your own incidents to the database (note they will be scrubbed for attribution).

Read more about this and other hydrogen safety topics at www.h2tools.org.
Please contact us at chs@aiche.org if you have a suggestion for a future topic.