ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

When an accident occurs, the investigator must act quickly. No two situations are alike, but normally the following is correct.

- A. Attend to the injured employee.
- B. Assess accident scene to determine if it is safe to enter.
- C. Secure the accident scene.
- D. Notify your immediate supervisor.

The amount of action will depend on the severity of the accident. Follow established company procedure. Begin your investigation as soon as possible.

Be objective -- Don't let emotions or your own opinions cloud your investigation. Proceed as follows:

- A. Interview everyone who saw or was involved in the accident, including the victim (may have to be done at a later date). Use this procedure:
 - 1. Put them at ease -- explain that you are finding facts -- not fault.
 - 2. Interview "on the spot" -- if possible.
 - 3. Interview each person separately -- group interviews create confusion.
 - 4. Encourage the person to tell "what they saw."
 - 5. Ask open-ended questions: "Why? What? Where? When? Who? How?"
 - 6. Repeat the story back for confirmation.
 - 7. End on a positive note.
 - 8. Keep the pipeline open. Some people will remember important facts later.
- B. Observe the accident scene -- Look for obvious defects in equipment, tools, the object causing the injury. In some cases photos or drawings may help.
- C. Record critical information promptly -- don't delay. Use a prepared form to help remember key questions.
- D. Gather facts, not opinions. Use them to identify activities that contributed to the accident.
- E. Make conclusions based on facts and knowledge, not suppositions.
- F. Make recommendations to correct physical hazards, revise job procedures, and identify employee-training needs.