

Controlling the Costs of Serious Employee Injuries

In spite of some companies' conscientious management efforts to prevent injuries, accidents continue to occur. When they do occur, it is important that your management team reacts quickly and knowledgeably to control accident costs.

Historically, a small percentage of employee injuries account for a very high percentage of the total injury costs for a business. A recent study showed that 10 percent of all employee injuries accounted for 70 percent of accident costs. While the percentage may vary, the trend is clear: To keep the total accident costs to a minimum, serious employee injuries must be well managed.

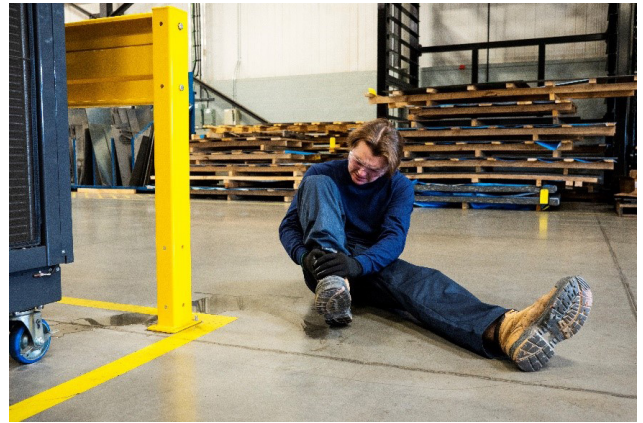
A well-thought-out post-accident plan and procedures are necessary to have in place before an accident occurs.

Management must respond to a serious employee injury in the following ways:

- Get proper medical attention for the injured employee
- Notify the insurance company of the injury
- Investigate the cause of the injury
- Take necessary corrective measures to prevent recurrence
- Clean up incident/accident area when your and the insurance carrier's investigations are complete

Managements that take little forethought of accident costs rely on the insurance carrier for control. While insurance carriers will do everything within their ability to control costs, there are post-accident steps that a company can take that will go a long way in reducing accident costs. What can the employer do to help minimize the costs of injuries to their employees? They can educate management teams in the following cost control techniques:

1. Make sure that the injured employee gets expert emergency care. In emergencies, call 911 for emergency medical services. Have someone accompany the injured employee to the emergency room, clinic, or doctor's office.
2. Promptly report incidents to the insurance carrier. In the event of a serious, or potentially serious injury, insurance company adjuster involvement early in the process can be very beneficial.
3. Do not discard any equipment involved in the accident that led to the employee's injury. Discard the equipment only when the insurance carrier has advised a management official that it is all right to do so. The equipment may be important in your investigation, and needed for legal matters.
4. When necessary, provide time for other employees who witnessed the injury to speak with insurance personnel.
5. Keep the lines of communication open with injured employees. Make regular contacts by phone or in person.
6. Show the concern of the company for their well-being. Send flowers, candy, or a card. Assist the employee in any matter possible. Make him or her feel missed.
7. Make sure the employee knows that a job is waiting for them upon their return.
8. Modify the job or put the employee in another "light duty" job to get those injured back to work faster.



Safety Zone



9. Never accuse anyone of malingering. This will likely prolong the period of disability and could encourage the employee to seek an attorney.

10. Keep in constant contact with the insurance carrier. Advise them on the changes in the employee's health and how the accident investigation is progressing. Don't assume that the insurance carrier will have learned something about the claim or injury just because you have—it's better to provide too much information than not enough.

Following the training of management in these techniques, be sure to conduct an analysis on a regular schedule to determine if they are effective. A closely coordinated effort between company management and their insurance carrier will assure that injury costs are well controlled.

For additional resources and other safety and risk management subjects, visit the AmTrust Loss Control website:

<https://amtrustfinancial.com/loss-control>

CONTACT INFO:

PHONE: 888.486.7466 ext. 363275

WEB: www.amtrustfinancial.com

EMAIL: AskLC@amtrustgroup.com

MAILING ADDRESS: AmTrust North America - 2605 Enterprise Road, Suite 290, Clearwater, FL 33759

AmTrust maintains this article as a service for its customers. This information is intended to give you a place to start when finding information about a particular safety question. This article is not intended to provide authoritative answers to safety and health questions. Before using the information here, the accuracy and appropriateness of the information to your specific situation should be verified by a person qualified to assess all the factors involved.

This article contains hyperlinks to information created and maintained by other public and private organizations. Please be aware that we do not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness or completeness of this outside information. Further, the inclusion of pointers to particular items in hypertext is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed or products or services offered by the author of the reference or the organization operating the site on which the reference is maintained.