

The Price of Accidents

When Jerry Wong was asked to take a measurement on an overhead conveyor, he didn't follow his company's lockout/tagout procedures to shut down the conveyor because it "was only going to take a minute" and shutting down would interrupt production. As a result, Jerry fractured and dislocated a finger when his tape measure was pulled into the moving belt. In addition, Jerry's injury cost the company nearly \$15,000 in medical expenses, investigation, lost work hours and replacement parts for the damaged equipment.

If Jerry had shut down the machine to do the work, the company estimated that it would have cost only \$250 in lost production and Jerry would have escaped injury.



Accidents Cost Everyone

Every on-the-job accident has costs, and the costs always include more than money.

You might be surprised at the ripple effect an accident can cause. When someone you work with is injured on the job, it affects you. Accidents directly affect your company's productivity, which can cause your company to lose business. When your company loses revenue, it can mean layoffs or less money and benefits for workers. In addition, when accidents occur, your company's workers' compensation insurance premiums go up. The more money spent on insurance, the less money available for workers' wages.

When a serious incident occurs on a site, such as a fire or explosion, you may be out of work while the damage is being repaired. And many badly damaged worksites shut down permanently or are taken over by other companies. Workers are likely to lose their jobs when this occurs.

When accidents happen, everyone feels stress. You can't perform your best when you're worried about your safety and health. And when coworkers lose their jobs because of disability, everyone suffers emotionally.

It's worth it to take the time and care to use the right equipment and procedures, wear the right personal protection and follow safe work practices at all times. You must also be alert to the safety needs of your coworkers.

Remember, accidents affect everyone and everyone pays a price. By simply following safe work procedures and seeing that your coworkers do the same, you will be doing your part to ensure a healthy and safe future for both you and your company.