

Safety Management System (SMS) - Element 5

A health and safety management system in Saskatchewan's healthcare system includes the following six elements:

1. Management commitment and leadership
2. Hazard identification and control
3. Training and communications
4. Inspections
5. Reporting and investigations
6. Emergency response

Each element consists of sub elements.

Element 5 - Reporting and investigations

Everyone in the organization has a role to play in an incident investigation. Workers must report incidents to their supervisors. The employer (manager/supervisor/OHC) needs to investigate promptly. After the investigation is complete a written investigation report must be prepared.

The purpose of conducting an incident investigation is to:

- determine the causes of the incident, including the root cause(s);
- identify any unsafe conditions, acts or procedures that contributed to the incident; and
- find out **why** those unsafe conditions existed and/or unsafe actions were taken and find ways to prevent similar incidents.

An investigation should determine:

- WHO was involved or injured
- WHAT happened
- WHERE the incident happened
- WHEN the incident occurred
- WHY the unsafe act was taken or condition was in place
- HOW a similar incident could be prevented.

The key to preventing future incidents is to find out why - this is the root cause. Once the cause is identified and corrective actions to prevent recurrence determined, the investigation report can be completed. Results should be shared with affected employees. The recommended corrective actions have to be implemented. Follow up is completed to ensure the corrective actions are working as intended.

A safety management system becomes part of the culture - the way people safely do their jobs.

(source: Safety Management System Basics, SASWH, 09/15)
additional Safety Talks specific to Safety Management System (e.g., elements, Leading & Lagging Indicators, Risk Matrix) are available on www.saswh.ca

Safety Talk Discussion

Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!