

Date: Tue, 28 Sep 1999 14:07:54 -0600
From: Meredith Brown <racer@lanl.gov>
Subject: Blue Alert: Unreported and Untreated Injuries

Title: Unreported and Untreated Injuries Can Result in Restricted Workdays

Date: September 28, 1999 Identifier:1999-ALO-WID-0004

Lesson Learned Statement: Unreported and untreated injuries can be aggravated by continuing work activities or worsen, requiring emergency medical treatment. All work-related injuries should be reported to your supervisor as soon as possible and medical treatment must be obtained regardless of how minor the injury may be.

Discussion of Activities: An employee reported to his supervisor he had injured his right shoulder while opening a heavy metal radiation shielding door. The supervisor suggested the employee go to the site medical facility for observation. The employee refused, indicating the injury was minor in nature. A week later the employee was performing a routine task when he heard a "pop" and felt pain in his right shoulder. The employee was sent to the company occupational medical director, who determined the employee had strained his right shoulder.

An investigation revealed the injury occurred when the employee was attempting to open the shielding door, and it had been aggravated by the routine task the employee later performed.

The employee incurred 22 restricted workdays as the result of the accident. The severity of the injury may have been reduced if proper medical treatment was given when the injury first occurred. The employee and his supervisor were reminded that site policy requires employees to report to the Health Services facility for evaluation and treatment if an occupational injury occurs during normal shift hours.

Recommended Actions: Report all work related injuries to your supervisor as soon as possible and seek medical assessment regardless of how minor the injury.

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Reviewing Official: J. R. Galle
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Functional Category(s) (DOE): Occupational Safety and Health
Functional Category(s) (User-Defined) : Reporting Injuries
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References: WIPP Lessons Learned Bulletin LL99-98