

## Accident Investigation & Corrective Action Best Practices

The PPI Safety Committee has met several times in 2023. Part of the purview of the committee, in addition to providing members with safety guidance information and training opportunities, is to review the monthly incident data submitted by twelve (12) member companies. These incidents include all recordable cases as well as first aid cases. **The committee would like to thank the twelve companies who have faithfully participated in submitting their monthly incident data.** By doing so, they have provided valuable information for the committee.

The committee reviews the incident information for the purpose of identifying trends in the data, and some of those trends have been topics for safety bulletins. Safety bulletins can be found posted on the PPI homepage under safety. During a recent meeting, the committee discussed trends surrounding accident investigation and corrective actions. Specifically, the accident investigation does not go deep enough to identify all the contributing factors associated with the event. In other words, for instance, if a company is using Five Why methodology, the investigation may not be searching out the answer to subsequent “whys” once an initial causal factor is identified.

Following are a few examples:

Incident	Corrective Action
Silicone splashed and sprayed in eye	Doctor prescribed eye drops
Inspecting bells on extrusion line – line operator activated pipe roller- pipe lifted and rolled striking employees’ hand	Add signage to highlight caution about moving pipe.
Contact with blade while cutting string	Assigned PPE training – proposed new equipment.
Slipped and fell	Safety standdown

The point to be made is that incomplete accident investigations may lead to corrective actions that may or may not eliminate all the causal factors that led to the event, possibly setting the member company up for a similar injury to occur in the future. Whereas a robust investigative process, though requiring a little more time upfront, will pay dividends in the long run with fewer injuries, improved culture, and reduced costs.

The PPI Safety Committee would like to share some best practices with our membership that if adopted would enhance the accident investigation process at your company or site.

### Investigation Process

- Identify a common platform for investigations that all sites will use. (Five Why, RCA)
- Provide training across the organization on how to conduct an incident investigation.
- Set accountability for investigation with line management. (This is not the safety person’s job)

- Set in place upper management review of more serious recordable cases and near misses. Upper management has a role to play in accepting investigations as is or directing further work to be done.
- Utilize an investigative team composed of cross functional members to conduct certain investigations, especially the more serious incidents.
- Establish an investigation matrix that defines what level of investigation gets accomplished based on severity, timing for completion, and who will conduct the investigation.

## **Corrective Actions**

- Establish a process for recording and tracking corrective action completion. This process should include assigning responsible parties to complete actions by defined dates.
- Utilize a system that provides e-mails to responsible parties as action item completion dates approach.
- Utilize a system that provides e-mails to responsible party's supervisor if an action item is not completed by the agreed upon date.
- Establish a process to verify that corrective actions are implemented and effective.

## **Communication**

- Broadly communicate corrective action completion so that all employees know why changes are implemented and there is a recognition that management is working to make the workplace safer.

## **Reminder - Recordable Tracking and Sharing of Corrective Actions:**

PPI is encouraging your company to participate in this monthly report. The Injury Reporting Process and Template are available in the PPI Member's Only section or simply email David Fink at [dfink@plasticpipe.org](mailto:dfink@plasticpipe.org). We look forward to your company's participation so that together we can support each other in continuous improvement of our safety performance.