Near Miss Reporting – Why It’s Just as Important as an Accident Fatality File

Ignored Near Miss Leads to Trench Collapse Fatality

In a tragic incident, a construction worker lost his life due to a trench collapse that could have been prevented. Prior to the fatal event, there were clear warning signs: the trench walls showed visible cracks, and a worker had previously reported feeling unsafe due to the trench’s instability. However, these near-miss indicators were not formally reported or addressed by the site management.

The failure to act on these early warning signs resulted in the trench collapsing while the worker was inside, leading to fatal injuries. An investigation revealed that the company lacked a robust near-miss reporting system and did not foster a culture that encouraged employees to report potential hazards without fear of reprisal.

This incident underscores the critical importance of near-miss reporting in the workplace. Near misses serve as early warnings of potential hazards and provide an opportunity to implement corrective measures before accidents occur. Employers must establish a non-punitive reporting culture, provide clear reporting procedures, and ensure that all reports are taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

Source: *NSC.org*