

ASK AN RSA

With Elyse Taylor, Vancouver Island

In this monthly feature, we invite readers to submit a question for a BCCSA Regional Safety Advisor (RSA) to address. This month's RSA is Elyse Taylor, who serves Vancouver Island.

Question:

What types of injuries and incidents need to be reported to WorkSafeBC?

Answer:

WorkSafeBC requires employers to report work-related injuries, illnesses, and incidents. Reporting timelines depend on the severity and nature of the incident. Employers must report serious incidents immediately to protect workers and allow for proper investigation.

Serious Incidents – Immediate Reporting

All fatalities, serious injuries, and certain high-potential incidents must be reported immediately to WorkSafeBC, as soon as it is safe to do so, after attending to injured workers and addressing any hazards. Report by calling the WorkSafeBC Prevention Line: 1.888.621.7233 (1.888.621.SAFE).

An employer must immediately notify WorkSafeBC of any incident that:

- resulted in serious injury to or the death of a worker.
- involved a major structural failure or collapse of a building, bridge, tower, crane, hoist, temporary construction support system, or excavation;
- involved the major release of a hazardous substance;
- involved a fire or explosion that had the potential to cause serious injury to a worker; or
- was otherwise required by regulation to be reported.

Incident scenes must be preserved until WorkSafeBC authorizes disturbance, except to provide medical aid or prevent further harm. This preserves evidence for investigation.

General Work-Related Injury and Disease Reporting

Work-related injuries and diseases requiring medical attention beyond first aid or resulting in missed time from work must be reported through a claim process, even if they appear minor or are not immediately life-threatening.

Employers must report within 72 hours of becoming aware of the incident by completing and submitting a Form 7- Employer's Report of Injury or Occupational Disease. Workers may also report online or by contacting WorkSafeBC directly at 1.888.WORKERS.

Failure to report a worker's injury when required is an offence under the *Workers Compensation Act* and may result in fines. Coercing a worker not to report an injury is also an offence.

Contact WorkSafeBC as soon as possible if an employee:

- Is diagnosed with a work-related injury or disease.
- Has a mental health injury from work.
- Has hearing loss due to exposure or a specific incident.
- Suffers damage to eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids, or prosthetics.

Employer Responsibilities

- Maintain a clear incident reporting procedure accessible to all workers.
- Ensure serious injuries and fatalities are reported 24/7.
- Preserve the scene and evidence until WorkSafeBC authorizes disturbance.
- Document all incidents, investigations, and corrective actions.
- Cooperate fully with WorkSafeBC.

Worker Responsibilities

- Report all injuries and illnesses promptly.
- Seek medical attention when necessary.
- Preserve evidence and incident information.
- Communicate any new symptoms after an injury.

References & Resources:

- Workers Compensation Act, Part 2, Division 10 – Employer Accident Reporting and Investigation
- Reporting serious incidents & fatalities - WorkSafeBC
- Reporting incidents to WorkSafeBC
- WorkSafeBC incident and injury forms – Forms & Resources

Need Help?

Your Regional Safety Advisor is available at no cost to guide employers in incident reporting.

Contact us: rsa@bccsa.ca or Regional Safety Advisors: BC Construction Safety Alliance (BCCSA).