
worksafe.qld.gov.au/injury-prevention-safety/incidents-and-notifications/what-is-an-incident

Has an injury, illness or dangerous incident occurred at your workplace? If so, you may be legally required to notify Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ) about what happened. The following aims to help you understand your notification obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, the *Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act 2011* and how you can comply with them.

Note: If you wish to notify of an incident that occurred under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995* (prior to 1 January 2012) contact WHSQ on 1300 362 128 to obtain the correct form.

Electrical incidents and notifications

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must, under the *Electrical Safety Regulation 2013* (the ES Regulation), notify the regulator once they become aware of a serious electrical incident (SEI) or dangerous electrical event (DEE) arising out of the conduct of their business or undertaking.

Read more on [electrical safety incidents](#).

On this page

What sort of incident do I need to tell WHSQ about?

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act 2011* set out what sort of incidents are notifiable to WHSQ. An incident is notifiable *if it*

arises out of the conduct of a business or undertaking and results in the death, serious injury or serious illness of a person or involves a dangerous incident.

When is an injury or illness serious?

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Safety in Recreational Water Activities Act 2011* set out that a serious injury or illness of a person is:

- an injury or illness requiring the person to have
 - immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
 - immediate treatment for
 - medical treatment (treatment by a doctor) within 48 hours of exposure to a substance
- any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, including any infection that is reliably attributable to carrying out work
 - with micro-organisms
 - that involves providing treatment or care to a person
 - that involves contact with human blood or body substances
 - that involves handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products
- the following occupational zoonoses contracted in the course of work involving the handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products
 - Q fever
 - Anthrax
 - Leptospirosis

- Brucellosis
- Hendra virus
- Avian influenza
- Psittacosis.

What is a dangerous incident?

A dangerous incident is an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance
- electric shock
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or thing
- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation
- the inrush of water, mud or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel
- any other event prescribed under a regulation; but does not include an incident of a prescribed kind.

Department of Natural Resources and Mines

The Department of Natural Resources and Mines provides support for the safety and health of all Queensland miners and people working in allied industries. The department administers associated regulations and recognised standards, guidelines and codes of practice related to mining and petroleum.

Contact details:

Website: www.dnrm.qld.gov.au

Phone: 13 74 68

Who is responsible for notifying?

A person conducting a business or undertaking is required to make the notification immediately after becoming aware that a notifiable incident arising from the business or undertaking has occurred.

Outside of business hours

Call 1300 362 128 to be connected to our after-hours messaging service. Your notification details will be referred to a WHSQ on-call inspector who will contact you within a timeframe that has regard to the seriousness of the incident.

If you make the notification by telephone, written notification is not required, WHSQ will provide the person notifying for the business or undertaking with details of the information received.

I've already notified WorkCover or my workers' compensation insurer, why do I need to notify WHSQ?

An injuries claim to WorkCover Queensland (WorkCover) or your workers' compensation insurer is not the same as notifying WHSQ of an incident, however if you insure with WorkCover, you can do both at the same time. [Read more about the joint incident claim service.](#)

WorkCover and other workers' compensation insurers have a different role to play from WHSQ following a workplace incident. WHSQ investigates the cause of the incident and how similar incidents can be prevented in the future. WorkCover and other workers' compensation insurers provide financial compensation to people injured in the course of their employment.

WHSQ is the workplace health and safety regulator in Queensland. It uses notified incident information to investigate workplace incidents and contraventions of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*. This information is also used to develop programs that identify solutions to workplace safety issues across all industries.

Notification to WHSQ is in addition to any workers' compensation claim made to WorkCover or self-insured businesses.

Can work continue where the incident occurred?

The person with management or control of a workplace at which a notifiable incident has occurred must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the site where the incident occurred is not disturbed, unless it is for a prescribed reason, until an inspector arrives at the site. The site includes any plant, substance, structure or thing associated with the notifiable incident.

A prescribed reason to disturb an incident site is action:

- to assist an injured person
- to remove a deceased person
- essential to make the site safe or to minimise the risk of a further notifiable incident
- associated with a police investigation
- for which an inspector or WHSQ has given permission – a direction that a scene may be disturbed may be given in person or by a telephone call.

Contact us on 1300 362 128 if the incident occurs outside of business hours and you wish to disturb the incident site. A WHSQ on-call inspector will return your call.

Do I need to keep a record of the incident?

The person conducting a business of undertaking must keep a record of each notifiable incident for at least five (5) years from the date notified to WHSQ.