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When is the incident investigation conducted?

- · Basic answer: As soon as possible.
- · Reasons:
 - Evidence gets lost or modified
 - Computer control historical data overwritten
 - · Outside scene exposed to rain, wind, sunlight
 - · Chemical residues oxidize, etc.
 - Witness memories fade or change
 - Other incidents may be avoided
 - Restart may depend on completing actions to prevent recurrence
 - Regulators or others may require it
 - E.g., U.S. OSHA PSM: Start within 48 h





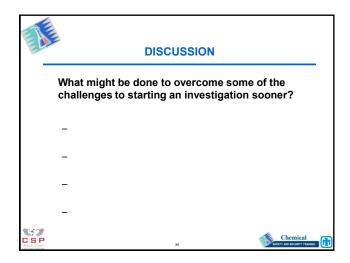
When is the incident investigation conducted?

Challenges to starting as soon as possible:

- Team must be selected and assembled
- Team may need to be trained
- Team may need to be equipped
- Team members may need to travel to site
- Authorities or others may block access
- Site may be unsafe to approach/enter

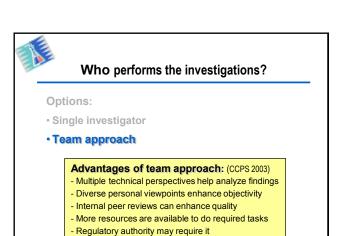




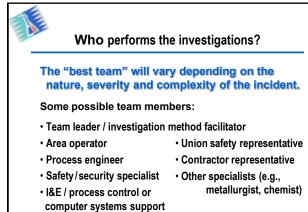




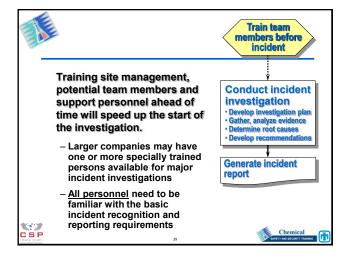




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Older investigations

- · Only identified obvious causes; e.g.,
 - "The line plugged up"
 - "The operator screwed up"
 - "The whole thing just blew up"
- · Recommendations were superficial
 - "Clean out the plugged line"
 - "Re-train the operator"
 - "Build a new one"







Layered investigations

- · Deeper analysis
- · Additional layers of recommendations:
 - 1 Immediate technical recommendations
 - e.g., replace the carbon steel with stainless steel
 - 2 Recommendations to avoid the hazards
 - · e.g., use a noncorrosive process material
 - 3 Recommendations to improve the management system
 - · e.g., keep a materials expert on staff







Investigation process

- 1 Choose investigation team
- 2 Make brief overview survey
- 3 Set objectives, delegate responsibilities
- 4 Gather, organize pre-incident facts
- 5 Investigate, record incident facts
- 6 Research, analyze unknowns
- 7 Discuss, conclude, recommend
- Write clear, concise, accurate report







Discovery phase

- · Develop a plan
- · Gather evidence
 - Take safety precautions; use PPE
 - Preserve the physical scene and process data
 - Gather physical evidence, samples
 - Take photographs, videos
 - Interview witnesses
 - Obtain control or computer system charts and data







Analysis of facts

- · Develop a timeline
- · Analyze physical and/or electronic evidence
 - Chemical analysis
 - Mechanical testing
 - Computer modeling
 - Data logs
 - etc.
- · Conduct multiple-root-cause analysis







Some analysis methods

- · Five Why's
- · Causal Tree
- RCA (Root Cause Analysis)
- FTA (Fault Tree Analysis)
- MORT (Management Oversight and Risk Tree)
- MCSOII (Multiple Cause, Systems Oriented Incident Investigation)
- TapRooT®







Some analysis methods

General analysis approach:

- Develop, by brainstorming or a more structured approach, possible incident sequences
- Eliminate as many incident sequences as possible based on the available evidence
- Take a closer look at those that remain until the actual incident sequence is discovered (if possible)
- Determine the underlying root causes of the actual incident sequence







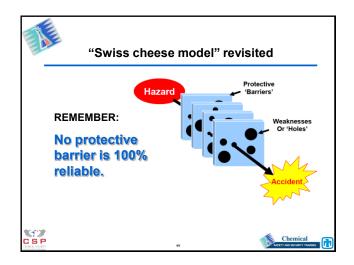
Incident sequence questions

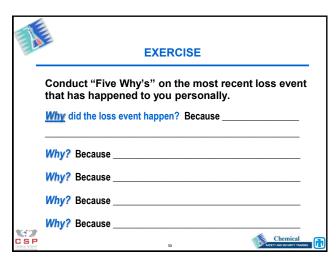
Determine, for the incident being investigated:

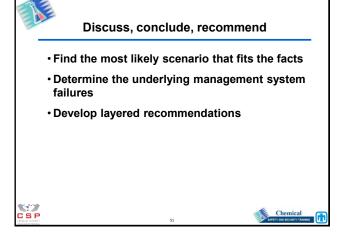
- What was the cause or attack that changed the situation from "normal" to "abnormal"?
- What was the actual (or potential, if a near miss) loss event?
- · What safeguards failed? What did not fail?

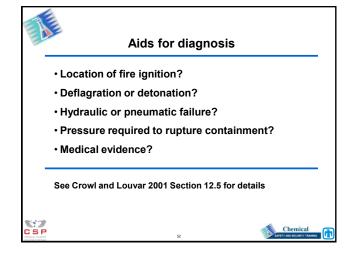
















How are incident investigations documented?

A written report documents, as a minimum:

- Date of the incident
- · When the investigation began
- · Who conducted the investigation
- · A description of the incident
- The factors that contributed to the incident
- Any recommendations resulting from the investigation







Typical report format

- 1 Introduction
- 2 System description
- 3 Incident description
- 4 Investigation results
- 5 Discussion
- 6 Conclusions
- 7 Layered recommendations







Investigation summary

- The investigation report is generally too detailed to share the learnings to most interested persons
- An Investigation Summary can be used for broader dissemination, such as to:
 - Communicate to management
 - Use in safety or security meetings
 - Train new personnel
 - Share lessons learned with sister plants

(See also: Crowl & Louvar 2001, Figure 12-1 and Example 12-2)







Accident involving contractors' injury during the operation of opening of a vessel for standard maintenance

Investigation summary example



Accident involving contractors' injury during the operation of opening of a vessel for standard maintenance





Description: This accident occurred in May 2003 during repair work in a propylene reactor at a European Petrochemicals site. The cover of a manhole was ejected 5 metres by a residual pressure inside the reactor.

Consequences: 5 operators from the maintenance department were rushed to hospital. Nobody was seriously injured.

History: Work had to be done in the vessel. Before the work could start, the vessel must be put into safe conditions and the manhole must be opened. That has been decided during the safety preparation meeting.

Preparation: The putting into safe conditions started on Wednesday. The drawings of this part of the plant have been taken; the valves to be closed are noted on the drawing and then closed in the field. Then, a nitrogen flush is installed in the entire installation (vessel and lines) to ensure that all flammable gases are removed from the system. Flushing means that nitrogen pressure is applied and then the wash out is released to a safe location. This operation goes on for several days.



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After that, on Friday, before opening the vessel, blinds had to be placed into the lines (to ensure that no product could enter the vessel). The entire system has been depressurised. These blinds are indicated on the drawing and the maintenance people started to put in the blinds (opening the lines to put them in).

The accident: Having started this operation, all of a sudden, they smell some gas odour and called the shift supervisor. They find out that a valve on a small line has not been closed. They close the valve and decided to flush 5 additional times. After that and while monitoring the depressurisation of the vessely value the manometer on the outside of the tank (from zero to 25 bars, impossible to read lower that 0.5), they opened the manhole. A whistling sound has been heard indicating a residual pressure in the vessel. When the noise was ended, they continued to open the manhole. At a certain moment the manhole was sprang heavily out by the residual pressure in the vessel, it was ejected and fell to the ground striking two employees.

- The application of the procedure has to be strictly followed and supervised.
- Monitoring has to be done using multiple devices or means, so as to be sure of the indicators. The equipment handling has to be done using the principles of inherent safety.









Findings and recommendations

What is the most important product of an incident investigation?

- 1. The incident report
- 2. Knowing who to blame for the incident
- 3. Findings and recommendations from the study







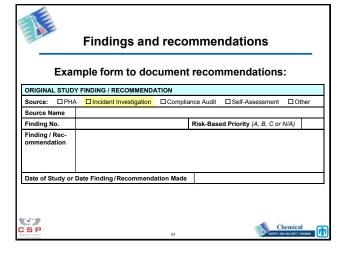
Findings and recommendations

What is the most important product of an incident investigation?

- 1. The incident report
- 2. Knowing who to blame for the incident
- 3. Findings and recommendations from the study
- 4. The actions taken in response to the findings and recommendations from the study









Aids for recommendations

Overriding principles (Crowl and Louvar 2001, p. 528):

- Make safety [and security] investments on cost and performance basis
- · Improve management systems
- · Improve management and staff support
- Develop layered recommendations, especially to eliminate underlying causes







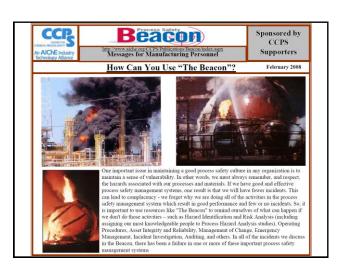
Aids for recommendations

Overriding principles:

- · Make safety [and security] investments on cost and performance basis
- · Improve management systems
- · Improve management and staff support
- Develop layered recommendations, especially to eliminate underlying causes and hazards







(continued from previous slide)

Did vou know?

Nearly all incidents are the result of more than one failure. Some failures result in near misses - that is they did not cause an incident this time, but could have.

- · Almost every month. "The Beacon" receives a number of emails pointing out other lessons that can be learned from the incident discussed, which have not been included in the Beacon.
- Because of the limited space available in "The Beacon", we must pick one of the many lessons from each incident, and focus the Beacon on that lesson. But there are always
- Whenever possible, if the reports on the incidents described are publicly available, we will provide a reference in the Beacon cover email note.

What can you do?

- · Good post the F vorkers will see Good – post the Beacon in places where workers will see it and read it – for example, bulletin boards, locker rooms, lunch rooms, control rooms, the gate house.
- · Better use the Beacon as the basis for safety meetings o other safety discussions with operators and other workers
- Better yet Develop additional information which relates the topic in the Beacon to the operations in your own plant, including any similar incidents or near misses in your company, and discuss this information with workers.
- Best Unit or plant management leads a discussion of the Beacon with workers and challenges them to find other lessons in the incident described, beyond those discussed in the Beacon. Challenge plant safety committees to use the Beacon in their work.



Implementation

As for PHA action items,

- a system must be in place to ensure all incident investigation action items are completed on time and as intended.
- Same system can be used for both
- Include regular status reports to management
- Communicate actions to affected employees







