



# GENERAL INFORMATION

## **NCDOL Investigates**

### **What triggers an investigation by the N.C. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Division?**

- A worker's death.
- Hospitalization of an employee, an amputation or the loss of an eye.
- The department may also receive information of a fatality or catastrophe from media reports or referrals from other government agencies.
- An OSH complaint.

### **How is the NCDOL OSH Division notified?**

- An employer must notify NCDOL within eight hours of any work-related fatality. In-patient hospitalizations of one or more employees, any work-related amputation, and any work-related loss of an eye must be reported within 24 hours.

### **What will the investigation focus on?**

- The investigation will usually be limited to the events surrounding the accident unless observations at the site indicate a broader investigation is needed.

### **What will happen during the investigation?**

- An OSH investigator will go to the accident site and collect physical evidence, including photographs.
- The investigator will interview employees, witnesses and management officials about the accident to determine its cause.
- Any violations of safety and health standards will be noted and citations will be issued.

### **How long will the investigation take?**

- An investigation can take anywhere from a few weeks to six months, depending on the complexity of the accident.

### **When are investigation results disclosed?**

- Citations and penalties, if issued, can be released to the public on the issuance date.
- Other contents of the file cannot be released until the case is closed or final order on citations is rendered.

### **What factors will OSH investigators seek to determine?**

- The cause of the accident.
- If a violation of OSH safety or health standards related to the accident occurred.
- What effect the standard violation had on the occurrence of the accident.
- Whether OSH standards should be revised in light of the hazardous working condition that led to that incident.

### **What programs does the Department of Labor have in place to prevent accidents?**

**Free training:** Workshops, training and consultation in both English and Spanish.

**Publications:** Brochures and industry guides that address various hazards.

**Special Emphasis Programs:** OSH Special Emphasis Programs target industries with high risk for serious or fatal work-related injuries or illnesses.

**Alliances and partnerships:** With industry groups and companies to prevent injuries, illnesses and fatalities in the workplace.