

Incident Response

Workplace incidents can happen in any location, at any time, and often without advanced warning. It's important to understand what a workplace incident is and how you should respond if you are involved in one. Examples of workplace incidents include:

- An injury, such as a fall, cut, electric shock, or burn
- A fire, explosion, or hazardous chemical spill
- Property damage, as a result of inclement weather, vehicle collision, or equipment failure
- A near miss, such as almost being struck by an object or falling off a ladder

Notifications

If you are involved in or witness an incident, it's important to know what to do and who to contact. Follow the basic guidelines below to ensure your safety and the safety of your colleagues and the Northwestern community:

1. If the incident requires immediate medical attention or response from emergency responders, such as for a fire, call 911 immediately.
2. If the incident location is unsafe, such as live electrical equipment or a chemical spill, ensure no one enters the area until emergency responders arrive.
3. Notify your supervisor as soon as possible; supervisors should notify Northwestern's Office of Risk Management on their [website](#) or by phone at (847) 491-5582.

Tips for Success When Talking to Your Team

Preparation is Key: Keep the topic relevant. Work with your team to review how to report incidents in your workplace and discuss how to identify hazards and avoid incidents.

Stay Positive: Keep the focus on what can be done to create a safe workplace, instead of focusing on what has gone wrong in the past.

Share a Story, Ask for a Story: Storytelling is a powerful method to convey information. Stories from your employees make the topic even more relatable.

Incident Prevention

Incidents can be avoided through understanding the risks and hazards associated with your work and careful job planning. Below are useful tips to create a safe work environment for you and your colleagues:

- ✓ Be aware of your surroundings: Always report unsafe work conditions or practices to your supervisor.
- ✓ Complete [Emergency Response](#) training to learn how to respond to incidents on campus.
- ✓ Look for ways to reduce or eliminate hazards, such as cleaning up wet floors.
- ✓ Conduct a [job hazard analysis \(JHA\)](#) to identify hazards and control or eliminate them before starting your work.
- ✓ Always wear the appropriate [personal protective equipment \(PPE\)](#) for the task at hand and contact your supervisor or [EHS](#) if you have questions or concerns.

Incident Investigations

Depending on the nature and severity of an incident, Northwestern's Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) team may [investigate](#) the incident to determine the root cause and to identify corrective actions to prevent similar incidents from occurring. Learn more by completing [Incident Investigation](#) training.

First Aid, CPR, and AEDs



- **First aid** refers to medical attention administered immediately after an injury or illness until full medical treatment is available, such as from paramedics.
- **Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)** is an emergency lifesaving procedure performed when the heart stops beating (cardiac arrest).
- **Automated external defibrillators (AEDs)** are portable machines [located](#) throughout campus used to treat cardiac arrest.

First Aid, CPR, and AED training can save lives and provides you with the critical knowledge and confidence to effectively manage an emergency. Contact Northwestern's Office for Research Safety at safety-training@northwestern.edu to register for [training](#).

For Additional Information

Contact Environmental Health & Safety at ehs@northwestern.edu