NORTHEAST PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION

REMOVE THE STIGMA FROM SHARING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND REDUCING LOSS TIME ACCIDENTS

Northeast Public Power Association
est. 1965

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Introduction

- Manager of Safety and Training
- Kay Electric Cooperative - Blackwell Oklahoma
- Journeyman Lineman - 10 years
- Engineering Dept. - Large Power

The Impact of Stigma

- Employees may avoid reporting because of:
  - Fear of discipline
  - Peer pressure
  - Looking inexperienced
  - Feeling like they caused delays
- This leads to:
  - Underreporting
  - Missed hazards
  - Higher injury risk
  - More lot time accidents

Why Sharing Matters

- Many incidents and near misses never get reported
- Fear of blame prevents open communication
- Small issues often become serious accidents later
- Strong safety culture depend on trust

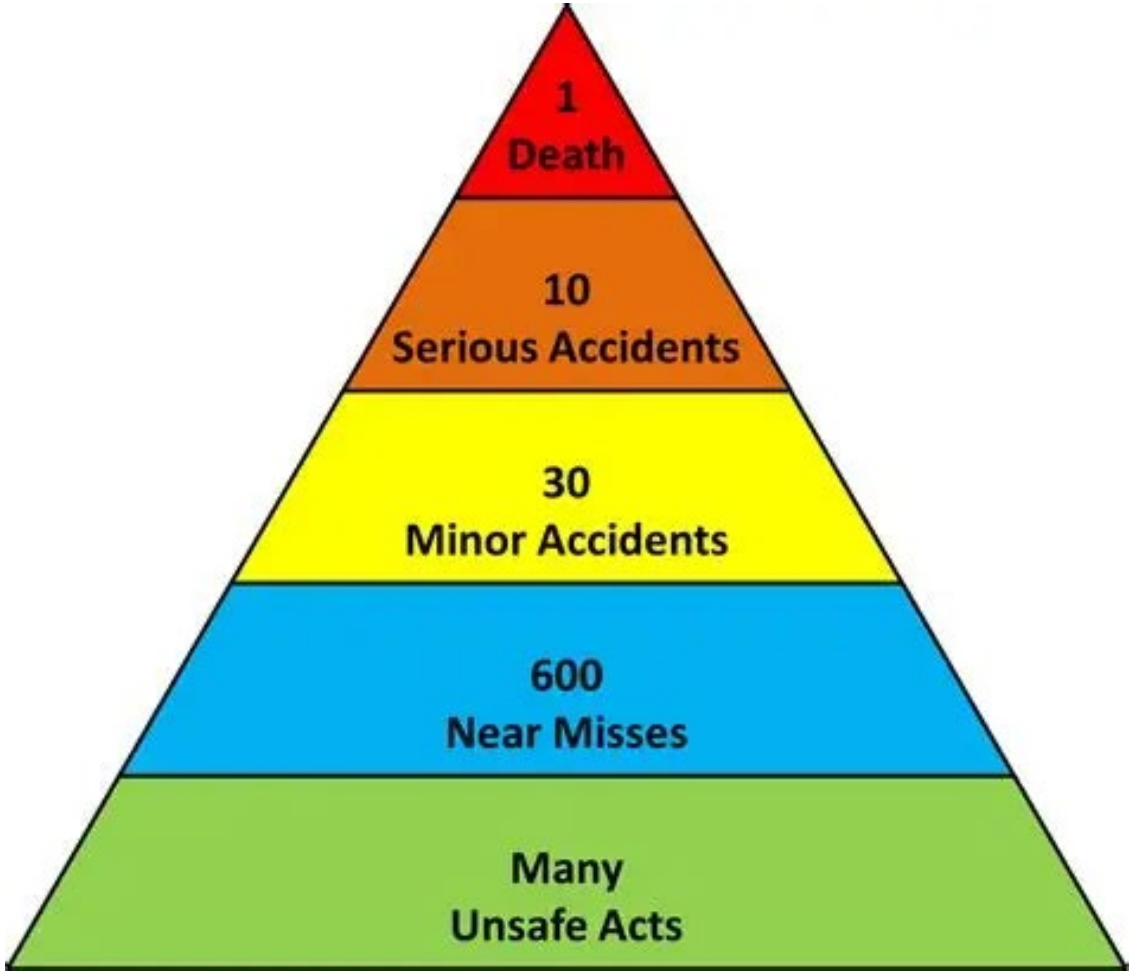
Accident Investigation

- Find root causes – not to blame
- Learn from incidents and near misses
- Improve procedures and communication
- Prevent repeat accidents

Near Misses Matter

- Near misses are free learning opportunities
  - Slips/trips
  - Cover-up concerns
  - Tool failures
  - Traffic or backing incidents
  - Communication breakdowns

Hierarchy Of Accidents



Building A Better Reporting Culture

- Encourage open communication
- Thank employees for reporting hazards
- Focus on solutions instead of blame
- Leadership must lead by example
- Share lessons learned companywide

NEPPA Safety Committee

- Safety Committee established February of 2026.
  - What were we created for
  - What is the committee's role

NEPPA Safety Committee

- Our first idea was to gather a list of all necessary trainings for all 6 states.
- Our second idea was to find a way to share concerns with each other.
  - Bucket Brief

Bucket Brief

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/NEPPA-Bucket-Brief--Winter-2026.html?soid=1101509622852&aid=-NfGC4DwwtY

Near Miss Reports

- After the initial success of the Bucket Brief, we were asked if we had any other near misses that were written up that we could share.
- We came out with our initial Near Miss Report.

Near Miss Reports

Microsoft Word Document

Near Miss Reports

- We held our Annual E&O shortly after the initial Near Miss Report
  - We held a session talking about the new program and how to share with NEPPA.
  - NEPPA ED also shared with the board to lead by example and share.

Successes of the Program

- Our shining example of why we should report and share near misses.
  - A utility had a flash while clearing vines from the bucket.
  - We shared the incident with the membership.
  - Another member utility responded with a tool that is made for this application.
  - The utility that had the original near miss purchased 3 units.

Transition to Accident Investigations

- A smaller utility that had seen the success of the near miss reports had an accident.
- They asked if I could do and informal accident investigation to write up and share.

Accident Investigations

- We had our first accident after the program started on May 22, 2026
- We had a lineman fall into a live front switching cabinet.
- The victim lost his arm.

Accident Investigations

- NEPPA Accident Report

Conclusion

- Unfortunately, we work in dangerous conditions.
- If we share the stories about the times we got lucky, maybe we can keep someone else from becoming a statistic.