



# Everyone Goes Home “SAFE”!

## “Don’t Blame Anyone”

Most of us have been at the scene of an auto accident – minor or otherwise. If we’re personally involved, we immediately go on the defensive. We want to make sure, if possible, that the blame isn’t put on us. We might even be tempted to hold back part of the facts, hoping to pass the buck to the other person if it sort of looks bad for us.

Our theme for this talk is **“Don’t Blame Anyone”**. That’s simple and easy to understand. But I wish to underline the theme by citing some of the reasons for not blaming anyone. The primary purpose of an accident investigation is to get the full and un-slanted information in order to prevent a similar accident from happening again.

With the help of an investigation team and management, if necessary we will make needed changes to ensure better safety in the future. Our great concern immediately should become the accidents we can prevent in the days and years ahead.

Don’t think that even minor accidents should be passed up for investigation. One that brings only slight injury, or perhaps just property damage, needs a careful and complete going-over. Maybe we got a break if the accident was minor. The next time unless you can help us prevent it the same type of accident might cause injury or could be fatal.

Have you been guilty of saying or thinking that a certain number or kind of accidents are bound to happen? If you have, you’ve been in error. Every accident has a cause or

contributing factor. We have to find the cause or causes. Then we have to make the right adjustments. If we do, and if the rules are followed, we won’t have the accident again.

In some cases, blame may have to be fixed — eventually. Someone may have to decide later there was a personal failure. But this should be no part of the investigative stage. Be wise and keep your wits. Don’t let anger, disgust, or any other emotion get control of you.

What do you do if a worker near you is hurt in an accident? Even though you suspect what might have brought it on, you don’t rush up and say, "What did you do that for?" If one suffers shock or is in extreme pain their emotions may run away with them at first. If they want to "blow off steam", let them do it. It will ease the pressure. Then get them to calm down and talk rationally. Ask what you can do to help. Get into a conversation not too directly related to the accident, while waiting for help or being taken for treatment. Psychologists have pointed out that talking reduces emotions.

Accident reports serve another purpose besides future accident prevention. They are grouped together to form nation-wide, state-wide, plant, and department statistics. It’s these statistics that tell us whether we are winning or losing the battle for safety.

Help reach a work site record that we can all boast about. And while we’re doing it, remember it’s not your responsibility to put the blame on anyone.