

Toolbox Topics: Incident Management and Work Zone Safety | Compliance Safety Manager

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Toolbox Topics: Incident Management and Work Zone Safety



Work zone incident management is an important part of work zone safety. An incident can be defined as an event that compromises the normal capacity of a road or street. Some examples of work zone incidents are:

- Disabled vehicles
- Emergency road users
- Natural disasters
- Special events
- Spilled loads
- Vehicle accidents
- Work zones

What is an Incident? Basically, any unscheduled event that reduces the normal capacity of the road is an incident.

Unscheduled work zones, such as for a broken water main, are incidents. Incidents create congestion. It is estimated that 60 to 75% of congestion is due to incidents. Incidents also create secondary crashes. The key to reducing the impact of the incident is effective traffic control.

Incident Management. The key to effective traffic control for an incident is to anticipate potential liabilities and to develop a response plan. This must be done with input from all agencies (fire, police, etc.) involved. Proper traffic control is essential to any fire, rescue, or other roadway-encroaching activities.

Legislative authority is required in order to implement and enforce the regulations and controls needed during an incident. Use the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and check with local authorities. The MUTCD defines the nationwide standards used by road managers to install and maintain traffic control devices on all public streets, highways, bikeways, and private roads open to public traffic. The idea behind the successful control of traffic during an incident is to minimize congestion and give necessary warning to traffic.

Incident management procedures and standards apply to all incident management operations, including special events and disasters. They apply to all public roadways regardless of the situation. If the incident is expected to last more than three days, then

MUTCD procedures shall be used. Hurricanes are typical of this type of incident.

If you are called upon to assist with an incident, be sure to apply the MUTCD where required and work with the controlling agency to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

About Craig Safety Technologies

Craig Safety Technologies, Inc. was founded in 1998 by Brenda Craig, a leader in industrial safety and safety software. Craig Safety Technologies provides Compliance Safety Manager™, a comprehensive and highly flexible web-based safety compliance management solution created to help companies understand and meet the regulatory requirements of the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Craig Safety Technologies, Inc. specializes in providing accountability and risk management for personnel and equipment assets for organizations across multiple industries. Specific CST services include: conducting on-site assessments of compliance readiness; training, documentation; and prescribing and implementing activities to ensure compliance with federal regulations. In 2004, CST delivered one of the industry's first comprehensive patented software to document DOT and OSHA compliance activities necessary to comply with federal mandates.