



Safety Message of the Day for IMEA Members

Measurement of accident
Frequency rate=?
Severity Rate (S.R.) ?
Formula of accident
calculation?

Severity and Frequency Safety Message

When evaluating hazards of a new job or task, many professionals evaluate severity versus frequency (or likelihood of occurring). Using this method enables an individual to compare a less severe but more frequent outcome to a severe but less frequently occurring outcome to decide where to place the most time, energy, and resources in mitigating hazards to prevent incidents.

Defining Severity

Severity is defined as “the fact or condition of being severe”. Severe is then defined as “of something bad or undesirable; intense”.

Defining Frequency

Frequency is defined as “the rate at which something occurs or is repeated over a particular period of time or in a given sample”.

Defining and looking at both severity and frequency helps to avoid only focusing on the less frequent “big” hazards that result in severe consequences such as a fatality. Attention also needs to be given to issues such as trip hazards that are much more frequent with a lesser outcome of severity. Often times it is smaller, more common hazards that lead to the majority of workplace injuries, not the hazards that cause the most severe outcomes.

Discussion point:

-Do you think the hazards that cause severe injuries take attention away from the more frequent common hazards that cause the majority of injuries in the workplace, such as a trip hazard?