



Jim Persons
jimpersons@safetypride.com
707-889-0881

Not a Big Deal - Until it is

Most of us have heard of the saying *"it is not a big deal until it is."* Whether it is related to production or safety, there are always issues that are recognized, but nothing is done to correct them in a timely matter. These issues are left unchanged until something occurs, and then it becomes a huge deal to upper management or someone else.

This kind of situation occurs every day at many companies. When these situations occur when dealing with workplace safety, leaving hazards unaddressed can lead to injuries or worse. When an injury occurs, that unaddressed hazard is sure to become a big deal.

Unaddressed Hazards in the Workplace:

How many hazards are knowingly walked past every day at work? Why is this a common occurrence at many jobsites? Are employees lazy? Are managers careless? Does no one care? The list of reasons why hazards are walked past and left unaddressed can be a long one. A few common related responses when asking why a hazard is left unaddressed are:

- *"It's not a big deal"*
- *"It will be okay"*
- *"It has always been like that, no one is worried about it"*

The problem with these responses is that it shows that **there is complacency** towards the situation, as well as there are multiple people not taking action to correct the hazard. These types of responses often show that bigger problems are present, not just the carelessness of one or two individuals.

When a Hazard Becomes a Big Deal:

As mentioned above, we have all witnessed situations that are much like ticking time bombs in the workplace.

For the most part, we all know what needs to be done, and we know what the expectation is for the work that we do, including working safely.

Often times the upper management of a company has high expectations for their worksites to work safely; however, hazards are left unaddressed at an individual site level or in part of a facility. When an injury occurs due to a hazard that has been recognized but not corrected, this is when it becomes a big deal for everyone involved.

Summary:

Do not wait for an issue to become a big deal before addressing it, especially when it comes to hazards at work.

We do not always have total control over each and every situation, but there is always something we can do to try to bring it to light or get it corrected.

Choosing to take action can make the difference in preventing an injury.