



Learning From Near Misses

Our final daily safety tip for National Police Week covers an often-overlooked area of workplace safety: near misses for police officers. Near misses are difficult to track because, as the name indicates, they do not lead to a direct workplace injury. The ability to identify when a near miss occurs, study the circumstances around it, and implement proactive corrections can greatly assist in spotting policy, practice, and training deficiencies before a near miss becomes a tragic incident.

All our member municipalities understand that police work is difficult and dangerous. Law enforcement officers navigate serious injuries and fatalities every year, each one a teachable moment for other police officers. Near misses can present the same learning opportunity with the benefit of the lesson being taught by those involved.

In 2014, the National Policing Institute developed and launched the Law Enforcement Officer Near Miss Reporting System (LEO Near Miss) with funding support from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office). Modeled after successful near miss reporting systems in other industries like aviation, LEO Near Miss is an online platform that enables law enforcement personnel to read about and anonymously share near misses, often referred to as close calls.

A near miss is defined as any incident where an officer was almost seriously injured or killed but harm or death was avoided. Every near miss offers valuable lessons learned and reminders that, if shared with the law enforcement community, can be incorporated into training and policy development proactively to mitigate risks, and improve officer safety. Today, LEO Near Miss contains hundreds of near misses and lessons learned from officers across the country. It serves as a no-cost resource for law enforcement personnel looking for quick training material to improve their safety in the performance of their duties.

Learning from incidents and near misses involves conducting thorough investigations to identify root causes and underlying and contributing factors. By analyzing these incidents, all municipal operations, including law enforcement, can uncover weaknesses in hazard analysis practices and identify areas for improvement.

The Comp Alliance Risk Management Department once again recognizes the hazards instinctive to police operations and thanks our members for their hard work and dedication to our communities. Should you have any additional questions or requests for more information, please reach out to our Director of Loss Control, Robert Blaisdell at rblaisdell@wrightinsurance.com or (518) 330-8591.