

Investigation Process

What triggers a fatality or catastrophe investigation by the N.C. Department of Labor?

- A worker's death.
- Hospitalization of three or more employees.
- The department may also receive information of a fatality or catastrophe from media reports or referrals from other government agencies.

How is NCDOL notified?

- An employer must notify NCDOL within eight hours of a worker's fatality or the hospitalization of three or more workers.

What will the investigation focus on?

- The investigation will usually be limited to the events surrounding the accident unless observations at the site indicate a broader investigation is needed.

What will happen during the investigation?

- An NCDOL investigator will go to the accident site and collect physical evidence, including photographs.
- The investigator will interview employees, witnesses and management officials about the accident to determine its cause.
- Any violations of safety and health standards will be noted and citations will be issued.

How long will the investigation take?

- An investigation can take anywhere from a few weeks to six months, depending on the complexity of the accident.

When are investigation results disclosed?

- Citations and penalties, if issued, can be released to the public on the issuance date.
- Other contents of the file cannot be released until the case is closed or final order on citations is rendered.



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Construction vehicles, such as this dump truck, must meet the safety requirements listed in 29 CFR 1926.601.

The Investigation

Investigators will seek to determine several factors, including whether:

- Truck had an audible warning device.
- A reverse signal alarm was in place or a signaling employee helped with clearance if the driver's view was obstructed.
- Cab protected the driver from debris and falling materials.
- Cracked or broken glass was repaired.
- Defective equipment was used. Equipment should be inspected daily.
- Training on hazard recognition was provided to workers.
- A worker directing a truck's path remained in the driver's line of vision.

Standards: 29 CFR 1926.601, Motor Vehicles

Industry Type: Construction

Accident Type: Struck by truck

Statistical Data: In 2005, 80 workers died on the job, including 27 in construction.

What programs does the Department of Labor have in place to prevent struck-by accidents?

Construction special emphasis program: Increased training and consultation in one of the most dangerous industries.

Free training: Customized training, consultation and standards assistance.

Publications: Brochures, alerts and industry guides.