

Learning from Incidents: Verify the Fix

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v1.0 | Reviewed October 6, 2026 | Discussion + field checks

Why this matters

An incident report can be closed while the original exposure remains. Before repeating similar work, identify the protection that changed and the evidence that it functions. Share useful learning without guessing at causes or naming people unnecessarily.

Objective: Connect an incident lesson to a specific control and verify it before similar exposure.

Key hazards or failure points

Blame replacing evidence; unconfirmed conclusions; an action closed on paper; a fix unsuitable elsewhere; continued exposure during review; private details shared unnecessarily.

Practical controls

- First protect people and follow emergency and reporting procedures. Preserve relevant evidence when safe and authorized. Do not disturb the scene or recreate the event for a toolbox demonstration.
- Use an approved, factual learning summary. Separate established facts from questions still under investigation. Ask which conditions and controls matter to today's task, including similar work elsewhere.
- Identify each required corrective control, its owner and acceptance source. Keep suitable interim protection or hold affected work until the approved permanent arrangement is ready.

Verify It in the Field

At the work location, compare the corrective action with the actual setup. Confirm the equipment, procedure revision and conditions match the approved change. A purchase order, training roster or closed action box does not show field performance.

Have the appropriate person complete the prescribed safe inspection or function check against the applicable requirement, instructions or approved design. Never reproduce the hazardous event or intentionally expose a person to see whether the fix works.

Ask affected workers to explain what changed and what failure would make them stop. Record the control, criterion, actual result, checker and time. Assign a later check to learn whether the improvement remains usable and whether similar locations need review.

Stop and reassess

Hold affected work for a missing or failed required control, conflicting findings, changed conditions or an unclear restart decision. Keep people protected while the responsible person resolves the issue. Recheck and communicate the authorized restart; investigation closure alone is not clearance.

Ask the crew

1. Which verified lesson applies to the work we are doing today?
2. What evidence shows the corrective control is present and functioning?
3. Where else could the same condition exist, and who will check?

Before similar exposure: verify the correction where the work happens.

Sources: OSHA Incident Investigation; Hazard Prevention and Control guidance; approved action plan.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance, references, supervisor check and attendance record accompany this talk.