

Case Study: 1st Response at Rocky Mountain

Oct 19, 2026 · By Wesley Yielding

Mortenson, general contractor on Xcel Energy's Rocky Mountain project, spent \$415,000 on 1st Response onsite care from Nov 19, 2024 to Mar 5, 2026. The site recorded 1 OSHA recordable case in 575,000 worker-hours, a rate 84% below the construction industry average. Valuing the offsite visits avoided and the gap to the industry injury rate, the program returned an estimated \$1.73 for every \$1 spent, a net savings of about \$304,100.

1st Response handled 314 first-aid encounters on the project and resolved 309 of them (98.4%) on site. Of the 113 work-related encounters, 111 (98.2%) were resolved on site.

The encounter and recordable counts are exact. The dollar figures are estimates, and the last section shows every input behind them.

The project

On a site this size, every injury or illness forces a choice: treat the worker where they stand, or send them off the job to a clinic. Mortenson brought 1st Response on site so the first option was always available.

Owner	Xcel Energy
General contractor	Mortenson
Site	Rocky Mountain, near Pueblo, Colorado
1st Response on site	Nov 19, 2024 to Mar 5, 2026
Peak workforce	500
Worker-hours	575,000
Staffing	One nationally registered paramedic (NREMT-P), 6 to 7 days a week
Services	Onsite medical care and first aid, drug testing, case management

Results: 98% of encounters resolved on site

1st Response resolved 98% of both work-related and personal encounters on site, including 111 of the 113 work-related ones.

Encounter type	Encounters	Resolved on site	Percent resolved
Work-related	113	111	98.2%
Personal	201	198	98.5%
Total	314	309	98.4%

Those 314 encounters covered 196 individual workers across 542 visits. The 228 follow-up visits were handled on site as well, so a worker did not have to leave the job for a recheck. Two in three encounters were personal, and they matter to the contractor too. A worker with a non-work health problem who gets seen on site stays on shift instead of leaving to find care.

Safety: recordable rate 84% below industry

The site recorded 1 OSHA recordable case in 575,000 worker-hours. A construction workforce working the same hours at the industry average rate would expect about 6.

Measure	Rocky Mountain	Construction industry average
Recordable rate (cases per 200,000 hours)	0.35	2.2
Recordable cases over 575,000 hours	1	6.3

The industry rate is the Bureau of Labor Statistics figure for private construction in 2024 ([BLS](#)). Fast first aid on site helps keep minor injuries minor, and Mortenson's own safety program shares the credit.

Return on investment: \$1.73 back per \$1

The savings come from two places: offsite visits the site never needed, and recordable injuries it did not have compared with the industry rate.

Line	Amount
Encounters resolved on site	309
Assumed cost of one offsite clinic or ER visit	\$1,500
Offsite visit cost avoided	\$463,500
Recordable cases below the industry rate (6.325 expected, 1 recorded)	5.325
Average cost per medically consulted work injury (NSC, 2024)	\$48,000
Recordable injury cost avoided	\$255,600
Total estimated cost avoided	\$719,100
Program cost	\$415,000
Estimated net savings to the general contractor	\$304,100
Estimated return on investment	73%

The same program cost also paid for drug testing and case management.

How it worked

Nothing here is exotic. The return comes from putting care where the work is and paying only for what the site needs.

- **Care in minutes.** Workers were seen within minutes of an injury, on site, instead of after a drive and a waiting room.
- **Coverage sized to the job.** One provider on the site's own schedule, 6 to 7 days a week, with no clinic facility to carry.
- **Workers stay on the job.** No trip, no escort pulled off the crew, no half-day lost to a clinic visit.

- **Follow-up on site.** Rechecks happened where the worker already was: 228 follow-up visits across the project.
- **One provider, several jobs.** The same program covered first aid, drug testing and case management.
- **Personal health included.** 201 non-work problems were seen on site too, which kept those workers on shift.

Where the numbers come from

The counts are measured and the dollars are modeled. Each figure below is labeled as one or the other.

Figure	Source	Precision
Encounters: 314 total, 113 work-related, 201 personal	1st Response electronic patient charts for this site, Nov 19, 2024 to Mar 5, 2026	Exact count
Resolved on site: 309 total, 111 work-related, 198 personal	The same charts. An encounter is resolved when it closes with a completed 1st Response visit.	Exact count
Work-related or personal	The final determination recorded on each chart	Exact count
OSHA recordable cases: 1	Reported by the general contractor	Exact count
Worker-hours: 575,000; peak workforce: 500	Payroll hours and headcount reported by the general contractor, which approved these metrics for publication	As reported
Program cost: \$415,000	1st Response contract value	As recorded
Industry recordable rate: 2.2	Bureau of Labor Statistics, private construction, 2024	Published figure

Figure	Source	Precision
Cost per recordable injury: \$48,000	National Safety Council cost per medically consulted work injury, 2024. Includes wage loss, medical, administrative and employer costs.	Published national average, not the contractor's claims data
Offsite visit: \$1,500	Planning assumption covering the visit, transport and paid time away from work	Assumption, not a billed figure

How encounters were counted. The count was built to run low, not high.

- Only first-aid encounters count. Drug tests, alcohol tests and physicals are excluded.
- Test and training charts are removed.
- Visits by the same worker within 4 days count as one encounter, so 542 visits became 314 encounters.
- An encounter charted as both work-related and personal is counted once, under its final determination.

How far the estimate can bend. The return stays positive under every conservative case below.

Scenario	Cost avoided	Return per \$1
Base case	\$719,100	\$1.73
Only half the recordable gap credited to 1st Response	\$591,300	\$1.42
Offsite visit cost cut in half (\$750)	\$487,350	\$1.17
Work-related encounters only (111 offsite visits)	\$422,100	\$1.02

With the recordable line as modeled, the program breaks even at 107 avoided offsite visits, about a third of the 309 resolved on site.

Published sources

- [Bureau of Labor Statistics, construction injury and illness rates](#)
- [National Safety Council, Injury Facts: Work Injury Costs](#)