

Safety Cornerstones

Provided By: Friedman Associates
A Newsletter of Practical Compliance and Safety Tips

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Don't miss out on this free service, which can save you fines and help you to prevent losses.



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This toxic substance found in many workplaces is the subject of a new emphasis program by OSHA.



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A new "Introduction to OSHA" component has been added.



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Taking Advantage of Free On-Site OSHA Consultations

Addressing hazards in the workplace saves money and adds value to your business; however, it is often difficult to navigate the many and constantly changing safety regulations and procedures that apply. If you are serious about job safety and health in your business, OSHA strives to work with you to help you understand the hazards specific to your business, stay in compliance and prevent losses. The organization's on-site consultation service could prove invaluable for the health of your business.

Can this be used against me?

This service is completely separate from enforcement and cannot result in penalties or citations. In fact, when you make use of a free consultation, you may even qualify for a one-year exemption from routine OSHA inspections. It is also confidential; any information you provide about your workplace, plus any unsafe or unhealthful working conditions that the consultant uncovers, will not be routinely reported to the OSHA inspection staff.

How can this help my business?

Understanding the workplace hazards that

you uniquely face often helps you to improve your operations and the management of your firm. The well-trained professional that administers this consultation provides you and your employees with professional advice and assistance on ways to correct workplace hazards.

What will the consultant do?

The safety and hazard consultant will provide you on-site training and assistance regarding any safety concern that arises. He or she can also help you establish or strengthen an employee safety and health program, making safety and health activities routine considerations rather than crisis-oriented responses. Post-consultation, some states allow employers to participate in the OSHA Consultation SHARP (Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program).

What is SHARP?

This program recognizes small employers who operate an exemplary safety and health management system. It provides incentives and support to high-hazard employers who develop, implement and continuously improve effective safety and health programs at their worksite. Employers who request a

free consultation visit and meet other specific program requirements can gain exemption from general scheduled OSHA inspections for one year.

How do I schedule the consultation?

The consultation is voluntary, so you must initiate the process by calling your local OSHA office. A consultant will discuss your specific needs and set up a visit date based on the priority of your request, your work schedule and the time needed for consultant preparation. OSHA encourages a complete review of your safety and health situation, but you may limit the consultation to one or more specific problems if you wish.

What are my post-visit obligations?

Your only obligation will be your commitment to correcting the serious job safety and health hazards that you may discover – a commitment that you must uphold whether or not you take advantage of OSHA's consultation service. You have nothing to lose and much to gain!

New Required Content for OSHA 10- and 30-Hour Outreach Training Program

“Introduction to OSHA” is a new training component that is now required content in every OSHA 10- and 30-hour Outreach Training Program class. It focuses on the importance of workers’ rights and educates them about their rights to:

- Safe and healthful workplaces
- Know about the presence and effects of hazardous chemicals
- Review information about injuries and illnesses in their workplaces
- Receive training
- Request or file for an OSHA inspection and participate in that inspection
- Be free from retaliation for exercising their safety and health rights

OSHA trainers cover topics on whistleblower rights and filing a complaint, and will provide samples of a weekly fatality and catastrophe report, material data safety sheets and the OSHA Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses. Trainers can obtain test and answer sheets from their authorizing training organization. The OSHA training program is voluntary, but is mandated in several states. While some companies choose to have an OSHA trainer on staff, others allow employees to take the training program on the computer. Find more information about the course, visit www.osha.gov/dcsp/ote.



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New NEP on Hexavalent Chromium

OSHA recently issued a National Emphasis Program containing updated standards which regulate workplace exposures to hexavalent chromium in general industry, construction and maritime. This substance is used as an anticorrosive agent in paints, primers and other surface coatings. It can also be formed when performing “hot work” such as welding on stainless steel or melting chromium metal, and it presents a serious health risk to those exposed to it. It is also often found in conjunction with other toxic substances, including arsenic, cadmium, calcium oxide and lead. The recently issued Program targets at-risk facilities, identifies activities most likely to involve overexposure, and provides procedures and plans for compliance assistance. Find a copy of the Program at www.osha.gov.

OSHA Proposes \$346k+ in Fines to Elevator Manufacturer

Fines to a Bronx, N.Y. elevator cab manufacturer follow 18 alleged violations of safety and health standards, chiefly for failing to correct hazards cited during prior OSHA inspections. The sizable fines reflect the severe and recurring nature of these hazards, which included lack of explosion-proof wiring and equipment in a paint spray room; no chemical hazard communication program and training; no respiratory protection program; no fire extinguisher and forklift operator training; improper disposal of flammable rags; and improperly used extension cords.

The company could have prevented these recurring hazards by establishing an effective comprehensive workplace safety and health program in which workers take an active role in evaluating, identifying and eliminating hazards. Take a look at your own safety program. Are there components that are missing or require improvement? How would a hefty fine fit into your budget?

Worker Fatally Falls From a Rack at Walmart

On April 19, a worker in a Fayetteville, Ark., Walmart climbed onto a rack. While attempting to access the nearby ladder, he missed it and fell to the concrete floor below, resulting in his death. Tragedies like this one are not uncommon, but in many cases they are preventable.

Review your company’s fall protection program. Does it sufficiently address any danger of falling there might be in your workplace? The time and money invested in developing or improving existing safety measures is well worth the life or well-being of an employee.

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