

Loss Control Bulletin

*A Policy of Working Together
for a Safer Tomorrow*

OSHA - Occupational Safety and Health Administration

With the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, Congress created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to establish and enforce workplace standards that protect workers' rights and ensure that employers act responsibly to provide workplaces that are free from known dangers that can hurt workers. OSHA is part of the United States Department of Labor.

OSHA was established on April 28, 1971. In the four decades since, workplace fatalities have decreased more than 60% and occupational injury and illness rates have decreased more than 65%. However, workers still die on the job every day and each year millions more suffer a serious job-related injury or illness.

OSHA's mission is to protect workers from deadly safety hazards at work and from exposure to toxic chemicals; to ensure that workers in high-risk jobs are properly educated about their job hazards; and to provide employers with assistance regarding safe work practices to save lives.

Who is covered

Most employees in the nation come under OSHA's jurisdiction. OSHA covers private sector employers and employees in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and other U.S. jurisdictions either directly through Federal OSHA or through an OSHA-approved state program. State-run health and safety programs must be at least as effective as the Federal OSHA program.

Employees who work for state and local governments are not covered by Federal OSHA, but have OSH Act protections if they work in a state that has an OSHA-approved state program. As of 2011, four additional states and one U.S. territory have OSHA approved plans that cover public sector employees only. This includes: Connecticut, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and the Virgin Islands.

Who is not covered

The self-employed; immediate family members of farm employers that do not employ outside employees; and workplace hazards regulated by another Federal agency (for example, the Mine Safety and Health Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Coast Guard).

OSHA standards

OSHA standards are rules that describe the methods that employers must use to protect their employees from hazards. There are OSHA standards for Construction work, Agriculture, Maritime operations, and General Industry, which are the standards that apply to most worksites. These standards limit the amount of hazardous chemicals workers can be exposed to, require the use of certain safe practices and equipment, and require employers to monitor hazards and keep records of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Employers must also comply with the General Duty Clause of the OSH Act, which requires employers to keep their workplace free of serious recognized hazards. This clause is generally cited when no OSHA standard applies to the hazard.



Employer responsibilities

Employers have the responsibility to provide a safe workplace. Employers MUST provide their employees with a workplace that does not have serious hazards and follow all relevant OSHA safety and health standards. Employers must find and correct safety and health problems. OSHA further requires employers to try to eliminate or reduce hazards first by making changes in working conditions rather than just relying

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on masks, gloves, ear plugs or other types of personal protective equipment (PPE). Switching to safer chemicals, enclosing processes to trap harmful fumes, or using ventilation systems to clean the air are examples of effective ways to get rid of or minimize risks.

Employee responsibilities

To help prevent exposure to workplace safety and health hazards, employees must comply with all OSHA requirements that apply to their actions and conduct.

OSHA's free on-site consultation program for small and medium-sized businesses

OSHA's On-site Consultation Program offers free and confidential advice to small and medium-sized businesses in all states across the country, with priority given to high-hazard worksites. On-site Consultation services are separate from enforcement and do not result in penalties or citations. Consultants from state agencies or universities work with employers to identify workplace hazards, provide advice on compliance with OSHA standards, and assist in establishing safety and health management systems.

OSHA offices

OSHA has 10 Regional Offices. The offices for states in which Grinnell Mutual writes insurance are listed below. In addition OSHA operates

about 100 area offices nationwide, offers a toll-free phone number (1-800-321-6742) with multi-language operators, and makes abundant information available for free on its Web site (www.OSHA.gov).

Region V

Chicago Regional Office

(IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
230 South Dearborn Street, Room 3244
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 353-2220
(312) 353-7774 FAX

Region VII

Kansas City Regional Office

(IA, KS, MO, NE)
Two Pershing Square Building
2300 Main Street, Suite 1010
Kansas City, Missouri 64108-2416
(816) 283-8745
(816) 283-0547 FAX

Region VIII

Denver Regional Office

(SD, ND, CO, UT, WY, MT)
1999 Broadway, Suite 1690
Denver, Colorado 80202
720-264-6550
720-264-6585 FAX

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