

OSHA's Top Ten Most Frequently Cited Violations

Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration releases a preliminary list of the 10 most frequently cited safety and health violations for the fiscal year, compiled from nearly 32,000 inspections of workplaces by federal OSHA staff. One remarkable thing about the list is that it rarely changes. Year after year, inspectors see thousands of the same on-the-job hazards, any one of which could result in a fatality or severe injury. **More than 4,500 workers are killed on the job every year**, and approximately 3 million are injured, despite the fact that by law, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their workers.

1) Fall Protection

It's no coincidence that falls are among the leading causes of worker deaths, particularly in construction, and our top 10 list features lack of fall protection as well as ladder and scaffold safety issues. We know how to protect workers from falls, and have an ongoing campaign to inform employers and workers about these measures. Employers must take these issues seriously.

2) Hazard Communication

Lack written program and training.

3) Scaffolds

Not constructed properly and poor access.

4) Respiratory Protection

Respiratory protection is essential for preventing long term and sometimes fatal health problems associated with breathing in asbestos, silica or a host of other toxic substances.

5) Lockout/Tagout

Far too many workers killed or gruesomely injured when machinery starts up suddenly while being repaired, or hands and fingers are exposed to moving parts. Lockout/tagout and machine guarding violations are often the culprit here. Proper lockout/tagout procedures ensure that machines are powered off and can't be turned on while someone is working on them.

6) Powered Industrial Trucks

The high number of fatalities associated with forklifts, and high number of violations for powered industrial truck safety, tell us that many workers are not being properly trained to safely drive these kinds of potentially hazardous equipment.

7) Ladders

Improper use.

8) Machine Guarding

Guarding. Install guards to keep hands, feet and other appendages away from moving machinery prevents amputations and worse.

9) Electrical wiring

Rounding out the top 10 list are violations related to electrical safety, an area where the dangers are well-known.

10) Electrical, General Requirements

Installation, extension cords, PPE.

If all employers simply corrected the top 10 hazards, the number of deaths, amputations and hospitalizations would drastically decline. Consider this list a starting point when auditing for workplace safety at your facility.

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