



2007 Most Frequently Cited OSHA Standards

OSHA annually reports the leading causes of workplace injuries during its fiscal year (October through September). This year, the 2007 "top 10" list of most frequently cited standards will look familiar — the top spots have remained relatively unchanged for the past three years. This stability is good news for risk managers and safety directors. It provides a compass as to where to focus your safety efforts to protect both employees and the bottom line.

	<u>Standard</u>
1. Scaffolding (construction)	29 CFR 1926.501
2. Fall protection	29 CFR 1926.501
3. Hazard communication	29 CFR 1910.1200
4. Lockout/Tagout	29 CFR 1910.147
5. Respiratory protection	29 CFR 1910.134
6. Powered industrial trucks	29 CFR 1910.178
7. Electrical	29 CFR 1910.305
8. Ladders (construction)	29 CFR 1926.1053
9. Machine guarding	29 CFR 1910.212
10. Electrical systems design	29 CFR 1910.303

Top 10 OSHA Trends

1. Scaffolding

In the National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2005, an average of 88 fatalities occurred in the years 2000-2004 from scaffolds, staging. In a 2006 Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) study, 72% of workers injured in scaffold accidents attributed the accident either to the planking or support giving way, or to the employee slipping or being struck by a falling object. All of these can be controlled by compliance with OSHA standards.

2. Fall Protection

In 2005, the BLS reported that 767 workers died in fatal falls, a 7 percent decline from the series high recorded in 2004. Falls from ladders and roofs still account for the majority of falls. Identifying fall hazards and deciding how best to protect workers is the first step in reducing or eliminating fall hazards. This includes guardrail systems, safety net systems and personal fall protection systems, as well as through the use of safe work practices and training.

3. Hazard Communication

In order to ensure chemical safety in the workplace, information must be available about the identities and hazards of the chemicals. OSHA standard 1910.1200 governs hazard communication to workers about chemicals produced or imported into the workplace. Failure to develop and maintain a written program, failure to maintain training, failure to have a material safety data sheet for each hazardous chemical and lack of employee training typically top the citation list.

4. Lockout/Tagout (Control of Hazardous Energy)

Lockout/Tagout (LOTO) refers to specific practices and procedures to safeguard employees from the unexpected energization or startup of machinery and equipment, or the release of hazardous energy during service or maintenance activities. Workers who service equipment face the greatest risk of injury if lockout/tagout is not properly implemented. Workers injured on the job from exposure to hazardous energy lose an average of 24 workdays for recuperation.

5. Respiratory Protection

From program administration to worksite-specific procedures to respirator use, standard 1910.134 provides employers guidance in establishing and maintaining a respiratory inspection program. Respirators protect workers against insufficient oxygen environments, harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapors and sprays. These hazards may cause cancer, lung impairment, other diseases or death.

6. Powered Industrial Trucks

Each year, tens of thousands of injuries related to powered industrial trucks, or forklifts, occur. Many employees are injured when lift trucks are driven off loading docks, lifts fall between docks and an unsecured trailer, they are struck by a lift truck, or when they fall while on elevated pallets and tines. Most incidents also involve property damage, including damage to overhead sprinklers, racking, pipes, walls and machinery.

7. Electrical Methods (general industry)

Many workers are unaware of the potential electrical hazards present in their work environment, which makes them more vulnerable to the danger of electrocution. Common citations include failure to effectively close conductors entering boxes, cabinets or fittings and protect from abrasion; failure to provide all pull boxes, junction boxes and fittings with covers approved for the purpose; failure to connect flexible cords to devices and fittings so strain and relief is provided to prevent pull from being directly transmitted to joints or terminal screws; and using flexible cords and cables as a substitute for the fixed wiring of a structure.

8. Ladders - Construction

Injuries from ladders typically occur when ladders are used for a purpose other than for which they were designed, using the top or top step of a stepladder as a step, failure to use ladders on stable and level surfaces and not tagging and withdrawing defective ladders from service. Most employee injuries can be attributed to insufficient or inadequate training and lack of following safe operating procedures.

9. Machine Guarding

Moving machine parts have the potential to cause severe workplace injuries, such as crushed fingers or hands, amputations, burns or blindness. Safeguards are essential for protecting workers from these preventable injuries. Any machine part, function or process that may cause injury must be safeguarded. When the operation of a machine or accidental contact injures the operator or others in the vicinity, the hazards must be eliminated or controlled.

10. Electrical - General Requirements

Electricity has long been recognized as a serious workplace hazard. OSHA's electrical standards are designed to protect employees exposed to dangers such as electric shock, electrocution, fires and explosions. Electrical hazards that top the electrical citation's list include the failure to install and use electrical equipment according to factory instructions, failure to guard electrical equipment, failure to identify disconnecting means and circuits, and not keeping work spaces clear.



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By taking proactive steps to eliminate hazards now, your efforts may prevent accidents that will boost employee morale, and save you frustrating downtime, costly overtime, workers' compensation claim costs, OSHA fines, or even a potential lawsuit. OSHA compliance can be stressful, but developing programs and following regulations shouldn't be. Contact us at 727-447-6481 to discuss your OSHA program needs and to learn more about how we can assist you.

Source: OSHA

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