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Orientation Training Program

What is the "OSHA"?

Occupational Safety and Health Administration:

The United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is an agency of the United States Department of Labor. It was created by Congress under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, signed by President Richard M. Nixon, on December 29, 1970. Its mission is to prevent work-related injuries, illnesses, and deaths by issuing and enforcing rules (called standards) for workplace safety and health.

OSHA federal regulations cover most private sector workplaces. The OSH Act permits states to develop approved plans as long as they cover public sector employees and they provide protection equivalent to that provided under Federal OSHA regulations. In return, a portion of the cost of the approved State program is paid by the Federal Government. Twenty-two states and territories operate plans covering both the public and private sectors and four — Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and the US Virgin Islands — operate public employee only plans. In those four states, private sector employment remains under Federal OSHA jurisdiction.

The most common violations and audits of companies under OSHA regulations include many of the changes in industrial safety regulation brought about by OSHA:

- Guards on all moving parts - By 1970, there were guards to prevent inadvertent contact with most moving parts that were accessible in the normal course of operation. With OSHA, use of guards was expanded to cover essentially all parts where contact is possible.
- Permissible exposure limits (PEL) - Maximum concentrations of chemicals stipulated by regulation for chemicals and dusts. They cover around 600 chemicals. Most are based on standards issued by other organizations in 1968 or before.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) - broader use of respirators, gloves, coveralls, and other protective equipment when handling hazardous chemicals; goggles, face shields, ear protection in typical industrial environments
- Lockout/tagout - In the 1980s, requirements for locking out energy sources (securing them in an "off" condition) when performing repairs or maintenance
- Confined space - In the 1990s, specific requirements for air sampling and use of a "buddy system" when working inside tanks, manholes, pits, bins, and similar enclosed areas
- Hazard Communication (HazCom) - Also known as the "Right to Know" standard, was issued as 29CFR1910.1200 on November 25, 1983 (48 FR 53280), requires developing and communicating information on the hazards of chemical products used in the workplace.
- Process Safety Management (PSM) - Issued in 1992 as 29CFR1910.119 in an attempt to reduce large scale industrial accidents. Although enforcement of the standard has been spotty, its principles have long been widely accepted by the petrochemical industry.
- Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP)- In 1990, OSHA issued a standard designed to prevent health care (and other) workers from being exposed to bloodborne pathogens such as hepatitis B and HIV.
- Exposure to asbestos - OSHA has established requirements in 29 CFR 1910.1001 for occupational exposure to asbestos. These requirements apply to most workplaces - most notably excepted is construction work. "Construction work" means work for construction, alteration and/or repair including painting and decorating. Occupational exposure requirements for asbestos in construction work can be found in 29 CFR 1926.1101.

Any manufacturing company in the United States falls under the regulatory eye of OSHA and is required, by law, to comply with its policies.