

Loss Control & Safety Tips



OSHA Safe + Sound Week is August 9-15

Safe + Sound Week is a nationwide event held each August that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and offers information and idea on how to keep workers safe.

Why participate?

Successful safety & health programs can proactively identify and manage workplace hazards before they cause injury or illness, improving sustainability and the bottom line. Participating in this can help get your program started, energize an existing one, or provide a chance to recognize your safety successes.

Who can participate?

All organization that are looking for an opportunity to recognize their commitment to safety are welcome to participate. In 2020, more than 3,400 businesses helped to raise awareness about workers' health and safety!

What can you do?

- **Strengthen or establish a safety and health program** - This is a proactive way to manage hazards in the workplace to prevent injuries and illnesses.
- **Find and Fix Hazards** - Establish an ongoing process that helps better identify and control sources of potential injuries and illnesses.
- **Management Leadership** - Provide the leadership, vision and resources needed to implement an effective safety and health program.
- **Worker Participation** - Engage workers at all levels in establishing, implementing, evaluating, and improving safety and health in the workplace.

Be #SafeAndSoundAtWork

Loss Control & Risk Management Solutions

There is never a one size fits all approach to developing a safety system. The common elements existing in almost all health and safety systems are: management leadership, worker participation, hazard identification and assessment, hazard prevention and control, education and training, and program evaluation and improvement. These elements are both interrelated and interdependent but necessary to ensure the success of any program.

Call us today to discuss your organization's loss control and safety programs or learn more about the services and experience our team has to offer.

Katy Pagano

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Reminder:

Didn't submit your OSHA Form 300A?

Employers may still submit the required 2020 Injury & Illness data to avoid penalties!

This data is to be submitted **March 2nd of every year.**

<https://www.osha.gov/injuryreporting/ita/>



Spring/Summer Worksite Safety Considerations

As the winter season concludes, employers can start preparing for spring projects. Nevertheless, spring weather comes with its own set of risks, as it is the most difficult in the scope of working outdoors.

Between the Physical Hazards, such as fluctuating temperatures, frequent rain showers, fog, heavy winds, you must also be aware of Biological Hazards, such as insects. It is important for employers and employees, to be aware of these warm weather-related dangers!

Physical Hazards:

- **Ensure Adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – Effective PPE is a critical element of protecting staff from spring elements. Employees should have slip-and water-resistant boots to stay safe in wet conditions; Reflective vests to remain visible in fog, and safety glasses or goggles that blocks the sun's rays.
- **Dressing Properly** – While the morning entails brisk temperatures, conditions often become significantly warmer by afternoon- making it difficult to decide what to wear. Staff should be instructed to dress in light, breathable layers that can be removed as temperatures rise.
- **Sun Exposure** – To protect against the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays, use sunscreen. Wearing a hat should protect your neck, face, nose and scalp.
- **Stay Hydrated** – Drink plenty of water. Consuming lots of fluids and foods high in water such as fruits and vegetables can help prevent dehydration.

Biological Hazards:

- **Mosquitoes** – To protect yourself from disease spread by mosquitoes, such as West Nile virus, cover any cuts or scraped and wear insect repellent.
- **Ticks** – When working outside, wear a light colored, long-sleeved shirt, long pants and socks. Peak activity months for ticks are from June through August!
- **Poisonous Plants** – Be aware that not only does direct contact with poisonous plants leave you exposed, but also touching tools that have had direct contact or inhaling particles from burning plants are other hazards.

Latest Updates on COVID-19

So far, more than 131 million Americans have been fully vaccinated.

On April 13th, the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Center of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) called for an immediate halt on the distribution of the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine. The recommendation came as the agency investigated numerous cases of a rare and severe type of blot clot in individuals who received the J&J vaccine. All cases occurred among women from the ages of 18 and 48, and symptoms occurred six to 13 days after vaccination.

On April 26th, the FDA and CDC in a joint statement, have recommended lifting the pause of the J&J COVID-19 vaccine. Available data shows that the vaccine's known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risks in individuals 18 years of age and older.

The FDA and CDC will continue to monitor the safety of all vaccines. "Easy bruising or tiny blood spots under the skin" has been added as a possible symptom to look out for.

Top 10 List of Most-cited OSHA Regulations for 2020 in Construction or General Industry

Employers should use the top ten list as a reminder to emphasize these areas during new employee orientation and existing employee refresher training. Employers should also realize that OSHA will be looking for violations in these areas when they visit your worksite.

Top Ten Standards for Serious Classifications

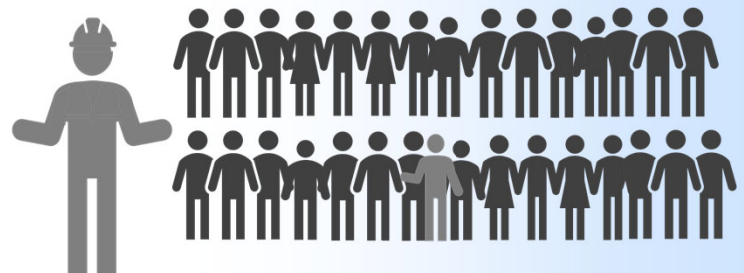
STANDARD	TOTAL VIOLATIONS
1 Fall Protection – General Requirements (1926.501)	4,373
2 Scaffolding (1926.451)	2,392
3 Hazard Communication (1910.1200)	2,082
4 Ladders (1926.1053)	1,931
5 Respiratory Protection (1910.134)	1,845
6 Lockout/Tagout (1910.147)	1,660
7 Powered Industrial Trucks (1910.178)	1,356
8 Personal Protective & Life Saving Equipment – Eye and Face Protection (1926.102)	1,215
9 Fall Protection – Training Requirements (1926.503)	1,167
10 Machine Guarding (1910.212)	1,124

Top Ten Standards for Willful Classifications

STANDARD	TOTAL VIOLATIONS
1 Fall Protection – General Requirements (1926.501)	152
2 Permit-Required Confined Spaces (1910.146)	42
3 Requirements for Protective Systems (1926.652)	27
4 Lockout/Tagout (1910.147)	18
5 Machine Guarding (1910.212)	16
6 Scaffolding (1926.451)	11
7 Ladders (1926.1053)	11
8 OSH Act of 1970 Section (5)(a)(1)	11
9 Hazardous (Classified) Locations (1910.307)	10
10 Powered Industrial Trucks (1910.178)	9

Did you Know?

According to OSHA, nearly 3 out of every 100 workers have a work-related injury during the year. To stay safe, review your employee handbook, job-specific safeguards and proper use of equipment. And don't be afraid to ask if you're unsure about potentially risky situations.





Providing Safety for Women in Construction

As increasing numbers of women enter the construction trades, concerns about their health and safety are growing. In addition to the primary safety and health hazards faced by all construction workers, there are safety and health issues specific to female construction workers. The small percentage of females within the construction trades and the serious health and safety problems unique to female construction workers have a circular effect. Safety and health problems in construction create barriers to women entering and remaining in this field. In turn, the small numbers of female workers on construction worksites foster an environment in which these safety and health problems arise or continue.

Hazards for Women on Construction Sites

There are common hazards for women that work on construction sites. Know how to identify these risks to keep your employees safe:

1. Workplace culture: The construction industry has been overwhelmingly male-dominated for years, and on many job sites, female construction workers are not welcome. Isolation—working as the only female on a job site or being ostracized by co-workers—evokes both stress and fear of assault. Many female construction workers say they are reluctant to report workplace safety and health problems for fear of being tagged as complainers or whiners, which would further strain their workplace relationships and jeopardize their employment.

2. Hostile workplace: A hostile workplace presents safety and health concerns on several levels, ranging from a lack of training and safety information to physical assault. The effects of a hostile workplace are visible in acute as well as chronic stress reactions. OSHA has already begun to recognize workplace violence as an occupational safety and health issue.

3. Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment is a serious problem for female construction workers. Sex discrimination and anti-women attitudes are still prevalent on worksites, despite the fact that sex discrimination is illegal. According to a USA Today analysis of U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Bureau of Labor Statistics data, female construction workers have the second-highest rate of sexual harassment complaints per 100,000 employed women.

Sexual harassment complaints at worksites range from subtle forms such as being stared at or seeing unsuitable images to more blatant forms such as unwanted sexual remarks (including comments on appearance), being touched in inappropriate ways and sexual assault.

4. Hazard reporting: The work culture described above—combined with female construction workers' more tenuous hold on their jobs than that of the more senior workers or male workers—often deters women from reporting unsafe or unhealthy working conditions. Women in a NIOSH study reported that they could not bring up the issue of proper restrooms or worksite safety, because doing so might threaten their employment.

5. Access to sanitary facilities: Access to sanitary facilities is frequently a problem on new construction sites. Temporary facilities are usually unisex, often without privacy and generally not maintained well. The availability and cleanliness of restroom facilities are major concerns for women. Courts have found that the lack of appropriate sanitary facilities is discriminatory and violates OSHA standards.

6. Personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing (PPC) fitment: Many women in nontraditional jobs, such as the construction trades, complain of ill-fitting PPC and PPE. Clothing or equipment that is not sized properly or does not fit can compromise personal safety and the protection offered. It also may not function effectively in the manner for which it was designed.

Ill-fitting PPE may be due to unavailability (e.g., manufacturers don't make it, or distributors don't stock it),

limited availability or lack of knowledge among employers and workers about where equipment designed for a woman's body structure can be obtained.

7. Ergonomics: Studies have shown that to reduce work-related musculoskeletal disorders, tools, materials and equipment should be designed based in part on ergonomic considerations. Tools and equipment, like clothing, are often designed to be used by average-sized men.

8. Reproductive hazards: There is inadequate information on the extent to which female construction workers are exposed to reproductive hazards in the workplace. Reproductive hazards are defined as chemical, physical or biological agents that can cause either reproductive impairment or adverse developmental effects on fetuses.

The vast majority of construction workers are of reproductive age and are at risk of potential harm if exposed to chemicals and conditions which have not been fully studied with respect to their reproductive hazards in humans.

Some employers find it easier to resolve potential problems by denying jobs to women, especially pregnant women. This is in spite of Supreme Court rulings prohibiting employers from continuing such a practice. While these actions may be well-intended, their effect is needless limitation on work opportunities for women. This can lead to discriminatory treatment and result in a female construction worker hiding her pregnancy, possibly endangering herself and her unborn child.



The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) found that in a one-year period, 41% of female construction workers suffered from gender harassment. In a CWIT study, 88% of the respondents reported sexual harassment.

Recommendations for Improving Female Safety

Take steps to promote the safety of female employees:

• Workplace Culture

- Include sexual harassment prevention training in safety and health programs.
- Ensure all communication materials are gender-neutral and include women. Visual materials should include examples of female construction workers to promote an integrated construction workplace.
- To address the problem of workplace isolation, employers, apprenticeship programs and unions (where responsible) should assign female workers to work in groups of two or more, when possible, especially those who are relatively new to the construction trade.
- Make sure supervisors are trained in ensuring the safety of female workers and can answer any questions workers may have.

• Sanitary Facilities

- Gender-separate sanitary facilities should be provided on worksites.
- Where changing rooms are provided on construction sites, they should also be gender-separated and provided with inside and outside locking mechanisms.
- Employees should be allowed to use sanitary or hand-washing facilities as needed.
- Toilet facilities should be kept clean and in good repair with clean toilet paper within reach.
- Hand-washing facilities should exist within close proximity to toilet facilities.

• Health and Safety Training

- Employers and unions should make skills training courses available and encourage all workers to take advantage of them.
- Journeymen should establish mentoring relationships with new workers to provide informal skills and safety training.
- Supervisors need to emphasize safety as well as productivity on the job site.
- Employers should emphasize that safety training is as important as skills training.

- **PPE and PPC**

- The design of PPE and PPC for women should be based on female measurements.
- Union apprenticeship programs should provide female construction workers with resources on where to find equipment and clothing that fits.
- Employers should make sure that all workers of all sizes have well-fitting PPE and PPC for safe and efficient performance.

- **Ergonomics**

- It should be accepted that some workers need to use different lifting and material handling techniques.
- Employers, unions, apprenticeship programs and other training entities should review skills training programs to see whether alternative methods are included for getting work accomplished by workers of different sizes or strengths. All programs should emphasize the importance of safe lifting.
- Workers need to hear from employers and unions that it's acceptable to ask for help and to explore alternative ways to lift and carry.
- All workers should be trained in the proper ways to lift and bend.

- **Reproductive Hazards**

- Employers should post Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for each chemical present on the worksite.
- Workers should read all SDSs and share the information with their physicians if they are pregnant or planning to start a family.
- All workers should educate themselves about the potential reproductive risks from exposure to certain chemicals.
- Employers should make reasonable accommodations for workers in later stages of pregnancy, rather than forcing them out of the workplace.
- During the later stages of pregnancy, women should consult with their physicians about strenuous physical activities on the job.