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2016 Most Frequently Cited OSHA Standards

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently unveiled its top 10 most frequently cited violations. The agency reports the leading causes of workplace injuries during its fiscal year (October through the following September).

The 2016 top 10 list of most frequently cited standards did not change significantly from 2015, with fall protection violations remaining at the top of the list. In fact, the top seven most cited violations remained the same. The 2016 top 10 most frequently cited standards are as follows.

Top 10 OSHA Violations

1. **Fall Protection (29 CFR 1926.501): 6,929 citations**

Falls from ladders and roofs still account for the majority of injuries at work. Identifying fall hazards and deciding how to best protect workers is the first step in eliminating or reducing fall hazards. This includes—but is not limited to—guardrail systems, safety net systems and personal fall protection systems in conjunction with safe work practices and training.

2. **Hazard Communication (29 CFR 1910.1200): 5,677 citations**

In order to ensure chemical safety in the workplace, information must be available about the identities and hazards of all chemicals in use. OSHA standard 1910.1200 governs hazard communication to workers about chemicals that are both produced or imported into the workplace. Both the failure to develop and maintain a proper written training program for employees, as well as the failure to provide a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for every hazardous chemical, top the citation list.

3. **Scaffolding (29 CFR 1926.451): 3,906 citations**

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the vast majority of scaffold accidents can be attributed to the planking or support of the scaffold giving way, or to employees slipping or being struck by falling objects. The dangers associated with scaffold use can be controlled if employers strictly enforce OSHA standards.

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4. **Respiratory Protection (29 CFR 1910.134): 3,585 citations**

Standard 1910.134 provides employers with guidance in establishing and maintaining a respiratory inspection program for program administration, worksite-specific procedures and respirator use. Respirators protect workers from oxygen-deficient environments, harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapors and sprays. These hazards could cause cancer, lung impairment and

other diseases or death.

5. Lockout/Tagout (29 CFR 1910.147): 3,414 citations

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

6. Powered Industrial Trucks (29 CFR 1910.178): 2,860 citations

Each year, tens of thousands of injuries related to powered industrial trucks (particularly forklifts) occur. Many employees are injured when lift trucks are driven off of loading docks or when they fall between docks and unsecured trailers. Other common injuries involve employees being struck by lift trucks or falling from elevated pallets and tines. Most incidents also involve property damage, including damage to overhead sprinklers, racking, pipes, walls and machinery.

7. Ladders (29 CFR 1926.1053): 2,639 citations

These types of violations typically occur when ladders are used for purposes other than those designated by the manufacturer—such as when the top step of a stepladder is used as a step, when ladders are not used on stable and level surfaces, or when defective ladders are not withdrawn from service. Most employee injuries can be attributed to inadequate training and a disregard for safe operating procedures.

8. Machine Guarding (29 CFR 1910.212): 2,451 citations

When left exposed, moving machine parts have the potential to cause serious workplace injuries, such as amputations, burns, blindness and crushed fingers or hands. The risk of employee injury is substantially reduced by installing and maintaining the proper machine guarding.

9. Electrical—Wiring Methods (29 CFR 1910.305): 1,940 citations

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 wiring violations that top the electrical citation list include the failure to install and use electrical equipment according to the manufacturer's instructions, failure to guard electrical equipment, failure to identify disconnecting means or circuits, and not keeping workspaces clear.

10. Electrical—General Requirements (29 CFR 1910.303): 1,704 citations

This standard contains many guidelines to ensure that all electrical components at a worksite are installed and maintained safely. The standard also outlines the amount of clear space needed around electrical equipment.

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