

A Snapshot in Safety and Risk

How to Stay Ahead of OSHA's Most Cited Violations and the 2023 Local Emphasis Program in Your Region

It was a normal Tuesday morning at work when an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspector arrived. There can be a moment of anxiety when you get an unanticipated compliance visit, but thankfully, your organization was prepared. You knew the OSHA inspection process and anticipated the likely areas that the OSHA inspector may focus on.

While there are several reasons for an OSHA inspector to be at your workplace, knowing what types of citations that are most common and what specifically-focused directives might apply to you can help your organization be prepared.

OSHA publishes its list of the top 10 most cited standards each year and communicates directives that indicate the focus areas for potential inspections. Knowing and taking action on the frequently cited standards and focus areas can help reduce the anxiety associated with an OSHA visit.

This newsletter provides summary information regarding the most recent OSHA Top 10 report (2022), and details OSHA's National Emphasis and Local Emphasis Programs (LEPs).

OSHA TOP 10 Most Cited Safety Violations of 2022

#1: Fall Protection – 5,260 Citations

OSHA's Fall Protection standard remains on top of the list for the twelfth year now. The standard focuses on when and where fall protection is required and what safety systems and hazard controls must be used to prevent falls. Learn more about the [Fall Protection Standard](#)

#2: Hazard Communication – 2,424 Citations

This standard requires companies to identify hazardous chemicals in the workplace and provide information about how to classify and label workplace chemicals. It also sets requirements for training employees, using safety data sheets (SDSs), and keeping a written workplace hazard communication plan. Learn more about the [Hazard Communication Standard](#)

#3: Ladders – 2185 Citations

This standard identifies the requirements for the safe use of ladders, extension ladders, wooden ladders, and step ladders. Components, selection, use, and inspection of ladders are covered by this standard. Learn more about the [Stairway & Ladders Standard](#)

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#4: Respiratory Protection – 2,143 Citations

The respiratory protection standard directs employers to keep a written respiratory protection if workers must wear a respirator to protect themselves. The standard includes specific rules for employee training and medical evaluation, as well as respirator selection, fitting, cleaning, use, maintenance, and repair. Learn more about the [Respiratory Protection Standard](#)

#5: Scaffolding – 2,058 Citations

The scaffolding standard covers safety requirements for airlifts, suspended scaffolds, supported scaffolds, and others. Common hazards associated with scaffolds include falls from elevation due to lack of fall protection; collapse of the scaffold due to instability, overloading, maintenance, or set-up; getting struck by falling tools or work materials; and electrocution. Learn more about the [Scaffolding Standard](#)

#6: Control of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout) – 1,977 Citations

The Lockout/Tagout standard protects workers from serious injuries (such as amputation or electrocution) that can arise from unexpected start-ups, cycling of machines, or release of stored energy from a machine during servicing and maintenance. Learn more about the [Control of Hazardous Energy Standard](#)

#7: Powered Industrial Trucks – 1,749 Citations

This standard provides design and construction standards for powered industrial trucks such as forklifts or lift trucks used to raise, lower, or remove objects. The standard also provides requirements for employers to ensure truck operators are properly trained in the operation and safe use standard. Learn more about the [Powered Industrial Truck Standard](#)

#8: Fall Protection Training – 1,556 Citations

This differs from the Fall Protection Standard noted as #1 above (which relates to physical hazard controls and fall protection systems). This standard provides information on employee-required training and education to prevent falls. Learn more about the [Fall Protection – Training Standard](#)

#9: Eye & Face Protection – 1,401 Citations

The eye and face protection standard requires employers to provide eye and face protection to employees when exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, or potentially injurious light radiation. Learn more about the [Eye & Face Protection Standard](#)

#10: Machine Guarding – 1,370 Citations

The machine guarding standard describes safeguards to protect employees from rotating parts, flying pieces, sparks, and other hazards caused by machinery. The standard identifies equipment that usually requires point-of-operation guarding. Learn more about the [Machine Guarding Standard](#)

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OSHA Directives

National Emphasis Programs (NEP)

National Emphasis Programs (NEP) are temporary programs that focus OSHA’s resources on particular hazards and high-hazard industries. Existing and potential new emphasis programs are evaluated using inspection data, injury, and illness data, National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH) reports, peer-reviewed literature, analysis of inspection findings, and other information sources.

Recent NEPs Announced: In May 2023, OSHA announced a NEP to reduce and prevent workplace falls. In July 2023, OSHA announced a NEP focused on warehouses, processing facilities distribution centers, and high-risk retail establishments.

To review the NEP List, [click here](#).

Local Emphasis Programs (LEP)

There are 10 OSHA Regions within the United States. The Local Emphasis Programs (LEPs) are enforcement programs that are designed and implemented at the regional OSHA office and area office levels within the region. Emphasis programs may be implemented by a single area office or at the regional level and applied to all area offices. The programs are intended to address hazards or industries that pose a particular risk to workers within the jurisdiction. The 10 OSHA Regions are as follows by state/territory code:

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| Region 1 – CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT | Region 6 – AR, LA, NM, OK, TX |
| Region 2 – NJ, NY, Puerto Rico, VI | Region 7 – IA, KS, MO, NE |
| Region 3 – DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV | Region 8 – CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY |
| Region 4 – AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN | Region 9 – AZ, CA, HI, NV, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands |
| Region 5 – IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI | Region 10 – AK, ID, OR, WA |

LEPs are accompanied by outreach intended to make employers in the area aware of the programs as well as the hazards that the programs are designed to reduce or eliminate. Outreach for LEPs may be in the form of informational mailings, training at local tradeshow, or speeches at meetings of industry groups or labor organizations.

To view the current LEP for your region, [click here](#).

Resources:

- *OSHA National News Release (7/1/23)*
<https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/07132023>

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- *OSHA Inspection Fact Sheet*
<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/factsheet-inspections.pdf>

For additional information contact:

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