



To proactively protect your employees and avoid OSHA fines you must understand the hazards that exist in your workplace.

- Industries are different
- Every worksite is different
- Employee behavior is not consistent
- Employee supervision may not be consistent
- Your safety knowledge may be lacking in some areas

However, one simple OSHA truism can help you:

OSHA is very predictable; and when something is predictable, it is manageable!

Although we don't know when an accident may occur or when an OSHA compliance officer might stop by your facility, we can properly prepare for an audit and we can always keep our workplaces safe for employees and visitors.

Since predictability is so important in the facility management business, here is a list of the most common OSHA safety violations in a built environment:

1. Hazard communication
2. Machine guarding
3. Electrical hazards
4. Use of flexible cords
5. PPE not properly maintained
6. Blocked exits
7. Fire sprinkler clearances
8. PPE blocked / obstructed
9. Lack of / incorrect OSHA I&I recordkeeping
10. Lack of / incorrect training records

NOTE: This is a general list not and not industry specific

Space does not allow for a full discussion of each of these issues; however, the following pictures and descriptions should help you to spot problems in your facility before the OSHA audit – and more importantly, before an employee is injured.



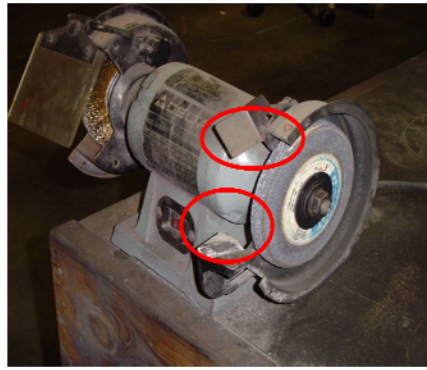
1910.1200(g)(8) The employer shall maintain in the workplace copies of the required material safety data sheets for each hazardous chemical, and shall ensure that they are readily accessible during each work shift to employees when they are in their work area(s). (see www.msds.com). The above example is a good idea for storing MSDS in an accessible location. Check www.labsafety.com for right-to-know stations.



1910.1200(f)(5) Unlabeled Containers

The employer shall ensure that each container of hazardous chemicals in the workplace is labeled, tagged or marked with the following information:

- (f)(5)(i)** Identity of the hazardous chemical(s) contained therein; and
- (f)(5)(ii)** Appropriate hazard warnings, or alternatively, words, pictures, symbols, or combination thereof, which provide at least general information regarding the hazards of the chemicals.



1910.215(a)(4) Adjustable Work Surface

On offhand grinding machines, work rests shall be used to support the work. They shall be of rigid construction and designed to be adjustable to compensate for wheel wear. Work rests shall be kept adjusted closely to the wheel with a maximum opening of one-eighth inch to prevent the work from being jammed between the wheel and the rest, which may cause wheel breakage.

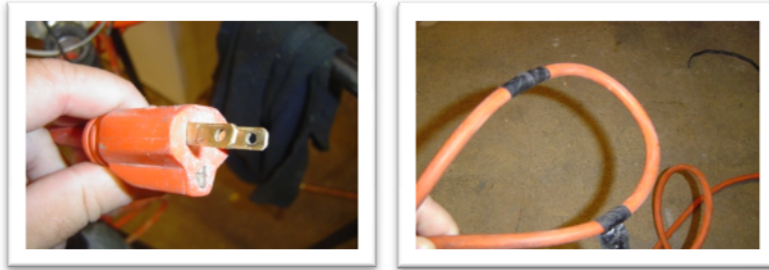
OBSERVATION: Proper clearance was not achieved.



1910.303(g)(1)(i) Electrical Equipment Clearance

The dimension of the working space in front of live parts operating at 600 volts or less shall be not less than 3'. For equipment operating at voltage in excess of 600 volts, see 1910.303(h)(3)(i).

Picture on the right shows OSHA required clearance footprint used by some organizations. This striping is non-mandatory, but demonstrates the clearance requirement.



1910.305(g)(1)(iii) Extension Cords – Grounding Pin

Grounding pin is missing on the extension cord on the left.

1910.305(g)(2)(ii) Flexible cords shall be used only in continuous lengths without splice or tap. Hard service flexible cords No. 12 or larger may be repaired if spliced so that the splice retains the insulation, outer sheath properties, and usage characteristics of the cord being spliced.

OBSERVATION: There does not appear to be a splice on this extension cord however cuts or tears of the insulated jacket would be a problem not necessarily corrected by simple electrical tape.

RECOMMENDATION: Inspect cords for damage. Remove from service those that are damaged and are not able to be repaired as noted above.



1910.157(e)(2) Portable extinguishers shall be visually inspected monthly (see example on right side).

1910.157(e)(3) The employer shall assure that portable fire extinguishers are subjected to annual maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION: Assign an employee to perform regular inspections.



1910.159(c)(10) Sprinkler spacing. The employer shall assure that sprinklers are spaced to provide a maximum protection area per sprinkler, a minimum of interference to the discharge pattern by building or structural members or building contents and suitable sensitivity to possible fire hazards. The minimum vertical clearance between sprinklers and material below shall be 18 inches.

RECOMMENDATION: Remove stored materials from top shelf and ensure proper separation is achieved. Train employees and ensure compliance is achieved by performing regular inspections.

In Conclusion

Contrary to popular belief, OSHA compliance need not be expensive, confusing or time consuming. It does, however, take a dedicated effort by all members of the organization. We hope that this proceeding provides you with a bit of basic information about workplace safety and encourages you to provide a safer workplace.

Should you have any questions or need assistance in fostering a safe work environment, you are welcome to contact the author at david@wpsac.org.



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