

UTAH OSHA SAFETY LINE

NEWSLETTER

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Nursing Home Emphasis Program

The Utah Labor Commission, Occupational Safety and Health Division (UOSH) is announcing the “2013 NURSING HOME SAFETY & HEALTH EMPHASIS INITIATIVE” which will be conducted statewide. The 2013 Nursing Home Safety & Health Emphasis Initiative began February 1, 2013 and will continue through October 31, 2013.

The 2013 Nursing Home Safety & Health Emphasis Initiative is designed to help educate employers and employees regarding the safety and health hazards commonly found in nursing homes. Employers and employees will be able to identify and eliminate the hazards associated with nursing homes in the State of Utah and nationwide:

- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Musculoskeletal Injuries – Strains and Sprains
- Workplace Violence for Healthcare Workers
- Exposure to Blood borne Pathogens

The State of Utah Labor Commission – OSHA Consultation Program provides free on-site safety and health services. Our goal is simple: Prevent work related injury and illness through a cooperative effort with employers and their employees.

Utah OSHA is committed to the safety and health of Utah’s employees working in this and all industries. By initiating this emphasis program, Utah OSHA is taking a positive step in protecting the safety and health of employees working in nursing homes through education and hazard recognition and elimination.

For more information please visit <http://laborcommission.utah.gov>, or Call Utah OSHA Consultation at (801) 530-6855 or request information by email, uoshconsultationprogram@utah.gov.

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Reporting Requirements

Utah employers are required to notify Utah OSHA of serious injuries or illnesses that occur in the workplace. Federal regulations state that employers only need to notify OSHA if there is a fatality, or the in-patient hospitalization of three or more employees as a result of a work-related incident. However, Utah has different requirements. In the State of Utah employers are required to notify Utah OSHA at (801) 530-6901 within 8 hours of occurrence of all fatalities, disabling, significant, and serious injuries or illnesses to workers.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find this information? The reporting requirements are located in R614-1-5(C)(5) of the Utah Administrative Code. The information is also a part of the Workplace Safety and Health in the State of Utah poster, which must be posted in the workplace. This poster and all required posters can be downloaded at:

<http://laborcommission.utah.gov/divisions/UOSH/RequiredPosters.html>

How do I know if an incident would qualify as disabling or serious injury? “Disabling and serious” includes, but is not limited to, any injury or illness resulting in immediate admittance to the hospital, permanent or temporary impairment where part of the body is made functionally useless or is substantially reduced in efficiency and which would require treatment by a medical doctor, such as amputation, fracture, deep cuts, severe burns, electric shock, sight impairment, loss of consciousness, and concussions; illnesses that could shorten life or significantly reduce physical or mental efficiency inhibiting the normal function of a part of the body, such as cancer, silicosis, asbestosis, hearing impairment and visual impairment.

Do I have to report a fatality caused by a heart attack at work? Yes, Utah OSHA will decide whether to investigate the incident, depending on the circumstances of the heart attack.

What if I don't learn about an incident right away? If you do not learn of a reportable incident at the time it occurs and the incident would otherwise be reportable, you must make the report within eight (8) hours of the time the incident is reported to you or to any of your agent(s) or employee(s).



Machine Guarding

The U. S. Department of Labor released a Safety and Health Information Bulletin regarding the Hazards of Operating Unguarded Stone Cutters and Splitters in Landscaping and Other Worksites. The purpose of this bulletin was to warn employers of the hazards involving the use of stone-cutting machines and the methods to eliminate or reduce the risk of injury during the operation of these machines. The bulletin is a reminder for all employers, not just those in the stone cutting industry, of the requirements for machine guarding. This article is an overview of the bulletin. If you would like to read the entire bulletin it is available at the following link: <http://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib01252013.html>.

Stone-cutting machines, also called stone masons, stone cutters, stone splitters, and rock cutters, have hydraulically operated rams to split and cut various types of stone products used mainly for decorative purposes in the landscaping industry. The machines are produced in both stationary and mobile models. Their high-pressure hydraulic systems may be driven by combustion engine (gasoline/diesel) or electric motor.

Stone-cutting machines with unguarded cutting blades can cause amputations and other serious injuries. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2010 (the most recent detailed data), 180 injuries occurred while using shears, which operate similar to stone cutters. Of these injuries, 100 were amputations and 50 were described as cuts, lacerations and punctures. Amputations can occur when shears or stone cutters are not guarded properly and a worker's hands or other body part is placed in the point of operation during operation. (Point of operation is the area on a machine where work is performed on the material being processed - that is, the actual mechanical action such as cutting.)

Machines need to have guarding at the point of operation, some other examples of equipment that requires machine guarding are: band saws, drill presses (chuck guard), table saws, grinders, routers, power presses, etc. In the case of this type of stone-cutting machinery first a fork-lift would lift the rock onto a rolling conveyor table where the operator placed the rock under the cutting blades (point of operation) by hand. The operator then operated the hand controls with one hand and held the back of the stone with the other hand. This placed the operator's hands within inches of the unguarded point of operation which could cause serious injuries. Even though the design and manufacturing of the machine did not provide adequate machine guarding at the point of operation it is still the employer's responsibility to assess the possible hazards associated with this operation.

During a recent investigation into a landscaping products company, which operated these stone-cutting machines, the Englewood, Colorado OSHA office worked with the manufacturer and the landscape products company to retrofit the machine with a two-handed control system. This system required the operator to press two controls, at the same time, one located at the top of the machine and one located lower on the machine, to lower the blade and complete the cut of the stone. The two-handed controls removed the employees hands from the point of operation. This retrofit was easily engineered, relatively inexpensive, and readily accepted by the operators.

What does this mean to companies not operating these stone-cutters? Every employer must provide a safe and healthful workplace for their employees. Look at each piece of equipment your employees use to complete their tasks. As you conduct this assessment, ask the following questions:

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- ✦ Does the equipment have machine guarding at the **point of operation**?
- ✦ Can the guarding be easily removed or bypassed?
- ✦ Does the guarding keep the operator's hands, fingers, and body out of the danger area?
- ✦ Is there evidence that the machine guarding has been tampered with or removed?
- ✦ Could changes be made on the machine to eliminate the point of operation hazard entirely?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions during your assessment, it is your responsibility to correct these hazards. Also, if you answered yes and your employees are exposed to this hazard you must find a way to protect your employees until you can permanently remove the hazard. The ways to remove the hazard include following the machine manufacturers safety procedures, replacing the equipment, engineering or purchasing a guard, changing the way the operation takes place, and as a last resort personal protective equipment. If you need assistance with identifying hazards or assistance in abating these hazards, there are many options available to you. Your workers compensation insurance company may be able to come to your site to do a safety inspection, or provide training for your employees. The website www.osha.gov has tools to assist you in identifying hazards and abating the hazards. Your local equipment supplier may have guards available for your particular piece of equipment. Also, the Utah OSHA Consultation Program is available to small employers in high hazard industries to assist you in identifying and abating hazards, and providing training all at no cost to the employer. For more information on the Consultation Program, please call 801-530-6855.

Compliance Corner

Question: We are looking at putting a TV in the warehouse where it plays upcoming events, safety issues, what is going on with the company, and so on. My concern is if this is a safety issue for the workplace. The guys will be driving by the TV on forklifts and order pickers. I was told by another company that it should not be out in the warehouse where it could cause an accident. I was wondering if you had anything and what OSHA thoughts were on this.

Answer: There are no OSHA regulations covering this. Any distraction "may" be a problem, though, so you might want to consider placing this information TV where it would not distract the forklift drivers. However, as stated above, there are no OSHA regulations that specifically cover this topic.

Question: In my workplace, the sound level is 105 dB. How much can ear plugs reduce the level?

Answer: The hearing protector will have a Noise Reduction Rating (NRR). Subtract seven (7) dB from the NRR and then subtract the remaining NRR value from 105 dB. If the result is under 90 dB, then the hearing protector is probably adequate IF the employees using it have been properly trained how to use the hearing protection.

Would you like to have your question answered in a future Safety Line edition ? Please send your questions to jparkstone@utah.gov.