

UTAH OSHA SAFETY LINE

NEWSLETTER



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Safety Pays

In the everyday operation of a business the large issues you encounter can have a huge effect on your bottom line. But what about the small issues?

Every day Utah Occupational Safety and Health Compliance Officers (CSHOs) see employees exposed to workplace hazards. Some of these hazards are readily seen from a distance; lack of fall protection, unsafe trenching/excavations, poor construction of scaffolding, and improper use of powered industrial trucks. During a typical inspection the CSHO will also identify smaller hazards; electrical panels missing knockouts/spacers, improper use of respirators, lack of Hazard Communication, missing machine guarding, and no lockout/tagout policy. These violations of OSHA regulations would expose an employer to a citation and the penalties associated with these violations.

Failure to eliminate the exposure to employees could also expose an employer to costs associated with a workplace injury. Even a small injury could cost an employer more than most penalties levied by OSHA, and could prove to be very costly to your bottom line.

On the OSHA webpage there is a tool to show what a workplace injury could cost you as a company. That tool can be found at: <https://www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness/safetypays/estimator.html>

This tool uses the two types of costs that are associated with workplace injuries:

Direct Costs: Direct Costs are easily identified, they are any cost that can be related directly to the production of a product or to a particular function or service. Examples of Direct Costs – Materials, Labor, Tools, Fuel

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Indirect Costs: The Miriam-Webster Dictionary defines Indirect Costs as: A cost that is not identifiable with a specific product, function, or activity.

For the purpose of the Safety Pays Program the following would be considered Indirect Costs;

Any wages paid to injured workers for absences not covered by workers' compensation;

The wage costs related to time lost through work stoppage associated with the worker injury;

The overtime costs necessitated by the injury;

Administrative time spent by supervisors, safety personnel and clerical workers after an injury;

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Training costs for a replacement worker;

Lost productivity related to work rescheduling, new employee learning curves, and accommodation of injured employees;

Clean-up, repair, and replacement costs of damaged material, machinery, and property.

The tool then takes the cost associated with the injury and estimates the additional sales needed to cover these costs. Here are two examples of what a workplace injury would cost a company that has a 3% profit margin.

Example #1: One of your employees suffers a sprained ankle because of a slip and fall accident caused by an elevation change in a walkway. The costs associated with a sprain would be:

Direct Cost: \$28,338

Indirect Cost: \$31,171

Total Cost: \$59,509

Additional Sales to cover the cost of this injury (Indirect Cost) \$1,039,060

Additional Sales to cover the cost of this injury (Indirect and Direct Cost) \$1,983,633

Example #2: One of your employees suffers a leg fracture because of a slip and trip accident in your workplace. The costs associated with a fracture would be:

Direct Cost: \$45,377

Indirect Cost: \$49,914

Total Cost: \$95,291

Additional Sales to cover the cost of this injury (Indirect Costs) \$1,663,823

Additional Sales to cover the cost of this injury (Direct and Indirect Costs) \$3,176,366

NOTE: It is possible that some of your direct costs will be covered by insurance, but a majority of your indirect costs will not be covered.

The costs, listed above, are based on data provided by the National Council of Compensation Insurance, Inc. (NCCI). The data reflects the average cost of lost time workers' compensation insurance claims derived from unit statistical reports submitted to NCCI for policy years 2007-2009.

Painted elevation changes, dock locks, signage, overhead storage, seat belts, ergonomics, record keeping, vaccinations, these items aren't normally at the forefront of our thoughts. Many of these small items may not be violations of OSHA Standards; however, taking care of the small things can have a huge impact on your bottom line.

Utah Labor Commission Releases Five-Language Instructional DVD

The Utah Labor Commission Workplace Safety Program has produced a DVD titled "Workplace Safety for Refugees." This DVD provides training for refugees to better assist them to know their roles, responsibilities and rights regarding workplace safety. The key partners in this production were the Utah Refugee Coalition (URC), a local non-profit organization comprised of refugee communities created to connect its membership to local resources, and Reel Advocacy, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing professional media with inspired storytelling for nonprofits. Free DVD copies of "Workplace Safety for Refugees" are available by contacting Elena Bensor, Public Information /Community Relations Officer (801) 530-6918 or elenabensor@utah.gov. In addition, the program can also be streamed directly from our website at: <http://laborcommission.utah.gov/media/video/videoEn.html>



New Ladder Safety App

Over the years, this newsletter has had many articles dealing with ladder safety. Why? Falls are one of the most common accidents seen in the workplace. Over 210,000 employees were injured, and an estimated 544 American workers were killed by falls to lower levels in 2012. Utah Occupational Safety and Health have investigated fatalities, and serious injuries, from falls as short as three feet. Many of these falls frequently involve unsafely positioned ladders.

The National Institute for Industrial Safety and Health (NIOSH) has developed the NIOSH Ladder Safety app for mobile devices. This application assists employers and employees in proper ladder selection, inspection, positioning, and accessorizing ladders for safe use. These apps are available in the Google Store, Apple App Store, and on the NIOSH website at: <http://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2013/08/27/ladder-safety/>

Servicing and Maintenance Hazards in Manufacturing

Like construction, the manufacturing workplace comes with its own specific hazards. These hazards must be assessed by the employer to ensure the safety of his/her employees. One of the most overlooked hazards is the control of hazardous energy (also known as Lock-out/Tag-out or LOTO). A recent search of inspections conducted, in the state of Utah, from October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013 showed that LOTO was cited in all areas of manufacturing and is the fifth most commonly cited General Industry standard.

The LOTO standard (29 CFR 1910.147) covers *the servicing and maintenance of machines and equipment in which the unexpected energization or startup of machines or equipment, or release of stored energy, could harm employees. This standard establishes minimum performance requirements for the control of such hazardous energy.* (29 CFR 1910.147(a)(1)(i)).

To fully understand what this standard applies to we must know how OSHA defines servicing and maintenance, which is: Constructing, installing, setting up, adjusting, inspecting, modifying, maintaining and/or servicing machines or equipment, including lubrication, cleaning or unjamming of machines or equipment, and making adjustments or tool changes, where employees could be exposed to the unexpected energization or startup of the equipment or release of hazardous energy. Electricity is not the only source of energy, other sources of energy include: mechanical, hydraulic, chemical, and thermal.

The LOTO standard does not apply to general industry workers performing servicing and maintenance on machines or equipment who are not exposed to the unexpected energization or startup of the machines or equipment, or the release of hazardous energy.

As an employer, you are responsible for establishing an energy control program, consisting of energy control procedures, employee training, and periodic inspections. To assist employers with establishing a LOTO program, OSHA has developed a Lockout-Tagout Interactive Training Program. You can access this training program at: <https://www.osha.gov/dts/osta/lototraining/index.html>. Utah OSHA Consultation Program can also assist small employers, in high hazard industries to develop a LOTO program. For more information please call Utah OSHA Consultation at: 801-530-6855.

Have you completed your HCS training?



Under the new harmonized Hazard Communication Standard (HCS), employers must train their workers on the new label elements and Safety Data Sheet (SDS) format by December 1, 2013.

The new labeling requirements will align the United States with the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals to better protect workers from hazardous chemicals and help American businesses compete in a global economy. Previously, manufacturers developed their own format for their Material Safety Data Sheets, under the new rule the Safety Data Sheets have to follow a standardized format.

To assist you in this required training, three Quick Cards are included with this newsletter.

Compliance Corner

Question: My employer is requiring all employees to get a flu shot. Is this allowable under OSHA rules?

Answer: OSHA does not have a standard which would mandate an employer to have every employee receive a vaccination. OSHA's only standard requiring vaccinations is the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard. Under the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard an employer has to **offer** a hepatitis B vaccination, but cannot **require** the employee to have the vaccination. You may want to address this question with your local health department.

Question: I work in a power plant. The area where I work is terribly noisy. We tested the area and found that the sound level was 105dB. My question is how can I figure out which hearing protection will give me the proper reduction in sound level.

Answer: The first thing you need to do is find a type of hearing protector that is comfortable for you to use. The more comfortable the protector is the more likely you are to wear it on a regular basis. Most businesses provide several types of hearing protectors for their employees. Every hearing protector will have a Noise Reduction Rating (NRR). According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), to find the proper NRR for use in your workplace subtract seven (7) 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. Of course, no hearing protector will protect you if you do not know how to properly use it.

Question: I have contracted a trainer to conduct a 10 hour OSHA outreach course. The trainer tells me that we have to do the course over two-days. Is it possible for me to have the trainer do all ten hours in one day?

Answer: OSHA will allow only seven hours of instruction per day, for the outreach courses. The trainer is correct, the course has to be conducted over a minimum of two days. The trainer may be able to ask OSHA for an exception, but these exceptions will only be granted in extremely extenuating circumstances.