

Together With



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TOSHA Standards Requiring Training - Fall Protection

Falls are one of the leading causes of traumatic occupational death, accounting for eight percent of all occupational fatalities from trauma. Falls from ladders and roofs still account for the majority of falls. Any time a worker is at a height of four feet or more, the worker is at risk and should be protected. Fall protection must be provided at four feet in general industry and six feet in construction. Regardless of the fall distance, fall protection must be provided when working over dangerous equipment and machinery. A major part of a fall protection program is training for employees. Workers who could be exposed to fall hazards must be trained to recognize the hazards and to know the procedures that minimize the hazards.

If you're an employer, you're responsible for ensuring that your employees can recognize fall hazards and that they know how to protect themselves before they're exposed to the hazards. You can't assume they know how to protect themselves from falls. If they're starting work on a new site, for example, they might not recognize fall hazards or know how to protect themselves unless you train them. Therefore, employees must be trained before they begin tasks that could expose them to fall hazards or before they use fall-protection systems.

Some employers assume that they can train their employees simply by showing them a fall-protection training video or giving them a safe practice guide. But that's not training. Through training, employees must learn to recognize fall hazards and know procedures to minimize the hazards. Therefore, it is important that the trainer knows the hazards at the work site, knows how to eliminate or control the hazards, and knows how to teach workers to protect themselves. That's why the trainer must be a competent person. (Recall that a competent person is one who can identify work-site hazards and who has management authority to control them.)

The trainer must know and be able to explain the following:

- The nature of fall hazards at the work site
- Procedures for erecting, maintaining, and disassembling fall-protection systems
- How to use and operate fall-protection systems
- The role of each employee who may be affected by a safety-monitoring system
- The restrictions that apply to mechanical equipment used during roofing work
- The procedure for handling and storing materials and for erecting protection from falling objects
- The requirements of Subpart D in 29 CFR 1910 (general industry) and Subpart M in 29 CFR 1926 (construction)

In construction work, a written certification of each employee's fall-protection training must be kept. Include the employee's name, the training date, and the trainer's signature.

New Law Mandates Inspection of Amusement Rides

There are more than 60 county fairs and numerous carnivals with amusement rides located throughout the state of Tennessee each year. Effective January 1, 2009, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Division of Boilers, Elevators & Amusement Devices (formerly the Division of Boilers and Elevators) is charged with inspecting amusement rides and devices for the safety of the riding public. These inspections are required by T.C.A. 68-121 et seq. The Division has hired an overseer of the inspection program who has many years of experience in the inspection and maintaining of amusement rides. For more information, contact the Division at 615-741-1627 or go to www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/ridesafety.htm.



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Condition: An evaluation of each powered industrial truck operator was not conducted at least every three years.

Potential Effects: Contusions, abrasions, fractures and crushing injuries from fork lift trucks striking an employee.

Standard: 29 CFR 1910.178(l)(4)(iii)

Recommended Action: Before a worker can operate a powered industrial truck, the employer must evaluate the employee to ensure that he/she is knowledgeable about the operation of the powered industrial trucks he/she will be assigned to operate. This evaluation could be as simple as having a person with the requisite skills, knowledge and experience observe the operator performing several typical operations to ensure that the truck is being operated safely and asking the operator a few questions related to the safe operation of the vehicle. If the operator has operated the same type of equipment before in the same type of environment in which he/she will be working, then duplicative or additional training is not required.

The standard does not specifically require testing of the operator; however, some method of evaluation is necessary. The TOSHA standard also does not require employees to be licensed, but an employer may choose to issue licenses to trained operators.

National Emphasis Programs Adopted by TOSHA

OSHA periodically establishes National Emphasis Programs (NEPs) to address specific exposures and hazards in the workplace where intervention by OSHA personnel is deemed necessary. The goal of an emphasis program is to increase enforcement activities and focus on workplaces where employee exposure to these hazards may be reduced by participation in the NEP. State OSHA programs are typically not required to participate in these programs but may elect to do so.

TOSHA has chosen to participate in the three following NEPs:

- Combustible Dust National Emphasis Program
- National Emphasis Program—Lead
- Petroleum Refinery Process Safety Management National Emphasis Program

Copies of these programs may be found at www.osha.gov under the National Emphasis Program link in the "N" portion of the A-Z index.

In addition TOSHA has state Special Emphasis Programs on the following:

- Occupational Exposure to Carbon Monoxide
- Occupational Exposure to Noise
- Fall Hazards
- Trenching and Excavation Hazards
- Amputation Hazards

Information about these programs can be found at www.tn.gov/labor-wfd/tosha.html.

Clarification on PPE Training

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A clarification concerning personal protective equipment (PPE) and training requirements was published in the Federal Register on December 12, 2008. The clarification applies to parts 1910 (General Industry), 1926 (Construction), 1915, 1917, 1918 (Maritime) standards and makes it clear that PPE and training requirements in the standards impose a compliance duty to each and every employee covered by the standards. Noncompliance may expose the employer to OSHA citations and civil penalties on a per-employee basis.

The result of this is that other standards requiring training on PPE were amended where needed to clarify that provision of PPE and training must be for each employee. An example of the change, from the respiratory protection standard, is as follows:

Original wording in 1910.134(a)(2)

Respirators shall be provided by the employer when such equipment is necessary to protect the health of the employee. The employer shall provide the respirators which are applicable and suitable for the purpose intended. The employer shall be responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a respiratory protection program which shall include the requirements outlined in paragraph (c) of this section.

Re-wording in 1910.134(a)(2)

A respirator shall be provided to **each** employee when such equipment is necessary to protect the health of such employee. The employer shall provide the respirators which are applicable and suitable for the purpose intended. The employer shall be responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a respiratory protection program which shall include the requirements outlined in paragraph (c) of this section. **The program shall cover each employee required by this section to use a respirator.**

Sharps Injuries Reduced in Tennessee

From 2005 to 2008 TOSHA has seen an 11.8% reduction in sharps injuries in hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers in Tennessee. For that time period, TOSHA has been conducting a targeting initiative involving inspections, training, and consultative service visits in those types of facilities.

Sharps injury reductions for each type of facility were categorized. In hospitals 103 out of 161 (64%) stayed the same or went down; in ambulatory surgical treatment centers 117 out of 158 (74%) stayed the same or went down. The numbers came from sharps injury logs submitted to TOSHA by the facilities. One hundred percent of the hospitals and ambulatory surgical centers in Tennessee are participating in the program.

The goal is a 10% reduction over five years, and we have completed 3.5 years. So, the hard work of the hospitals, surgery centers, and TOSHA has paid off in reduced injuries for workers.

When reviewing the sharps injury logs and conducting inspections, TOSHA found the following to be major contributors to the number of sharps injuries from contaminated sharps:

- Not immediately disposing of contaminated sharps in containers
- Removing contaminated scalpel blades with forceps, needle holders and fingers
- Reaching into containers of contaminated sharp instruments
- Overfilling sharps containers
- Recapping and removing contaminated needles
- Safe work practices not being used (e.g. surgical hands-free pass zone)
- Safety devices not being provided
- Safety devices not being used when provided
- Safety devices not activated before disposal
- Handwashing contaminated surgical instruments
- Using devices without sharps injury protection because they are still available in the workplace
- Training is deficient in use of sharps and safety devices
- Training is deficient on need for sharps injury reporting



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EARN & LIVE

TOSHA Case File Summary

A 22-year-old construction laborer died when he fell while installing a roof on a commercial building. His employer was subcontracted to install insulation and steel panels for the roof of the building. He was part of a three-man crew working to roll out six-foot wide by 100-foot long rolls of insulation and then install two-foot wide by 155-foot long steel panels on top of the insulation. As the victim and his co-workers were rolling out a roll of insulation, multiple gusts of wind occurred, uplifting the insulation and making it difficult for the employees to hold it down. The victim and a co-worker were standing on the two-foot wide steel panel closest to the leading edge in an attempt to hold down the insulation. The co-worker saw the insulation go over the side of the leading edge and the victim fall with it. He fell approximately 75 feet to a gravel surface below and sustained fatal injuries.

To Prevent Such Incidents from Happening

1. Protect each employee on walking/working surfaces from falling through holes (including skylights) more than six feet (1.8m) above lower levels by personal fall arrest systems, covers, or guardrail systems erected around such holes.
2. Ensure that personal fall arrest systems, when stopping a fall, are rigged such that an employee can neither free fall more than 6 feet (1.8), nor contact any lower level.
3. Ensure that a personal fall arrest system is not attached to guardrail systems, nor attached to hoists except as specified in 29 CFR Part 1926.
4. Protect each employee engaged in a steel erection activity who is on a walking/working surface with an unprotected side or edge more than 15 feet (4.6m) above a lower level from fall hazards by guardrail systems, safety net systems, personal fall arrest systems, positioning device systems or fall restraint systems.

