

TRANSNEWS



Volume 44

OSHA's Top 10 Violations of 2014

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Every year, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) releases the top 10 most frequently cited standards.

This listing is meant to inform employers of the most commonly cited standards, so that they can take preventative measures to fix any hazards that may be present before an injury occurs.

Once again, Fall Protection tops the list of OSHA violations.

The top 10 violations list in 2014 is very similar to the list in 2013.

All violations in the 2014 top 10 violations list appeared in 2013, although in a different order. All ten violations that appeared in the 2014 top 10 violations list were lower than the previous year.

Here is the final list of OSHA's most commonly cited safety standards, along with the number of violations issued, from October 2013 through September 2014.

1. Fall Protection

There were 7,120 violations. Many of the violations were due

to unprotected sides and edges, holes and steep roofs. *Question:* If you have staff working on the roof of a commercial vehicle or trailer, do you have fall protection in place?

2. Hazard Communication

There were 5,461 violations. The citations that were issued for this standard covered many industries and many different violations. *Examples:* unlabeled chemical containers, lack of written program, readily available safety data sheets,

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Workplace Violence

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Ten years ago, bullying is what happened to school kids. Now, managers need to think of it differently. According to a recent study from the Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI), 65.6 million American workers have been affected by bullying. In the recent study done by WBI, 27% of respondents said they are experiencing or have experienced workplace bullying in the past

(7% experiencing and 20% have experienced in the past).

So what are employers doing to combat bullying? Not much. A quarter of the respondents admitted to denying the problem or doing nothing about it. In fact, when they were presented with a bullying case, only 28% said they did something positive – showed concern, created and

enforced new policies or exercised zero tolerance.

What's worse is that 61% of cases only stopped when the victim leaves his or her job – whether it's because they want to escape the mistreatment, they're forced to quit because conditions are made worse, or they get fired. Only 15% of

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safety data sheets for all chemicals, and no chemical inventory list.

3. Scaffolding

There were 4,543 violations. Types of businesses hit hard with violations of this standard included masonry, roofing, siding and plastering. We typically use scaffolding in a more limited basis for operations such as cleaning, painting, and repairs.

4. Respiratory Protection

There were 3,229 violations. A big reason for violations of this standard: Companies lack written respiratory protection programs. Vehicle painting is a common practice where respiratory protection is needed.

5. Ladders

There were 2,776 violations. Common hazards companies don't correct: damaged side rails, workers using the top step and ladders used for wrong purposes.

6. Powered Industrial Trucks

There were 2,770 violations. Some common violations include: lack of training, not removing vehicles in need of repair, and failure to conduct pre-use or pre-shift inspections.

7. Lockout/Tagout

There were 2,707 violations. Failures to document procedures, train workers, and conduct periodic inspections are common reasons why companies face violations of this standard.

8. Electrical – Wiring Methods

There were 2,447 violations. Many industries, including stores, face OSHA's wrath over this standard because they use extension cords as permanent wiring.

9. Machine Guarding

There were 2,162 violations. Industrial and commercial machinery are both subject to this standard. Examples: missing or damaged machine guards and

equipment not properly adjusted (such as on bench grinders).

10. Electrical – General Requirements

There were 2,080 violations. Violations of this standard focus on installation and use of electrical equipment.

FY 2014 Top 10 most frequently cited standards		
Standard		Total
1	Fall Protection	7,120
2	Hazard Communication	5,461
3	Scaffolding	4,543
4	Respiratory Protection	3,229
5	Ladders	2,776
6	Powered Industrial Trucks	2,770
7	Lockout/Tagout	2,707
8	Electrical, Wiring Methods	2,447
9	Machine Guarding	2,162
10	Electrical, General Requirements	2,080

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bullies are fired, and they're only punished 11% of the time.

Top-down bullying concern

Here's the big problem: 56% of bullying is top-down – a boss bullying subordinate. With that in mind, provide employees with multiple safe outlets for reporting issues of bullying. And since many don't report problems, encourage workers to address the issue as soon as possible.

Four Tips for Preventing Bullying

- 1. Implement a zero-tolerance bullying policy** – Any health and wellness policy needs to involve anti-bullying protocols. Make sure this is covered and

supported by management and is taken seriously at all levels.

- 2. Address bullying behaviors immediately** – It's easy to sit back and hope for the best, thinking that your employees will be able to work it out among themselves. It won't. Don't let a problem fester among employees if you want a productive, healthy, and effective work environment.
- 3. Eliminate competition** – Often bullying evolves from a sense of competition in the workplace, leading employees who feel threatened by the skills of other employees to attempt to bring them down or sabotage their efforts by engaging in psychological

warfare. It's a dangerous and problematic workplace dynamic to let fester.

- 4. Encourage management and staff interaction** – The more involved your workforce is at all levels with itself, the less likely the lowest-level workers are to take matters into their own hands.

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Construction Zone Safety

Every eight hours, somebody dies in a work zone related accident. That's three deaths every day. And every nine minutes, someone is injured in a highway work zone. That translates into 160 people a day.

The reality is that many of these accidents, injuries, and deaths can be avoided if we keep the following safe driving tips in mind:

- **Expect the unexpected.** Work zones, and the traffic delays that come with them, can occur at any hour of the

day or night and can often come without warning. Traffic lanes may be changed and people may be working on or near the roadway. Although speed limits may be reduced, many motorists fail to heed them. More alarming, many rush toward the front of the traffic tie-ups and try to squeeze in at the last minute – often targeting a commercial motor vehicle for their point of entry. Don't let any of this behavior surprise or

frustrate you. Expect it and don't over-react to it.

- **Slow down.** Speeding is one of the leading causes of work zone related crashes, so slow down and take your time.
- **Don't tailgate.** Keep a safe following distance between you and the vehicle in front of you – even if that means that other motorists try to squeeze in front of you. Remember, the most common crash in a highway work zone is the rear end

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Are Hands-Free Phones Safer?

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According to a National Safety Council (NSC) survey, 80% of drivers mistakenly think that using a hands-free device is safer than a handheld phone. The group points to dozens of studies that show hands-free devices are no safer than their handheld counterparts because the brain is distracted by the cell phone conversation. Yet, 70% of study respondents who use

hands-free devices said safety was the reason.

While many drivers honestly believe they are making the safe choice by using a hands-free device, it's just not true. The problem is the brain does not truly multitask. Just like you can't read a book and talk on the phone, you can't safely operate a vehicle and talk on the phone.

Drivers may be confused by this concept because many states ban handheld devices and many new cars are being equipped with hands-free technology.

Multi-Tasking: The Big Myth

- The brain quickly toggles between tasks – but can't do two things at the same time.

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collision. So, don't tailgate. And keep an eye on your mirrors.

- **Keep a safe distance between your vehicle and the construction workers and their equipment.** This demands the utmost skill as a professional driver. Barrels or barriers often restrict the lanes giving less margin of error. Further complicating this, inexperienced drivers often feel hemmed in and tend to shy away from these barriers.
- **Pay attention to the signs.** The warning signs are there to help traffic move safely through the work zone. Observe the posted signs until you

see the one that says you've left the work zone. This includes when it appears that nobody is working in the work zone.

- **Obey road crew flaggers.** The flagger knows what is best for moving traffic safely in the work zone. A flagger has the same authority as a regulatory sign and you can receive a citation for not obeying his or her directions.
- **Stay alert and minimize distractions.** Dedicate your full attention to the roadway while driving through the work zone.
- **Get in the correct lane early.** Don't drive right up to the lane closure and then try to barge in. Forcing your way

into a line of frustrated motorists is a poor choice and prime complaint material.

- **Obey lane restriction signs.** Some work zones restrict commercial vehicles to designated lanes – usually because of size restrictions and hazards that are unique to commercial vehicles.
- **Stay patient and remain calm.** Work zones aren't there to personally inconvenience you. Remember, the work zone crewmembers are working to improve the road and make your job easier.

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- The activity in the area of the brain that processes moving images decreases by up to 1/3 when listening to talking on the phone.
- Drivers looking out the windshield can miss seeing up to 50% of what's around them when talking on any kind of a cell phone.

The Essential Trio: Requirements for Driving

1. Eyes on the road
2. Hands on the wheel
3. Mind on driving

Other activities take thought and are hard to do while on a call, like reading a book. You can't do either well if you're doing them at the same time, and the consequences with driving are much greater than needing to reread a page.

Buckle Up

Statistics indicate that 48 percent of commercial vehicle drivers buckle up. That number is way too low, do something about it!

Is it really necessary?

Someone dies in a crash every hour in North America just because they didn't buckle their safety belt. If that's not reason enough to wear your safety belt, then consider this: failure to buckle up contributes to more fatalities than any other single traffic safety-related behavior. And, it's the law.

My safety belt is not very comfortable.

Millions of people have grown accustomed to wearing safety belts. If your safety belt causes severe discomfort, do something about it. There are ways to make a belt more comfortable.

No one can tell that I'm not wearing my safety belt. Why bother?

- Staying belted helps you maintain control of the vehicle when it is most needed.
- Safety belts – the most effective safety devices in vehicles – are estimated to save over 13,000 lives each year.
- 50 percent of commercial drivers (309 of 620) killed in crashes were not wearing safety belts.
- One in four drivers killed in crashes were ejected from the vehicle.
- The emotional and financial costs of these fatalities to families, employers and society are devastating.



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How to Prevent Back Problems at Work

You can't afford to let back problems interfere with work. Back problems have the potential to adversely affect our work schedules by limiting us physically, so its best to find ways to prevent or alleviate pain before we get sidelined with back issues.

In most cases, unrelated to medical conditions, backaches are a result of a combination of factors. These factors may range from genetic to lifestyle-related problems. Certain sedentary jobs are also known to aggravate the back. Back pain can make it difficult to concentrate on the job at hand. Whether it's a dull ache or a throbbing sensation, back

issues can hamper your work. Making an effort to identify what may trigger back problems at work can help you avoid it and go a long way in helping you on your road to recovery.

Additionally, many occupations, such as a mechanic, require odd positions and frequently bending over. This can put significant demands on the back. Here are a few suggestions to help avoid back pain by understanding what causes them and focusing on prevention.

- The chief work-related factors associated with back pain are exerting too much force, repetitive physical

movements, awkward body postures and even mental pressure or stress, which lead to muscle tension.

- If there is no direct medical problem, then backaches are commonly due to lack of exercise-it's always best to remain fit. If a back problem persists despite exercise, then you need to consider looking into the cause. For instance, it could be a wrong chair, incorrect height of a table or continued wrong posture.
- Remember, even if you have a job that requires continued

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- How to Prevent Back Problems at Work **1**
- Safety Tips for Welding **1**
- Power Strip Safety **2**

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bpost@postfinancial.com

Welding presents various hazards, including arc-flash exposure, molten metal spray, dangerous metal vapors, and noise hazards when grinding. The following tips can help mitigate some of these risks.

- 1. Protect the skin.** Arms and legs can become severely burned by the UV light generated by welding activities. Wear heavy clothing to prevent injury from molten

metal, which can burn through light layers. Welding greens, leather jackets, aprons and gloves provide good skin protection.

- 2. Welding Arc Eye.** The light generated by welding is extremely bright. Looking directly at a welding arc even for a short time can cause arc eye when the bright flash from the arc burns the cornea. Do not look directly at a welding

arc, even briefly. Closing your eyes for a few sneaky tacks will not prevent arc eye.

- 3. Protect Others.** Warn others in the area before welding and use a screen to protect potential passersby. Most welders often only think about their own safety when welding, however, other workers in the area can experience arc flash, arc eye

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activity, it is not an alternative to exercise. You need to regularly include a balance of cardiovascular workouts and muscle training in your exercise program to help keep your back in healthy condition. You also need to keep your weight in check. Appropriate weight as per height helps minimize stress on the back.

- Certain strengthening and stretching exercises that focus on toning your back

muscles are very helpful for preventing backaches. Such strengthening exercises help your back muscles as well as your lower spine. Strong and flexible muscles keep the back fit and healthy.

- Pay proper attention to posture. Bad posture always affects the back. Slouching or swayback positions where you compromise the body's natural position causes muscle fatigue. You can almost always keep back muscles in good

order just by keeping a healthy body balance.

- If you have anything stressful weighing on your mind, then you need to address it immediately. Being under constant mental stress causes your muscles to tense. The more stress you experience, the lower your tolerance to pain—minimize your sources of stress and develop coping mechanisms.

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and other potential hazards when working around welding activities.

4. Working with Galvanized Steel.

Remove zinc coatings from galvanized steel prior to welding. Fumes from these coatings can cause heavy metal poisoning, a flu-like condition that lasts for several days.

- #### 5. Respiratory Protection.
- Not only can the fumes from steel and welding materials be hazardous, but the fumes from flux cored gasless wire and arc welding can also be nasty. Perform all welding in a well-ventilated area to protect from fumes that omit chromium and ozone. If ventilation is not possible, wear a vapor mask.

6. Inspect the area prior to welding.

Inspect the immediate and surrounding areas in which you are welding to ensure that no fire hazards are present. Molten metal and sparks can spit several feet away, so combustible materials such as wood or paint must be removed from the area.

- #### 7. Fire Protection.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near your welding unit, next to the exit door and/or the exit egress. It should be readily available in case there is an immediate need to respond to a potential fire.

Power Strip Safety

Two Manhattan fires that occurred in 2014 prompted the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) to release an advisory regarding the dangers of overtaxed circuits and improper power cord use. The fires left one person dead and another severely burned. Both are being blamed on overloaded power strips.

Here are some tips for safely using power strips and cords:

Power Strips

- Do not overload a circuit. Know the circuit's capacity and the power requirements of all items plugged into all the other outlets on the circuit, as well as any light fixtures on the circuit.
- Heavy reliance on power strips is an indication of an inadequate number of outlets. Have additional outlets installed if needed.
- A surge suppressor only protects the items plugged into the suppressor, not back along the circuit into which it is connected.
- Plug multiple-plug outlets directly into mounted electrical receptacles; do not chain them together.

- Ensure that all power strips and extension cords are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory and read the manufacturer's instructions carefully.

Power Cord Safety

- Use extension cords on a temporary basis only; unplug and safely store them after every use.
- Do not place power cords and extension cords in high-traffic areas or under carpets, rugs or furniture, and never nail or staple them to a wall or baseboard.
- Never remove the ground pin (the third prong) to make a three-prong plug fit into a two-prong outlet.
- Make sure extension cords are properly rated for their intended use, indoor or outdoor, and meet or exceed the power needs of the appliance or tool being used.
- Keep all electrical items and extension cords in good condition. If an item is damaged, repair the item or dispose of it.

My Back

Use these principles to avoid back pain!

Make sure you plan the lift. Clear the path. Assess if the load is too heavy. If the load is too heavy, seek help.

Your feet should be shoulder width apart. Get a firm footing close to the load.

Be sure to lift smoothly using the proper lifting technique. Avoid jerking or twisting during the lift.

A firm grip should be maintained throughout the lift.

Carry the load close to your body, always move your feet when turning.

Keep your spine aligned with your natural curve. Maintain the 'S' shaped curve in your back.



**One International Blvd.
Suite 405
Mahwah, NJ 07495**

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