Deadlines Approach for OSHA’s New Walking-Working Rules

Provided by Curtis Speck, President
Safety Resources Company of Ohio, Inc. and
Stark County Safety Council Committee Member

At the beginning of 2017, OSHA enacted a new set of General Industry regulations aimed at Fall Protection and Walking-Working Surfaces. These regulations have two primary purposes. The first is to update old standards that were implemented decades ago, bringing them in line with newer technologies and modern workplace practices. The second is to simplify many of these rules to make them similar to Construction standards that cover the same topics. The overall goal of this overhaul is to protect workers by making the rules they need to know more relevant to their work and easier to understand. But even the most comprehensive rebuild of any safety standard is meaningless unless it is properly enacted by employers. To help employers roll it out, OSHA has built a schedule for when various parts of the new Subpart D standards need to be in place. The first deadline for employee training has already passed, but the next deadline is coming up soon in November.

By November 20th, 2017, Employers must have all permanent building anchorages for rope descent systems inspected and certified.

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**ROBIN’S CORNER**  
By Robin Watson, Ohio BWC Representative

**Question:** Can an exposure to a chemical substance below an occupational health limit represent a health hazard for some employees?

**Answer:** Generally, we assume that if an exposure to a chemical substance is below an occupational health limit, there is no cause for concern. However, occupational exposure limits do not represent a fine line between a healthy versus an unhealthy work environment. Possible reasons for an individual to have increased susceptibility to a chemical substance can include the following: age, gender, genetic factors (predisposition), lifestyle choices (e.g., poor diet, smoking, abuse of alcohol and other drugs), pre-existing medical conditions (asthma, high blood-pressure, cardiovascular disease, etc.), ethnicity and medications. Previous exposure to chemicals that are known sensitizers (such as formaldehyde and isocyanates) can cause reactions to sensitized individuals well below the established occupational health limits for these chemical substances. Increased work load (light versus heavy) and extreme heat or cold can also change an individual’s response to chemical exposures. The bottom line – it is possible for an individual to have an adverse reaction to a chemical substance even though the exposure is well below the established occupational exposure limits. The occupational exposure limits are set so that the majority of the exposed population will have no adverse reaction.

Keep in mind the occupational exposure limit listed in regulations is the limit of exposure without respiratory protection. Other PPE, such as gloves, aprons, eye protection, face-shields etc. would still be required depending upon the hazards of the chemical substance.

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for use according to the new standards. These inspections will ensure that all such anchorage points are strong and reliable enough to support the loads they will be used for. By November 19th, 2018, all new and existing fixed ladders over 24 feet must have safety systems installed, such as personal fall arrest systems, cages, wells, or ladder safety systems. Lastly, all cages and wells used as fall protection must be replaced with ladder safety systems or personal fall arrest systems by November 18th, 2036.

The purpose of these required installations is to ensure that employers are employing new safety techniques to protect their workers. By upgrading workplaces with these new features, workers are better protected from the falling hazards present in their work environments.
Back to School season is in full swing and we need to be mindful that we will once again be sharing the roads with school buses. Here are a few safety tips to keep us all safe throughout the entire school year.

- Be alert for students near school bus stops as well as those who walk to school.
- Typical school hours are 7am – 4pm but after school events such as school sports, could be on weekends or during the evening.
- Never pass a school bus while it is loading or unloading.
- Always make sure the area is clear of students before proceeding (after waiting for bus).
- Always obey all traffic laws.
- School areas have reduced speeds posted during school hours.
- Control your speed in all areas, especially those where students may be present.
- Controlling your speed is the best way to control your vehicle.
- If possible, plan to use alternate routes to avoid school related traffic.
- Maintain a safe following distance from any school buses.
- Remember that school buses stop at all railroad crossings.

Fire Prevention Week is October 8-14, 2017

A reminder to change the batteries in your smoke alarms!
First Aid in the Workplace—Sept 6—8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
Industry Safety Elements (OSHA 10) - Sept. 11-12—8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. each day
Basic Construction Safety (OSHA 30) Sept. 18-22—8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. each day
Behavior-based Safety Systems—Sept. 26—8:30 a.m. to noon
Bloodborne Pathogens—Sept. 26—1:00 p.m.—4:30 p.m.
Train the Trainer Techniques for Safety—Oct. 3-4—1.5 days
Measuring Safety Performance—Nov. 1—8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.
Electrical Basics—Nov. 7—8:30 a.m.—noon
Understanding and Identifying Ergonomic Risk Factors—1:00—4:30 p.m.

Coming Next Month

October 12, 2017
Identity Theft: Steps to Protect Your Company’s Data
Kris Evans, Certified Identity Theft Risk Management Consultant, Harvard Risk Management Corporation

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