



Regulatory Compliance

## A Safety Insider's Take: OSHA's Top 10

Frank Quarato | Mar 01, 2017

### What You Need to Know

80 percent of safety concerns come from 20 percent of the issues.

Learn 4 steps to start tackling OSHA's top 10 violations.

You need to think about the Pareto principle.

**To take on OSHA's most-cited violations, consider the 3 or 4 that most affect your workplace.**

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's top-cited standards focus on hazards that are specific to industries. By using the list of *manufacturing's top violations* as a starting point, industry safety professionals can not only get the ball rolling for their companies' compliance efforts, but they can also do their due diligence on standards, which is a part of their fiduciary responsibility under OSHA laws.

Eighty percent of hazards come from the top 20 percent of safety exposures. Prioritizing a company's safety review by implementing a team of evaluators ensures both a unified approach and multiple perspectives, which can help when you are looking at possible issues.

### Getting Started

Having safety as a new job responsibility leaves one question: Where do I get started? If you have not had an accident that is forcing you to review your safety standards, just finding a starting point can be a bit overwhelming. Consider these four steps to start.

#### Step 1: Establish Your Mission

Start by picking a mission statement for your company, such as: "We will make our machine shop exceedingly safer focusing on our top safety hazards with the use of engineering controls, management controls and personal protective equipment (PPE), where applicable." Writing this down can help you choose which standards and hazards you'll want to focus on.

To get started with your mission, review and consider OSHA's top 10 most-cited safety standards (part of 29 CFR 1910).

## Step 2: Get Your Evaluation Team Together

A group decision-making process allows for perspective and a dynamic approach. Make sure your evaluation team reflects the DISC method by including four types of people: dominant (CEOs and plant managers), intellectual (accountants and forecasters), sensitive (human resources professionals and company nurses or safety professionals) and competent (mechanical and maintenance operations).

### FACT

97 percent of OSHA's citations are issued without a worker being killed or injured first.

## Step 3: Hold Your First Meeting

Present the OSHA top-cited list to the group in no particular order. Have your team judge the hazards based on a scale of 1 to 10, listing them by priority.

## Step 4: Hold Your Second Meeting

Focus on the top three hazards that your team prioritized in the first meeting.

Let's say machine guarding is the No. 1 hazard. Make a list of options for safety controls for that issue, such as engineering, management and PPE. Then include the timetable for implementation, considering the cost and how the changes may impact your operations.

Discuss whether your solutions are intuitive, user-centric and ergonomic. Pick out what options you will want to avoid against each hazard, then design a timeline and budget to implement them. Don't forget to record the meeting minutes so you can review your goals and solutions later on.

## Remember the Pareto Principle

It helps to think of your safety concerns by using the Pareto principle, which says 80 percent of all your issues come from 20 percent of the possible causes. It's an economic and business perspective that has been in practice since 1896.

If that holds true, by addressing 20 to 30 percent of the top 10 citations, you can effectively boost the safety in your company by addressing the three issues that are most important to your company first. Then handle the rest.

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*What are the biggest safety concerns in your workplace?*

