



Occupational Health, Safety &
Environmental Consultants

OSHA Updates for January – March 2018

**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA)
REGULATORY UPDATES**

1.0 FINAL STATUTES AND RULEMAKINGS

Citations	Summary
	There were no final statutes issued during the 1 st quarter of 2018.

2.0 LETTERS OF INTERPRETATION

OSHA issued the following letters of interpretation since the last regulatory update:

November 20, 2017 - Enforcement Guidance for General Industry Rope Descent System (RDS) Anchorage Requirements. (29 CFR 1910.27(b)(1)).

- <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/2017-11-20>

November 28, 2017 - Clarification on the use of a rigid boot as a precautionary measure after an ankle strain. [1904.7(b)(7)]

- <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/2017-11-28>

December 12, 2017 - Clarification if the use of a cold compression device is considered medical treatment. [1904; 1904.7(b)(5)]

- <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/2017-12-21>

January 12, 2018 - Recording Injuries and Illnesses of Temporary Workers versus HIPAA Requirements. [1904.31]

- <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/2018-01-12>

3.0 RECENT NEWS AND DEVELOPMENTS

OSHA’s FactSheet for respirable crystalline silica

OSHA has issued a new FactSheet that summarizes the major requirements of their new Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard, 29 CFR 1910.1053, for General Industry. The FactSheet is available at <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3682.pdf>.

OSHA will enforce the Beryllium Standard starting in May, 2018

OSHA will start enforcement of the final rule on occupational exposure to beryllium in construction (29 CFR 1926.1124), shipyards (29 CFR 1915.1024), and general industries (29 CFR 1910.1024) on May 11, 2018. The final rule was published on January 9, 2017 and the start of enforcement had previously been



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set for March 12, 2018. In response to feedback from stakeholders, the agency extended the enforcement date as it considered technical updates to clarify and simplify compliance.

Safety and Health Bulletin on hearing loss caused by chemical and noise exposure

Research has demonstrated that exposure to certain chemicals, called ototoxicants, may cause hearing loss or balance problems, regardless of noise exposure. Substances including certain pesticides, solvents, and pharmaceuticals that contain ototoxicants can negatively affect how the ear functions, causing hearing loss, and/or affect balance. The risk of hearing loss is increased when workers are exposed to these chemicals while working around elevated noise levels. This combination may result in hearing loss that can be temporary or permanent, depending on the level of noise, the dose of the chemical, and the duration of the exposure. This bulletin provides recommendations to employers and safety professionals about identifying ototoxicants in the workplace and establishing hearing conservation programs where these chemicals cannot be replaced. The bulletin is available on OSHA's website at <https://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib030818.html>.

Guidance for working with isocyanates in the automobile industry

Through its alliance with OSHA, the American Chemistry Council developed an infographic that provides personal protective equipment (PPE) recommendations for the automotive refinish market. The infographic provides general information on the importance of PPE during the refinishing process. High performance polyurethane coatings used in automotive refinishing applications, can present health hazards from skin contact or breathing in vapors, if appropriate PPE is not used during the painting process. The infographic is available at: <https://polyurethane.americanchemistry.com/Products-Resources-and-Documents/General-Personal-Protective-Equipment-Recommendations-for-Automotive-Refinish-Coating-Applications.pdf>

Avoiding underground utilities during horizontal directional drilling

OSHA has issued a Safety and Health Information Bulletin on horizontal directional drilling (HDD) operations. Installing underground utility lines safely using HDD equipment prevents the drill from hitting and breaking existing underground utility lines (i.e., electrical, water, sewage, gas, steam, chemical). If the drill contacts underground electrical wires, the operator may be electrocuted. Striking natural gas lines with the drill may cause gas leaks at the worksite or down the line in surrounding areas, potentially causing an explosion. The bulletin addresses safe HDD operations and specific methods to avoid underground lines because visibility is more limited than in vertical drilling. The bulletin was initiated based on an incident that led to an explosion that resulted in a worker fatality at a nearby restaurant. The bulletin is available at <https://www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib031318.html>.