

INTRODUCTION TO OSHA PART 1

MODULE DESCRIPTION

This module will introduce OSHA, what it stands for, and its purpose.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this module, students will be able to:

- Explain why OSHA is important to workers
- Explain worker rights under OSHA

MODULE OUTLINE

1. Fatality Catastrophe (FAT/CAT) Reports

- OSHA publishes an updated Fatality/Catastrophe Reports list every week on its web site.
- FAT/CAT Reports contain the following information:
 - Date of incident
 - Company and Location
 - Preliminary description of the incident

2. History of OSHA

- OSHA stands for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Labor.
- OSHA's responsibility is worker safety and health protection
- OSHA was created by Congress under the **Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970**
- There were four main events that led to the OSHA laws.
 - **1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Company:** a fire in New York City killed 146 of 500 employees in one of the worst work-related disasters in our country's history. Factory workers died because doors were locked and there were no fire escapes.
 - **Production for World War I:** The government created a Working Conditions Service to help states inspect plants and reduce hazards.
 - **1930's Roosevelt's New Deal:** As part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, additional laws increased the federal government's role in job safety and health. But the federal role was mainly to provide services and information to state governments.
 - **1960 Statistics:** 14,000 workers died every year and more than 2.2 million workers were not able to work due to injuries and illnesses.
- **OSH Act:**
 - On December 29, 1970 President Nixon signed the OSH Act. This Act created OSHA, the agency, which formally came into being on April 28, 1971.
 - With the creation of OSHA, all employers in the United States had the legal responsibility to

provide a safe and healthful workplace for employees.

- The OSH Act is also known as Public Law 91-596.

3. OSHA Standards

- Who does OSHA cover?
 - All private sector employers and their workers in the 50 states and all territories and jurisdictions under federal authority.
 - Religious groups are covered if they employ workers for secular purposes, such as maintenance or gardening.
- Who is not covered by OSHA?
 - Self-employed
 - Immediate members of farming families not employing outside workers
 - Mine workers, certain truckers and transportation workers, and atomic energy workers who are covered by other federal agencies
 - Public employees in state and local governments, although some states have their own plans that cover these workers.
- **OSHA's Mission:** is to save lives, prevent injuries, and protect the health of America's workers to achieve this some of the things OSHA does to carry out its mission are:
 - Develop job safety and health standards, and enforcing them through worksite inspections
 - Maintaining a reporting and recordkeeping system to keep track of job-related injuries and illnesses
 - Provide training programs to increase knowledge about occupational safety and health.
- OSHA also assists the states in their efforts to assure safe and healthful working conditions through OSHA-approved job safety and health programs operated by individual states instead of federal OSHA.

4. Why is this Training Important?

- Even though OSHA has had an impact on worker safety and health, significant hazards and unsafe conditions still exist in the U.S. workplaces.
 - On average, 15 workers die every day from job injuries
 - Over 5,600 Americans die from workplace injuries
 - Over 4 million non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses were reported
 - The estimated cost of occupational injuries and illnesses are from \$145 billion to \$290 billion a year for direct and indirect costs.

5. Know Your Rights

- When you know your rights, and when employers act responsibly to prevent hazards, the result will be fewer worker deaths, injuries, and illnesses.
- Hazard Communication or **Right to Know** standard provide additional rights:
 - A safe and healthful workplace
 - Know about hazardous chemicals
 - Employers must have a written, complete hazard communication program that

includes information on: Container labeling, MSDs and Worker training. (Note: MSDs provides important information to workers about hazardous chemicals in the workplace)

- Employers must also include a list of the hazardous chemicals in each work area and the means the employer uses to inform workers of the hazards of non-routine tasks.
- The program must explain how the employer will inform employees of hazards to which their workers may be exposed.
- Information about injuries and illnesses in your workplace
- OSHA's recordkeeping rule requires most employers with more than 10 workers to keep a log of injuries and illnesses.
- The log, which is also called the **OSHA 300**, must contain all work-related injuries and illnesses resulting in lost work days, restricted work or transfer to another job, as well as any incident requiring more than first aid treatment.
- You have a right to review the current log, as well as the logs store for the past 5 years. The employer must provide this by the end of the next work day.
- Complain or request hazard correction from an employer
 - Workers may bring up safety and health concerns in the workplace to their employers without fear of discharge or discrimination, as long as the complaint is made in good faith. [Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR 1977.9(c))]
- Training: You have a right to get training from your employer on a variety of health and safety hazards, and standards that your employer must follow.
- Hazard exposure and medical records
 - Under OSHA's standard 1910.1020, you have the right to examine and copy exposure and medical records, including records of workplace monitoring or measuring a toxic substance.
 - OSHA standards require employers to measure exposure to harmful substances, and workers or their representatives have the right to observe the testing and examine the results. If the exposure levels are above the limit set by standard, the employer must tell workers what will be done to reduce exposure.
- File a complaint with OSHA: You may file a complaint with OSHA if you believe a violation of safety or health standard, or an imminent danger situation, exists in your workplace. You may request that your name not be revealed to your employer.
- Participate in an OSHA inspection:
 - If an OSHA inspection is conducted in your workplace, you have the right to have your representative accompany the inspector on the inspection.
 - You also have the right to talk to the inspector privately.
 - You also have the right to find out about inspection results and abatement measures, and get involved in any meetings or hearings related to the inspection.
- Be free from retaliation for exercising safety and health rights: Workers have the right to seek safety and health on the job without fear of punishment [Section 11(c) of the OSH Act]
- Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act states: "Each employer shall furnish to each of his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to his employees."
- Section 5(b) of the OSHA Act states that each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all applicable rules, regulations, and orders.