

OSHA Announces Major Changes in Injury and Illness Reporting and Recording Requirements

By Gary Hanson, President American Safety & Health Management Consultants, Inc.

On September 11, 2014 Dr. David Michaels, assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA, announced the OSHA Final Rule expanding requirements for employers to notify OSHA when a worker is “Killed on the job, or suffers a work related hospitalization, amputation or loss of an eye.” The new rules will go into effect for employees covered under Federal OSHA on January 1, 2015.

Dr. Michaels advised that currently OSHA receives little information about serious nonfatal injuries. The new rule is intended to help OSHA to better allocate agency resources and assess the adequacy of current OSHA standards. It will also allow OSHA to better target employers and industries that need assistance.

All employers covered by the Occupational Safety & Health Act, even those who are exempt from maintaining injury and illness records, are required to comply with OSHA’s new severe injury & illness reporting requirements. The new rule maintains the exemption for any employer with 10 or fewer employees, regardless of their industry classification from the requirement to routinely keep records of worker injuries and illness.

The new rule will require all employers even those who were exempt, either by size or industry to report the following:

- * All work related fatalities that occurred within 30 days of a work related incident. These must be reported within 8 hrs.
- * All work related inpatient hospitalizations of **one** or more employees who are admitted for inpatient care to a hospital or clinic. There is an exception for employees who are admitted for diagnostic testing or observation only.
- * All work related amputations
- * All work related losses of an eye

These must be reported to OSHA within 24 hrs. of an employer learning of it. Employers can either report directly to their nearest OSHA Area Office by telephone or to the OSHA Hotline at 1-800-321-6742 (OSHA). Also employers will have to report an inpatient hospitalization due to a heart attack if it was the result of a work related incident.

OSHA is also currently developing a new means of reporting events electronically. This information will be available on the OSHA web site. www.osha.gov

When reporting an above related incident employers will be required to provide the following information:

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| * Establishment name | * Location of work related incident |
| * Time of work related incident | * Type of incident |
| * Number of employees | * Name of employees |
| * Contact person and telephone number. | * Brief description of the work related incident. |

Employers will not have to report an event if it:

- * Resulted from a motor vehicle accident on a public street
- * Occurred on a commercial or public transportation system
- * Occurred more than 30 days after the work related incident – in case of a fatality or more than 24 hours after a work-related incident in the case of an inpatient hospitalization, amputation or loss of an eye.

According to Dr. Michaels the new reports will all be public on the OSHA website. “Since no employer wants their workplace to be known as an unsafe place we believe that the possibility of public reporting of serious injuries will encourage – or in the behavioral economics term “nudge” employers to take steps to prevent injuries so they are not seen as unsafe places to work.” He also stated that the new reporting system will benefit all employers and workers and help continue to lower injury rates.

Please update your reporting procedures. Advise anyone handling these procedures to make sure they understand the new requirements in detail.

If you need any assistance with your safety program or have any safety related concerns, please call me at either 1-330-854-4577 (Office) or 1-330-495-3437 (Cell)