October 2015 – OSHA publishes top 10 violations for 2015

OSHA recently announced the preliminary Top 10 most frequently cited workplace safety violations for fiscal year 2015 (click *here* for details). The final report for 2015 will be published in December 2015.

National Safety Council President and CEO Deborah A.P. Hersman said "In injury prevention, we go where the data tell us to go". She added "The OSHA Top 10 list is a roadmap that identifies the hazards you want to avoid on the journey to safety excellence".

The full list of workplace safety violations (based on data as of 8th September 2015) is:

1. Fall protection
2. Hazard communication
3. Scaffolding
4. Respiratory protection
5. Lockout / tagout
6. Powered industrial trucks
7. Ladders
8. Electrical – wiring methods
9. Machine guarding
10. Electrical – general requirements

What does the list tell us? Are there any surprises? Looking back at the previous three years, the content of the list contains exactly the same violations and almost in the same order!

How can the frequency of the violations appearing on the list be reduced and / or the severity mitigated, etc, etc?

Firstly, the organisation must be assured that some basic building blocks are present which form the foundations for a good safety management system. This will assist in delivering compliance and drive best practice. Some of the requirements include:

- Great communication (two-way)
- Easy to understand procedures
- The environment to implement the procedures and to challenge if they can't be followed
- Competent people
- Leaders who are passionate about health and safety
- A few critical safety rules / values
- Adopt a mindful approach to managing the business
- Trust
- Supervision and monitoring
- Audit and review

Pure compliance will never be enough to consistently deliver great health and safety performance.

Why?........because people are involved!

The organisation needs to develop a health and safety culture that is much more than a priority …. it needs to be a **CORE VALUE.** For health and safety to be a core value and for the organisation to build trust it must be led from the very top of the organisation but operate in an environment where people are held accountable for their actions (ie in a 'just culture').

Some of the areas to focus on to reinforce health and safety as a core value are:

- Eliminate (or at least minimise) any safety vs production conflicts
- Insist managers visibly demonstrate their safety leadership
- Hold leaders responsible for health and safety performance
- Resource, complete and monitor corrective and preventative actions
- Consistently communicate health and safety using all available mediums
- Ensure kpi's include behavioural measures
- Capture and share lessons learned

All incidents / violations / injuries are preventable but it is a journey that requires leadership, hard work, commitment and enthusiasm.

The content of this article is intended to provide a general guide to the subject matter. Specialist advice should be sought about your specific circumstances.

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