
Cal-OSHA Compliance Tips

ATTENTION: THIS DOCUMENT IS GENERAL IN NATURE AND DEALS WITH VARIOUS LAWS AND REGULATIONS. IT SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED AS LEGAL ADVICE. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU SEEK THE ADVICE OF AN ATTORNEY SPECIALIZING IN THIS AREA OF THE LAW

This article is brought to you by David K. Fischer of California Employer's Services, if you should have any questions please give us a call we are here to help. Phone 888-358-2221/cell 559-284-1912.

I spend a lot of my time as a Cal-OSHA Compliance Coach in the field doing Cal-Osha Mock Inspection walk-throughs in many automotive repair shops many of which you may know. I also spend a good amount of time working with my clients doing Cal-OSHA appeals.

From that perspective I am going to give you some tips that if followed will help you to have a better idea of what Cal-OSHA is looking for.

1. Some things that Cal-OSHA is assessing fines for is not even valid. For instance, every door that goes outside must have an exit sign if you don't have one they can fine you for that. But here is the fine details, this is true only if the building has 50 or more employees working. I have been working with one employer who had an old grinder that he kept away from the work area in storage. Every employee had their own hand-held grinder and there was one bigger grinder in the shop that was compliant. Never the less when Cal-OSHA came out to inspect his workplace he was fined \$8,000.00 dollars and some change for the grinder not having the proper base plate.
2. It is no longer enough to have a Formally Written Safety Program, now you must have written documentation to prove that you are compliant with every aspect of the 8 standards that all employers must comply with. Failing to have written documentation to prove that you are doing safety training, workplace inspections, discipling employees for unsafe conduct or rewarding employees for being safe can cause you to end up with a deficient safety program, a long term for a fine being assessed because your safety program is not adequate.
3. You need to keep employee training records for as long as they are employed by the company.
4. Safety training for automotive repairs shops should be done at least monthly even though you as an industry are not considered to be high hazard. An Osha rep will probably tell you that quarterly is enough, but I encourage employers to do it monthly. Why? Because while you are not considered to be high hazard you do perform some of the same duties as the high hazard companies do. Secondly, it is easier to develop and maintain a monthly habit than it is a quarterly habit. Lastly safety training is something that goes a long way to making you look good should you get a friendly visit from either Cal-OSHA Consulting or the Enforcement Team.

5. Pay attention to the times, compliance with Cal-OSHA and California Labor law have become very complex. I would honestly recommend that you get a good compliance coach, someone who understands not only the laws but how they are being enforced.
6. Get a good Heat Illness Heat Prevention Program, the fine for not having one can go as high as \$18,000.00.
7. Make sure that your shop grinders are compliant every fine that you get concerning your grinder will be a serious violation and that is not good for a couple of reasons. The classification of a serious is much more serious than a general. A serious violation fine is much higher than a general. A serious violation can open you up to an employee lawsuit if someone gets injured on the job.