

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A PEOSH INSPECTION

Inspectors representing the Oklahoma Department of Labor PEOSH unit have several reasons to be at your work sites. These include complaint investigations, fatality investigations, consultations requested by your agency, follow-up visits and inspections. The first four are performed as the needs arise. This section deals with compliance inspections.

Regardless of the number of people involved in your safety and health programs, our initial point of contact is the designated safety coordinator or, in the absence of such a person, the agency head. These inspections are always unannounced. There will be an opening conference where the inspector will identify himself and will have credentials identifying him as an ODOL employee. He will then ask to see copies of your OK 200 Log of Accidents and Illnesses and written programs as described in this guidance book. These will be reviewed and discussed.

After the document review the inspector and designated employee will tour selected work sites. The number of sites included depend on the type of site, the nature of the work being performed at each, the number of injuries and illnesses recorded and other information. A list of the sites visited will be noted on the inspection form, a copy of which will be left with the agency.

During the tour the inspector may wish to speak briefly with employees. These may include supervisors, maintenance personnel and other full- or part-time employees.

Anything found to present an imminent hazard to employees must be immediately corrected. This might include equipment problems or actions of employees. Serious hazards or other non-compliance items (such as lack of or improper documentation) will be addressed in a written report.

There will be a closing conference at which time the inspector will review findings and all parties can ask questions and obtain additional information.

A written report containing the non-compliant condition, the citation of the pertinent standard and requirements for achieving compliance will be mailed to the agency. The agency has 45 days to abate physical hazards and 90 days to correct documentation or program deficiencies.

The inspector may conduct formal or informal follow-up activities to assist you in achieving compliance. When all deficiencies have been corrected the ODOL case will be closed. However, this does not preclude additional activities in the future. Also, the agency may request assistance from the ODOL at any time.

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PROBLEMS COMMONLY FOUND DURING SAFETY INSPECTIONS

The following is a partial list of some of the problems very commonly found during inspections:

Fire extinguishers - annual and monthly inspections not documented

Breaker boxes - circuits unlabeled, open spaces

Power cords - plugged end to end, trip hazards, extension cords instead of rigid wiring, improper cord or plug for the job

Electric heaters - fire hazard (too near objects or no tip over protection), electrical hazard

Exit signs - not in required places, not visible, not lit

Emergency lighting - none where needed, not checked to ensure working

Chemicals - improperly stored, labels not there or illegible, no MSDS, no eyewash

Information on bulletin boards - DOL poster, OK200 totals (Feb. 1 - Mar. 1)

Ladders - do not meet specifications, improper type for job

Housekeeping - oily shop rags not properly stored, objects in aisles and walkways or too close to breaker boxes, general clutter and filth which could pose safety or health hazards, food and chemicals in same storage (or refrigerator), tools and other objects not properly cleaned and stored, accumulated trash

Shop equipment - no guards or guards not properly adjusted, top heavy machines not secured

Bulletin board posting - poster, 200 summary (in February)

Material storage - heavy objects stored above shoulder/head height with no railings nor posted load limits, materials not properly secured

Cylinders - not secured, cylinders with incompatible contents stored too close together (e.g. in welding)

Trenching - improper shoring, no safety measures in place

Lack of documentation - written programs, exposure records, training, OK200 log