

Obtaining a History of Your Company's OSHA Citations

Why bother?

OSHA enters information about its citations into a data base. For each employer, the agency maintains this historical information for five years. When new inspections are conducted, Compliance Safety and Health Officers (CSHOs) examine an employer's historical citation information for at least two reasons. First, the CSHOs may wish to focus on the same issues for which the employer was previously cited while performing their inspection. Second, the CSHOs may use the prior citations as the basis for Repeat citations, which is permissible within five years of the prior citation under certain circumstances.

OSHA publishes the citations entered into its data base. Employers which know their citation history will be better equipped for future inspections and better able to avoid Repeat citations.

Steps for locating your company's OSHA Citations history:

1. Go to www.osha.gov
2. On the home page, under the heading "Data and Statistics," under the category "Inspection Data," click on "Search by Establishment."
3. On the next screen, enter your Company's name in the "Establishment" box.
4. The resulting screen should contain a list of all citations issued to the designated establishment in the last five years.
5. To obtain greater detail on each set of citations, click on the box under the heading "Get Detail."

Obtaining a List of the 10 Standards Most Frequently Cited by OSHA in Your Industry

Why Bother?

OSHA publishes statistical data each year based upon the citations it issues to employers. The agency categorizes its data by industry sectors, using Standard Industrial Classification Codes (“SIC Codes”). Within each sector, OSHA lists up to ten of the most frequently cited standards, prioritizing them from the highest to the lowest citation frequency.

An employer may, therefore, access the standards most frequently cited by OSHA during inspections of other employers in its same SIC Code (which are likely to be its competitors). These sector-specific lists often provide an excellent means of predicting the standards with which employers in your sector encounter the most compliance challenges. In addition, these lists may provide a useful roadmap of the areas which are most likely to be examined by a Compliance Safety and Health Officer during an inspection at your facility.

Steps for locating your industry’s top 10 most frequently cited list:

1. Go to www.osha.gov
2. On the home page, under the heading “Data and Statistics,” under the category “Inspection Data,” click on the “Frequently Cited OSHA Standards.”
3. On the next screen, enter your company’s 4-digit Standard Industrial Classification Code (“SIC Code”)¹ and click on “Submit.”
4. The next screen will list the ten standards most frequently cited by OSHA during inspections conducted within your selected SIC Code during the previous fiscal year.
5. Each standard will be displayed as an eight digit number, which designates a section in volume 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations. For example, the number 19100157 relates to 29 CFR §1910.157 (OSHA’s standard on portable fire extinguishers).
6. To locate a specific OSHA standard, type the CFR citation in a Google search. For example, 29cfr1910.157 will yield several links to OSHA’s portable fire extinguishers standard.

¹ If you do not know your company’s SIC Code, contact a representative of your Accounting Department. Also, on the screen on which you enter the SIC Code, there is a link to a keyword search mechanism.