

OSHA'S PROPOSED CHANGES AND TARGET DATES

May

- Making technical changes and corrections in sections affecting powered platforms, manlifts and vehicle-mounted platforms, and compressed gas and compressed air equipment.
- Adding new sections on protective helmets for electrical workers, slings, uniform traffic control devices, exits, sprinklers, foam, mechanical power transmission guarding, bakery equipment and floating cranes and derricks.

June

- Adding new sections on woodworking machinery, oil burning equipment, ovens and furnaces and installation of gas appliances.
- Adopting the 1971 Threshold Limit Values of the American Congress of Governmental Industrial Hygienists on toxic substances and noise, replacing 1968 and 1970 levels.
- Promulgating an asbestos standard to replace the emergency standard issued December 7, 1971.
- Amending the construction standards to correct conflicts, duplications and technical errors, including those on watch platforms and scaffold heights.
- Completing a section on electrical transmission and distribution lines and equipment, including a specific standard for the electrical utility industry.
- Bringing sections of the general industry standards and the construction standards into conformity.

MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS

Effective immediately with the publication of the Federal Register, March 31, were some miscellaneous amendments. They included some small dimension changes on the chart sizes for Portable Wood Ladders. Paragraph 1910.37(p) is revoked and dealt with hangings or draperies over exit doors, and mirrors placed on or near exit doors which might confuse the direction of exit. An additional table designating dimensions of Class A and B ramps designed as a means of egress was included in the amendments. Alarm and fire protection systems shall be under the supervision of a responsible person who shall cause proper tests to be made at weekly intervals and have general charge of all alterations and additions. This read formerly "at specified intervals".

Several subparagraphs were included for clarifications on the scope of standards for ventilation 1910.94, nonionizing radiation 1910.97, hydrogen 1910.103, oxygen 1910.104, flammable and combustible liquids 1910.106, spray finishing using flammable and combustible materials 1910.107, storage and handling of liquified petroleum gases 1910.110.

Several amendments were made to section 1910.109 explosive and blasting agents. Among these are several subparagraphs on small arms ammunition, small arms primers, and small arms propellants which will have become effective April 30, 1972.

THE ACT UNDER ATTACK

Representative Roncalio (D.-Wyo.) has proposed that no penalties would be given where violations are corrected within the abatement period. Senator Pearson (R.-Kan.) and Senator Curtis (R.-Neb.) have co-sponsored a bill to amend the Act. It would exempt small businessmen, manufacturers, and farmers employing less than 25 persons. It would delay by one year the effective date for employers with 25 - 100 employees. The Secretary would be required to publish the estimated average or maximum cost of compliance with each regulation. He would also be authorized to provide technical advice and consultations to employers with 100 or less employees to assist them in complying. The bill would provide that national consensus standards not have equal status with other regulations under the rule-making procedures of the administration. It would relieve employers from absolute liability if they have made a concentrated, good-faith effort to comply. The employer would also be relieved from fines and penalties if he can prove that requirements he is alleged to have violated would not have effectively constituted an improvement of the health and safety of his employees. The Secretary would also be granted the option of entering into an agreement with the employer for prompt compliance, in the event of an alleged violation, rather than imposing a penalty for failure to comply.

HEALTH HAZARD EVALUATION

Requests can be made for a toxicity evaluation to NIOSH Hazard Evaluation Service Branch, Federal Office Bldg., 500 Main Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202. Requests must include the name, address, telephone number, address of employment, specific workplace and process, and the signature of the requester. The reasons for the request must be specified as well as confirming the individual's authority to make the request and if anonymity is desired. If the substance can be identified, the name should be given along with any trade name, chemical name, manufacturer's name and the physical state of the substance. State whether labels contained warnings. Give the number of people exposed, their occupation, and the length of exposure.

After all required information is received, NIOSH will inspect the workplace, collect samples if necessary and perform all necessary tests. Their determinations will be mailed to the employer who in turn must post it or make it available to employees. If a hazard exists believed to be serious, NIOSH will immediately inform both employers and employees as well as the Department of Labor representatives or state agencies charged with enforcement of standards.

ROLLOVER PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES

According to the Federal Register, April 5, the effective date for new equipment to be equipped with rollover protective structures has been set at September 1, 1972. This allows sufficient time for manufacturers to adjust to the new standard. Machines manufactured before July 1, 1972 raise more serious questions. Machines were not designed for the addition of rollover protection and added structures could create stress factors. The decision for the required standard on these older machines is reserved pending further study, development and review.

WALKAROUND PAY

April CROSSROADS had a short paragraph on the question of pay for representatives accompanying inspectors. Since that issue was printed, George C. Guenther, Assistant Secretary of Labor, gave a decision on a union's complaint against Mobil Oil Corporation for refusing to pay a representative for time spent in the inspection. Guenther declared that Mobil Oil Corporation was not guilty of discrimination against its employees in refusing to pay them. The union will appeal the decision.

NEWS ITEMS

...More and more companies continue to be cited for the violation of using compressed air for cleaning with pressure over the allowable 30 psi.

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