



OSHA Announces New National Emphasis Program

Introduction

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has announced the establishment of a new National Emphasis Program (NEP) focused on Process Safety Management (PSM) regulated chemical facilities (effective July 27, 2009). The NEP was under development over the last three years as a result of safety incidents at chemical facilities. PSM regulated facilities can anticipate significantly enhanced enforcement of PSM implementation requirements.

Applicability

The NEP has begun as a one year pilot program. Results of the pilot will be analyzed and a determination made about the future of the NEP. For this first year, programmed inspections will take place in the following areas:

- Region 1 (New England - Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont);
- Region 7 (Midwest - Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska); and,
- Region 10 (Pacific Northwest - Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington).

However, it is important to note that unprogrammed inspections will also follow this NEP, so inspections of facilities that have an accident or complaint in any Region will also be subject to this NEP. In addition, facilities subject to Site-Specific Targeting (SST) inspections will also be susceptible to this NEP.

Targeted Facilities - Ammonia, Chlorine and Explosives

Inspection sites will be selected randomly from a master list of covered facilities. The master list will be generated based upon a collection of the following targeted facilities:

- USEPA Risk Management Program (RMP) Program 3 facilities;
- Explosives manufacturing facilities;
- Previously cited facilities;
- Ammonia facilities (primarily for refrigeration, but other uses of ammonia will be targeted as well); and
- Chlorine facilities (primarily used for water treatment).

Inspections Unannounced

Inspections conducted through the pilot program are unannounced. OSHA indicates that inspections will place more emphasis on PSM implementation than on documentation. Inspectors will have a list of approximately 15 questions that will be administered during the inspection. OSHA has stated that if a facility successfully answers these questions, the inspection will be complete. If a facility fails on any of the questions, the inspection could become more in-depth and citations are likely.

Update Your PSM and RMP Programs

We strongly encourage all PSM regulated facilities to review and as necessary update their PSM and RMP programs including proper documentation, training and emergency preparation.

If your company does not have a PSM specialist, please feel free to contact us as we will be able to assist you in reviewing your PSM and RMP programs and preparing for potential inspections.

Important Resources

OSHA NEP Directive

http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/Directive_pdf/CPL_02_09-06.pdf

OSHA PSM Guidance and Information

<http://www.ehso.com/ProcessSafety.htm>

EPA RMP Guidance and Information

<http://www.epa.gov/oem/content/rmp/>

Weaver Boos Qualifications

Weaver Boos is experienced assisting facilities in developing and implementing OSHA PSM programs for various industries as well as preparing and submitting USEPA RMP plans. As a routine course of business we can:

- Identify which facility processes are covered under OSHA PSM. Develop a PSM program including all 14 elements of PSM;
- Facilitate a Process Hazard Analysis (PHA) at your facility to update your PSM;
- Audit your current PSM program and identify gaps and/or deficiencies; and
- Prepare and submit a RMP plan for your facility as required by the USEPA.

Weaver Boos employs qualified Environmental Professionals educated and experienced to assist you with your environmental management requirements. For more information, please call Carolyn M. Feltz, P.E., LEED AP at (312) 922-1030 or Douglas G. Dorgan, Jr., LPG at (630) 717-4848.

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