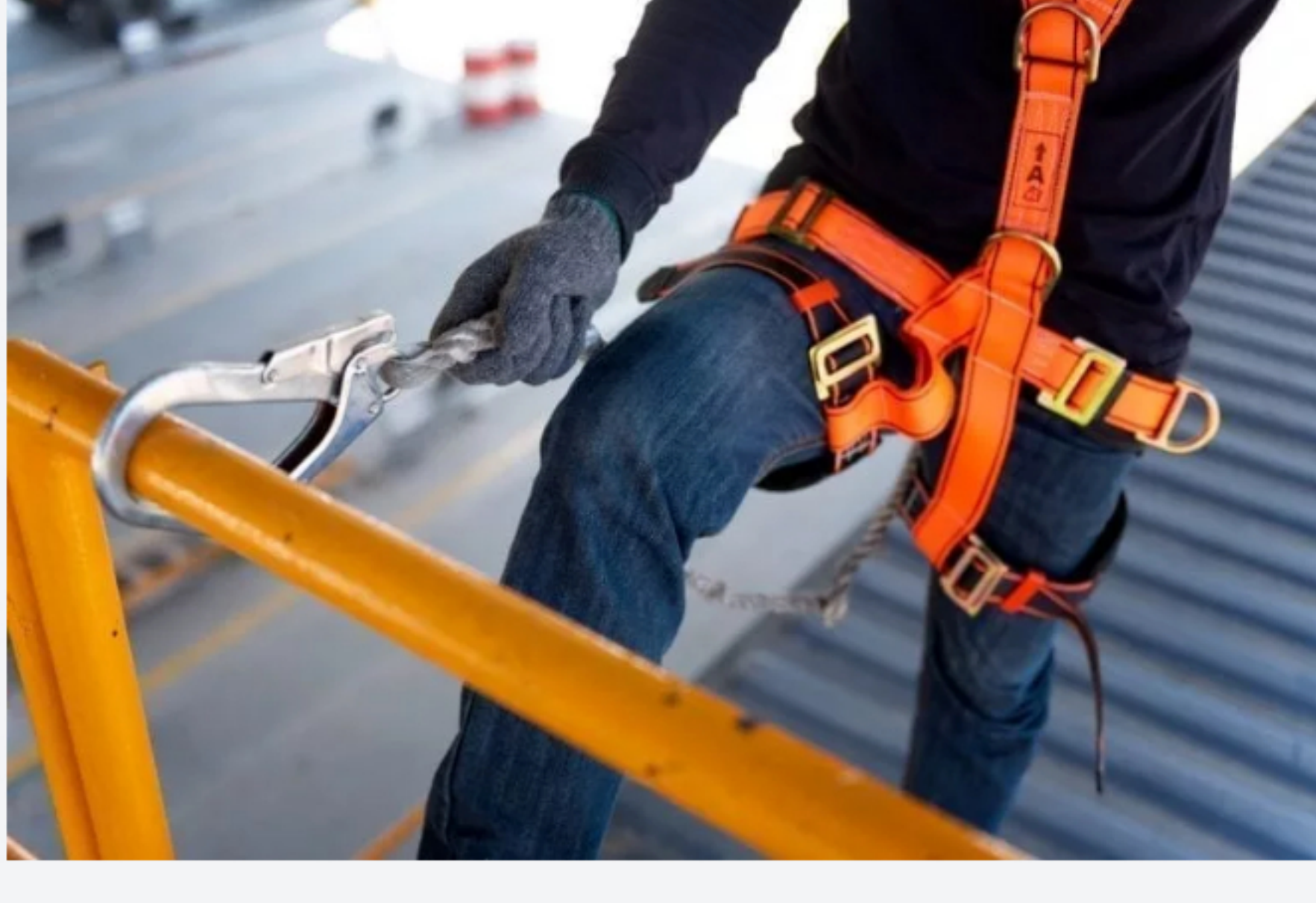


Fall Protection Tops OSHA’s List of Top 10 Most Cited Violations

DECEMBER 3, 2018 BY

JOBSITE EDITORIAL STAFF



Each year OSHA releases its list of top 10 most cited violations at the National Safety Council (NSC) Congress and Expo. Unfortunately, changes don’t seem to be fast enough—OSHA’s seven top offenders are repeats from the year before. It’s no surprise that OSHA’s becoming more strict with tougher enforcement and increased fines. In 2017, OSHA conducted nearly 76,000 workplace inspections—that’s more than double from the previous year.

There’s a good reason for this lack of tolerance. Nearly 4,600 people die each year doing their jobs, and some three million are injured. The number one killer—falls.

“Falls continue to lead as the number one fatality in our industry and the number one for citations that are issued,” said Kevin Cannon, the Director of Safety and Health for Associated General Contractors. In fact, 384 out of 991 total deaths in construction in **CY 2016** (38.7%) were fall-related.

With OSHA fines on the rise, the cost could be hefty. However, the price to pay for repeated violations is only one aspect to worry about. There’s the safety of your crew, schedule delays, reputation and higher insurance costs. OSHA violations not only put your workers’ safety at risk and cost you money—they actually hurt your business.

Nine out of the top ten saw an increase in the number of violations from the previous year. Number 10 on the list is a newcomer this year.

- Fall Protection: 7,270 violations, an increase of 1,648 incidents.**
- Hazard Communication: 4,552, up 376 incidents.**
- Scaffolding: 3,336, up 48 incidents.**
- Respiratory Protection: 3,118, up 21 incidents.**
- Lockout/Tagout: 2,944, up 67 incidents.**
- Ladders: 2,812, up 571 incidents.**
- Powered Industrial Trucks: 2,294, up 132 incidents.**
- Fall Protection – Training Requirements: 1,982, up 459 incidents.**
- Machine Guarding: 1,972, up 39 incidents.**
- Eye and Face Protection: 1,536, new this year.**

#### Increased Fines

Construction industry members always feel the pain of OSHA fines. It’s become an even bigger problem following a sharp increase in 2016, in addition to a cost-of-living hike in **January 2018**.

According to OSHA, “The cost-of-living adjustment multiplier for 2018, based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for the month of October 2017, not seasonally adjusted, is 1.02041. To compute the 2018 annual adjustment, the Department multiplied the most recent penalty amount for each applicable penalty by the multiplier, 1.02041, and rounded to the nearest dollar.” This means that the current cost for a serious fine is \$12,934.

#### A Call for Increased Awareness

**"Other factors like distraction and fatigue also have a huge impact on worker safety, but aren’t always visible to the naked eye"**

Debbie A. P. Hersman, the president and CEO of the NSC, opened the Expo with a **call** for safety experts to increase their awareness of hazards, some of which are not visible. Hersman discussed the role of opioids, which are often prescribed after an injury, even though they are highly addictive and likely to alter judgment and perception on the job.

Other factors like distraction and fatigue also have a huge impact on worker safety, but aren’t always visible to the naked eye, added Hersman.

“As we become more sophisticated, the hazard cues become more subtle. We have to develop a deeper understanding of what causes or contributes to risk,” she said.

#### Preventing Falls

To prevent employees from being injured from falls, employers must:

- Guard every floor hole into which a worker can accidentally walk (using a railing and toeboard or a floor hole cover).
- Provide a guardrail and toeboard around every elevated open sided platform, floor, or runway.
- Regardless of height, if a worker can fall into or onto dangerous machines or equipment (such as a vat of acid or a conveyor belt) employers must provide guardrails and toeboards to prevent workers from falling and getting injured.
- Other means of fall protection that may be required on certain jobs include safety harness and line, safety nets, stair railings and handrails.

Construction, as we all know, is an inherently dangerous business, which is all the more reason to be proactive about safety. As safety experts repeatedly point out: all jobsite incidents are preventable. Making safety a priority can mean the difference between life and death.

For a best practices guide on preventing falls, OSHA’s fall protection **web page** is a great resource.

If you liked this article, here are a few eBooks and webinars that you may enjoy:

**The Future of Construction Safety**

**Building a Safety Culture: Improving Safety Management in the Construction Industry**

**The 10 Most Critical Factors in Construction Safety**

CATEGORIES:

SAFETY

TAGS:

OSHA, WORKER SAFETY

J

Jobsite Editorial Staff

Launched in 2016, Jobsite, Procore's news platform, covers a mix of engaging and informative construction news, trends, tech and customer spotlights for the U.S., Australia and Canada. Contributors include construction news writers, thought leaders and from those on the ground. Jobsite's popular Weekly Grind column includes curated construction news from around the world.

### Leave a Reply

Your email address will not be published. Required fields are marked \*

Comment

Name \*

Email \*

Website

☐ Save my name, email, and website in this browser for the next time I comment.

Post Comment

#### FEATURED

Construction Owner Tips: How to Navigate Software Licensing

In Challenging Times, How one Company is Giving Back

The Value of Effectively Managing Project Schedule Compression through COVID-19

How Predictive Analytics Can Get You On The Path to An Incident-Free Jobsite

Recycled Plastic a Serious Contender for Future Construction Materials

### Subscribe to Jobsite

email@example.c

Submit