



OSHA Compliance Monthly

A Monthly Publication Courtesy of TechneTrain, Inc.



What's OSHA Doing In the Green Industry?

Last year, OSHA issued 161 citations in the Lawn Care Industry, a total of \$67,423 in penalties. Avoiding costly OSHA citations requires that you provide a safe workplace and understand what OSHA might focus on in your business. Looking at last year's OSHA citations can give you an insight into where to focus your compliance activities.

Emphasis Area	Total Cost	Number Citations	Average Cost
Hazardous Workplace	\$15420	10	\$1542
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	\$14457	31	\$ 466
Excavation Safety	\$ 7440	5	\$1488
Tools and Machine Guarding	\$ 6787	17	\$ 399
Electrical	\$ 4250	25	\$ 170
Hazard Communication	\$ 625	14	\$ 49

SIC 0782 (Lawn/Garden Services) for October 2003 - September 2004, www.osha.gov.

Most Costly/Most Frequent

Hazardous Workplace citations were the most costly. Last year, most of the hazardous workplace citations for the lawn care industry had to do with usage of vehicles or heavy equipment, and/or safety in and around traffic. It is the responsibility of the employer to furnish a workplace that is free from recognized hazards that are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.

PPE was the most frequently cited regulation. OSHA found that employers were not providing necessary equipment based on the job hazards, including safety glasses or goggles for eyes, hearing protection, hard hats as needed for head protection, gloves and safety shoes. Some of you will also need to provide protective clothing, respirators, and protective shields and barriers. Where the employee furnishes his or her own protective equipment, it is the employer's responsibility to assure its adequacy on an on-going basis.

Other Key Citation Areas

Improper excavation had only 5 citations last year, but they were the second most costly. If you do excavations or trenches 5 feet deep or greater, the employer must provide a protective system to prevent cave-ins. In addition, precaution must be taken regarding underground utility installations, surface encumbrances, and other factors.

Tool guarding, especially for portable power tools, continues to be a frequently cited area. The safe condition of tools and equipment used by employees, including those furnished by employees, is the responsibility of the employer. One key area is keeping the manufacturers' guards on at all times. There are specific rules pertaining to specifications, usage, and maintenance requirements for many of the tools and equipment used in the lawn care industry, including portable tools and mowers.

Electrical equipment on the job was the second most frequently cited area for last year. Frayed cords and improper extension cords, as well as selection and usage of equipment, improper wiring, and the lack of safe lockout/tagout procedures all triggered costly citations.

Hazard communication continues to be cited where companies require their workers to use chemicals, including gasoline, without informing them of the hazards of these materials. Employers also need to provide a comprehensive hazard assessment of the chemicals they use. This area is improving and had only 14 of the 161 citations.

This Publication has been provided Courtesy of TechneTrain, Inc., an OSHA Training & Support Firm. Because each business situation is different, this information is intended for general information purposes only and is not intended to provide legal advice.

Please do not hesitate to call with any questions.

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