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Project Construction and Contract Administration Safety and Operations Job Site Worker Safety

www.fhwa.dot.gov/federal-aidessentials

Agencies have an obligation to manage safety for all workers on Federal-aid projects



Highly congested roadways, coupled with much-needed construction and repair, can mean greater safety risks in work zones. This is especially true for those working around traffic and heavy equipment at the job site. Studies show that more than 20,000 workers are killed or injured each year in road construction zones.



Local public agencies, or LPAs, have an obligation to manage project safety for all workers on Federal-aid projects.

This includes your employees, consultants you may hire, employees of the contractor, and even those from third parties, such as police and emergency services. While contractors and third parties retain responsibility for their own actions and employees, you must direct them to adhere to the worker safety requirements stipulated in Federal-aid contracts. The requirements come from Federal laws overseen by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA, and the Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA. You must follow safety regulations and institute good practices designed to prevent workers from becoming part of these statistics.

Let's start by looking at the safety requirements for your employees. OSHA requires all employers to provide a workplace free from recognized hazards, and to maintain programs that help employees be safe. Because of the high safety risks associated with construction activities, OSHA has special regulations for construction work.

With regard to employee programs and proactive safety, training is essential and generally a good investment because, as the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." OSHA has standards for training employees related to the safety and health aspects of their jobs. This training is especially important for work in a construction area.



Basic safety training for employees who work on or visit a construction site should include topics such as identifying the hazards employees will encounter on the job, use and care of personal protective equipment, and best practices to prevent injury.

As the employer, train your workers to recognize, document, and report to their supervisors when they feel they have

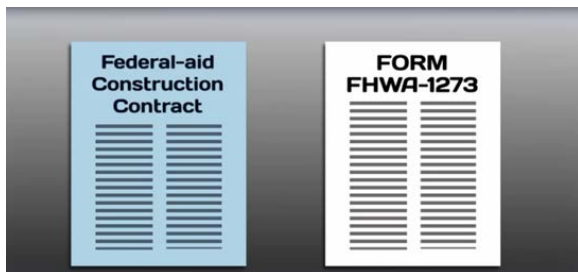
encountered unsafe working conditions while in the construction work zone. Your employees must be able to safely access and exit the construction work zone when making inspections of the contractor's work. An LPA inspector should not feel pressured to make an inspection where unsafe working conditions exist.

Sometimes specialized training is necessary because OSHA standards require employers to limit certain job assignments to employees who are "certified," "competent," or "qualified." This means that the employees have had special training, in or outside the workplace, and are competent and qualified to perform specific duties.

In addition to training, the LPA is responsible to provide the personal protective equipment their employees are required to wear.

For example, roadside workers are required to wear high-visibility safety apparel when work activities expose them to moving vehicles.

Employees have responsibilities, too. They must know and adhere to safety requirements and perform their duties safely while working on a Federal-aid project. Employees must stay alert, use common sense and demonstrate proactive safety practices while working in a construction zone.



What are the safety requirements for your contractors' employees? Contractors, as employers, share the same responsibilities as you do in providing a safe workplace, training and personal protective equipment for their employees. Contractors on a Federal-aid project are contractually obligated to meet OSHA safety requirements, which are included by reference in the Form FHWA-1273, a part of every Federal-aid construction contract.



Contractors are also required to display the OSHA 3165 poster on the project bulletin board for their employees. This poster provides information to employees on worker safety and their right to a safe work place.

Finally, one of your responsibilities as the project owner is to verify that the contractors meet contractual safety requirements for the workers at the job site. The LPA fulfills this responsibility by making field inspections throughout the life of the project.

An LPA should perform worker safety inspections as part of its overall work zone inspection process.

Some of the specific conditions to look for regarding worker safety are:

- Have the safety devices been placed appropriately to protect the workers in the work zone?
- Are all workers wearing correct personal protective equipment?
- Are only properly trained and qualified employees performing designated jobs?
- Do the workers meet specific training qualifications for their roles, such as for flaggers, law enforcement, or as "competent persons?"
- If the work is performed at night, is there adequate lighting? Are the workers wearing the proper reflective personal protective equipment?

Check with the State department of transportation, or State DOT, the State department of labor, and OSHA for a more comprehensive checklist to use in inspecting construction zone safety.



Document any deficiencies found during the inspection to share with the contractor. You may want to take pictures to include with your documentation about the conditions at the time of the inspection. Whatever method is chosen to conduct the inspection, keep a written record, including the date and time of the inspection. Discuss the deficiencies with the contractor and agree on a time table for correction. Then, follow-up with the contractor to ensure the deficiencies are corrected.

Implementing and enforcing safe worker practices and safe working conditions in the construction work zone contribute to the ultimate success of the project. Federal-aid safety requirements help LPAs ensure these practices and conditions exist, so in the end, each worker can go home safe and sound each night.

Web Resources

- Link to OSHA regulations for construction
http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=1c2d9fd427a828f844ba7ea41073753a&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title29/29cfr1926_main_02.tpl
- FHWA regulations for work zone safety and mobility, including requirements for worker training
<http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=290fc6120445390597f08cbae47b02d8&rgn=div6&view=text&node=23:1.0.1.7.21.9&idno=23>
- Link to major OSHA construction requirements and guidance to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/compliance_assistance/quickstarts/construction/index_construction.html
- FHWA regulations, guidance and information covering worker safety
<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/workersafety/index.htm>
- Link to the MUTCD, including the section on safety apparel requirements
<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>
- Information on Worker Safety for Highway Construction Standard
<http://www.workzonesafety.org/training/record/10234>

The content of this document is not a substitute for information obtained from State departments of transportation, appropriate FHWA Division Offices, and applicable laws. Scenarios have been simplified for emphasis and do not necessarily reflect the actual range of requirements applicable to the scenario or this topic. This document was created under contract number DTFH63-12-F-00025 by the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, and is offered to the public to heighten and focus awareness of Federal-aid requirements within the local public agencies community and reinforces the importance of these necessary policies, procedures, and practices.

This companion resource is the script content for the video production of the same name.