



Winter 2017

Top Stories/National News

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## Final Rule to Update General Industry Walking-Working Surfaces and Fall Protection Standards Now in Effect

The [final rule](#) for walking-working surfaces in general industry became effective on January 17, 2017. This rule updates general industry walking-working surfaces standards specific to slip, trip, and fall hazards and includes a new section under the general industry personal protective equipment standards that establishes employer requirements for using personal fall protection systems. The rule aligns fall protection requirements more closely with the construction standard and has incorporated industry best practices, advances in technology and national consensus standards. The rule also benefits employers by allowing them more flexibility in choosing fall protection systems. The standards will affect approximately 112 million workers at seven million worksites and are projected to prevent 29 fatalities and 5,842 lost-workday injuries each year when fully implemented. Additional information including the preamble, regulatory text, [fact sheets](#) and [Q&A](#) can be found on the [final rule website](#).

### Important Dates

- January 17, 2017: Effective Date—compliance with most provisions
- May 17, 2017: Employee Training
- November 17, 2017: Inspect and certify anchorage for rope descent systems
- November 17, 2018: New and replacement fixed ladders (over 24 ft) must have fall arrest or ladder safety systems (cages /wells are acceptable on existing ladders)
- November 17, 2036: All fixed ladders (over 24 ft) must have fall arrest or ladder safety systems



The 4th annual [National Fall Prevention Stand-Down](#) will take place May 8 -12th, 2017. A Safety Stand-Down is a voluntary event where employers talk directly to employees about safety. Companies can conduct a Safety Stand-Down by taking a break to have a toolbox talk or another safety activity such as conducting equipment inspections, developing rescue plans, or discussing job specific hazards. Managers are encouraged to plan a stand-down that works best for their workplace anytime during May 8-12, 2017.

Fatalities caused by falls from elevation continue to be a leading cause of death for construction employees, accounting for 350 of the 937 construction fatalities recorded in 2015 (BLS data). Those deaths were **preventable** and the National Fall Prevention Stand-Down raises fall hazard awareness across the country in an effort to stop fall fatalities and injuries.

Employers are encouraged to share their events with OSHA. OSHA hosts an events page to help employers and employees find events that are free and open to the public. To learn how to partner with OSHA during the

Stand-Down, get information on how to conduct a successful event, find resources for employees and workers, receive a certificate of participation, and the latest news, visit [www.osha.gov/StopFallsStandDown](http://www.osha.gov/StopFallsStandDown).

If you would like to post your event on the OSHA website, please contact John Olaechea at [olaechea.john@dol.gov](mailto:olaechea.john@dol.gov).



## RECORDKEEPING REMINDER



Don't forget to certify and post your OSHA 300A annual summary forms from February 1– April 30. For more information, visit the Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements [website](#).

## National Emphasis Program for PSM Covered Chemical Facilities

On January 17, 2017, OSHA released a [directive](#) which describes the updated National Emphasis Program (NEP) by OSHA to reduce or eliminate workplace hazards associated with the catastrophic release of highly hazardous chemicals at facilities which are covered by OSHA's Process Safety Management (PSM) of Highly Hazardous Chemicals (29 CFR 1910.119). Inspections under this program will be initiated for employers in the following categories: ammonia refrigeration, petroleum refineries, chemical manufacturing, and other likely PSM covered facilities. For more information about PSM regulations, hazards, and compliance assistance, please visit our [website](#).



OSHA and co-sponsors NSC, AIHA, ASSE, and NIOSH are organizing the first annual Safe + Sound Week from June 12-18. The goal is to raise awareness and understanding of the value of safety and health programs in workplaces and encourage their voluntary adoption and implementation. To participate, employers undertake activities or plan events involving at least one or more of the core elements of a safety and health program: management leadership; worker participation; and find and fix workplace hazards. For more information on Safe + Sound Week visit the [website](#) as it continues to be updated.

## Final Rule to Protect Workers From Beryllium

In January 2017, OSHA issued a [final rule](#) to prevent chronic beryllium disease and lung cancer in American workers by limiting their exposure to beryllium and beryllium compounds. The rule contains standards for general industry, construction, and shipyards.

OSHA estimates that the rule will save 90 lives from beryllium-related diseases and prevent 46 new cases of chronic beryllium disease each year, once the effects of the rule are fully realized. About 62,000 workers are exposed to beryllium in their workplaces, including approximately 11,500 construction and shipyard workers who may conduct abrasive blasting operations using slags that contain trace amounts of beryllium. The majority of workers affected by this rule are exposed in general industry operations such as beryllium metal and ceramic production, non-ferrous foundries, and fabrication of beryllium alloy products.

All three standards contained in the final rule take effect on March 21, 2017 (extended from March 10). The three sectors have one year from the original effective date (March 12, 2018) to comply with most of the requirements.

### KEY PROVISIONS

Reduces the permissible exposure limit (PEL) to 0.2 micrograms per cubic meter of air, averaged over 8-hours.

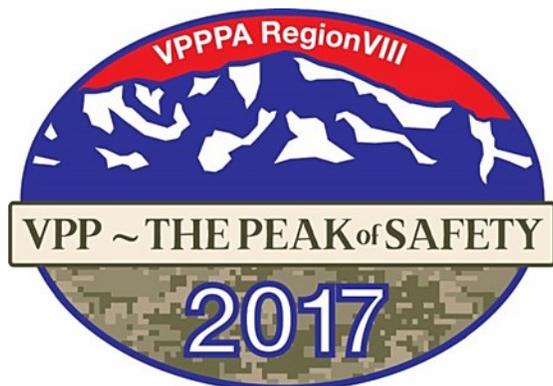
Establishes a new short term exposure limit (STEL) of 2.0 ug/m<sup>3</sup>, over a 15-minute sampling period.

Requires engineering and work practice controls (such as ventilation or enclosure) to limit worker exposure to beryllium; use of respirators when controls cannot adequately limit exposure; limited access to high-exposure areas; written exposure control plan; and worker training on beryllium hazards.

Requires employers to make available medical exams to exposed workers and provides medical removal protection to workers identified with a beryllium-related disease.

**NOTE:** OSHA is seeking comments on a [proposal](#) to delay the effective date of the final rule from March 21 to May 20 to allow for further review and consideration. See [news release](#).

## Region VIII Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) News



### VPPPA Safety Summit

The Voluntary Protection Program Participants' Association (VPPPA) will hold their regional [2017 Safety Summit](#) in Colorado Springs on April 25-27. The VPPPA is a service organization whose mission is to promote workplace safety and health excellence and continuous improvement of site safety and health programs through the OSHA Voluntary Protection Program (VPP). VPP is a cooperative partnership program developed by OSHA to recognize worksites that maintain excellence in employee safety and health. The Region VIII chapter consists of a community of safety and health professionals in Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, North Dakota and South Dakota. The preliminary conference [schedule](#) including the keynote speakers is now available at the Region VIII VPPPA [website](#).



### Special Governmental Employee (SGE) Training

An SGE training class will be June 13-15, 2017, at Hellman & Associates, LLC (an OSHA VPP Mobile Workforce Star level participant site) located in Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

The [SGE Program](#) was established to allow industry employees to work alongside OSHA during Voluntary Protection Programs' (VPP) onsite evaluations. Not only does this innovative program benefit OSHA by supplementing its on-site evaluation teams, but it gives industry and government an opportunity to work together and share views and ideas.

Qualified volunteers from VPP sites are eligible to participate in the SGE program. These volunteers must be approved by OSHA and funded by their companies to participate.

If you would like to consider serving as an SGE, more information can be obtained at the [SGE program](#) webpage. [Click here to register](#) for the SGE training by April 15.

## Stand-Up for Grain Engulfment Prevention



To help prevent injuries and deaths from grain bin engulfment, several OSHA offices in the Midwest are supporting the OSHA Training Institute's Education Center at the University of Texas, Arlington in a "Stand-Up for Grain Engulfment Prevention," March 27-31. The goal is to raise awareness about hazards, protective methods and safety practices to prevent engulfment. During the weeklong event, companies can participate by providing toolbox talks and training on lockout/tagout, fall prevention, and other safety measures. For more information, visit the event [webpage](#).

A [webinar](#) was held on January 26, 2017, to discuss the stand down event and general safety and health issues. To view the [webinar](#) or obtain more information please visit the event [website](#). If you would like to participate, please register on the [website](#) or contact John Olaechea at [olaechea.john@dol.gov](mailto:olaechea.john@dol.gov) or 720-264-6586.

## Safety Fest of the West at the Rocky Mountain Education Center



Chad Vivian, acting area director of OSHA's Englewood Area Office; Joan Smith, executive director of the Rocky Mountain Education Center and Herb Gibson, area director of OSHA's Denver Area Office sign [alliance](#) renewal at Safety Fest of the West.

The Rocky Mountain Education Center (RMEC) at Red Rocks Community College resumed the annual Safety Fest of the West after a one year layoff. RMEC partnered with OSHA to deliver a variety of free safety and health training programs from January 11-13 including OSHA 10 for both general industry and construction, OSHA 7410 (Managing Excavation Hazards), an ex-

tended 4-hour OSHA update session, and a new class entitled Social Styles for Field Leaders in Construction and General Industry. The successful event provided training to about 175 participants. [Powerpoint presentations](#) and other materials from some of the sessions can be downloaded at the RMEC [website](#).

The event was kicked off on January 11 by a signing ceremony for the formal [alliance](#) between RMEC and OSHA. The alliance, originally formed in 2010, is a joint effort to provide employers and others with information, guidance and access to training resources that will help them protect the health and safety of workers and understand the rights of workers and the responsibilities of employers under the Occupational Safety and Health Act. RMEC is an authorized OSHA Training Institute Outreach Training Center that provides a wide variety of safety and health training. Additional information on RMEC can be found at [www.rmecosha.com](http://www.rmecosha.com).

This newsletter is distributed quarterly. Call John Olaechea (720-264-6586) or send an e-mail to [olaechea.john@dol.gov](mailto:olaechea.john@dol.gov) to subscribe or to submit comments, questions or suggestions.

### Meet the Compliance Officer

Anthony Castillo is an industrial hygienist with the Billings Area Office in Montana. Anthony started his career with OSHA in April of 2015. He has a degree in Environmental Health and Safety and served in the US Navy. Anthony also acquired experience in manufacturing and quality control before joining OSHA.

Anthony is originally from Dallas but grew up in a military family and has lived all over the country. When he's not busy working on his house he enjoys relaxing and spending time with his daughter.

