



# WisCon Words of Wisdom

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## Top 10 Cited OSHA Standards

OSHA has officially released their [Top 10 Most Frequently Cited Standards for Fiscal Year 2024](#). The Top 10 include:

1. Duty To Have Fall Protection (1926.501)
2. Hazard Communication (1910.1200)
3. The Control Of Hazardous Energy (Lockout/Tagout) (1910.147)
4. Ladders (1926.1053)
5. Respiratory Protection (1910.134)
6. Powered Industrial Trucks (1910.178)
7. Fall Protection Training Requirements (1926.503)
8. Scaffolds – General Requirements (1926.451)
9. Eye and Face Protection (1926.102)
10. General Requirements For All Machines (1910.212)

The order of the list varies only slightly from the preliminary list released late last fall.

## June Awareness Topics

June 1-7: [National Trailer Safety Week](#)

June 16-20: [Trench Safety Stand Down](#)

All Month Long:

[National Safety Month](#)

## We want to hear from you!

What content would you like to see in an upcoming newsletter?

Let us know [here](#).

## Public Hearing set for Proposed Rule on Heat

As summer approaches the horizon, bringing with it increased temperatures, OSHA has scheduled a **virtual informal public hearing on their proposed rule for Heat Injury and Illness Prevention in Outdoor and Indoor Work Settings on June 16, 2025**. This hearing highlights a significant step in the ongoing effort to establish a federal heat standard to protect workers from the adverse health effects of excessive heat exposure, including heat related-illnesses such as heat stroke, which become more prevalent during warmer months.

Heat continues to be the leading cause of weather-related fatalities in the U.S. Workplace heat exposure has resulted in an average of 40 fatalities annually from 2011-2022 and over 3,389 work-related injuries and illnesses per year from 2011-2020, though these figures are considered underestimates. Workers in various settings, including outdoor environments, indoor spaces without adequate climate control, and those near heat-generating processes, are at particular risk as temperatures rise. Vulnerable populations, such as pregnant workers and workers of color in essential jobs, face disproportionately higher risks.

OSHA's proposed rule, published in the Federal Register on August 30, 2024, aims to clarify employer obligations and mandate the creation of plans to evaluate and control heat hazards across general industry, construction, maritime, and agriculture sectors. While the period to submit a Notice of Intention to Appear (NOITA) for the hearing closed on May 2, 2025, further information on viewing the hearing will be posted in the coming weeks.

For more details on the proposed rule, refer to the [Federal Register](#) and [regulations.gov](#). Information regarding the rulemaking process can be found on the [OSHA website](#).

## National Safety Month is Now

National Safety Month, an annual initiative led by the National Safety Council (NSC), offers a crucial opportunity for employers. Its core mission is to significantly raise awareness and reduce preventable injuries and deaths that can occur at work, at home, and on the road. For businesses, this translates directly into tangible benefits like enhanced productivity, decreased operational costs, and a healthier, more resilient workforce.

Established in 1996, National Safety Month consistently underscores that safety isn't a one-time fix but a dynamic, continuous process demanding consistent attention and improvement. It's about embedding safety as a core value within your organization's culture. Each week strategically focuses on specific safety topics, providing you with practical themes to integrate into their ongoing safety programs:

- **Continuous Improvement (June 1-7):** This week encourages you

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# Protect Workers from Excavation Hazards—Join the Trench Safety Stand Down

Trenching and excavation are among the most hazardous construction activities, with **cave-ins being the leading and most deadly risk**. Just one cubic yard of soil can weigh as much as a small car, posing a severe threat of crushing and suffocation. OSHA has standards (29 CFR 1926 Subpart P) to mitigate these dangers. Key hazards include not only cave-ins but also falls, hazardous atmospheres (low oxygen, toxic gases), striking underground utilities, mobile equipment accidents, and flooding.

To ensure safety, critical measures include:

- **Protective Systems:** Required for trenches 5 feet deep or more (or 20+ feet, designed by an engineer). These include **sloping, shoring, and shielding (trench boxes)**.
- **Competent Person:** A qualified individual must inspect trenches daily and after any changes, classify soil types, and have the authority to correct hazards.
- **Soil Classification:** Essential for determining appropriate protective systems (e.g., Type C is least stable).
- **Access and Egress:** Safe entry/exit points (ladders, ramps) must be within 25 feet of workers in trenches 4 feet or deeper.
- **Ladders** must extend 3 feet out of the trench to provide safe entry or exit.



Source: [OSHA](https://www.osha-slc.gov/)

- **Material Placement (Spoils):** Excavated soil must be kept at least 2 feet from trench edges to prevent re-entry and wall pressure.
- **Utility Location:** Always call 811 before digging to identify and avoid underground lines.
- **Atmospheric Testing:** Required for trenches 4 feet or deeper to check for hazardous gases or oxygen deficiency.
- **Regular Inspections:** Trenches must be inspected at the start of each shift and after events like rain.
- **Training:** All workers must be trained on trench hazards and safety procedures.

Adhering to comprehensive safety measures and OSHA regulations are crucial for preventing severe injuries and fatalities in trenching operations.

This month, during the week of June 16-20, take part in the 2025 Trench Safety Stand Down sponsored by the National Utility Contractors Association (NUCA) and others. Take a break from work to have a tool box meeting or another safety activity to discuss the specific hazards of working in and around trenches and excavations. Even if your company just provided training last month, repetition is key for learning. If you participate in the stand down, NUCA can provide you with a Certificate of Participation. Visit [NUCA's website](https://www.nuca.org/) for more information.

## National Safety Month is Now (Continued from Page 1)

to proactively evaluate and enhance existing safety protocols. It's about systematically gathering and acting upon valuable employee feedback, analyzing incident data, and implementing refinements that lead to stronger, more effective safety management systems. This commitment can significantly reduce incidents and associated costs.

- **Employee Engagement (June 8-14):** Fostering genuine employee engagement in safety is vital. This week emphasizes creating an environment where workers feel empowered and safe to voice their safety concerns, report near misses, and contribute ideas for improvement without fear. Engaged employees become active partners in building a safer workplace, leading to higher compliance and a more proactive approach to risk mitigation.
- **Roadway Safety (June 15-21):** Given that motor vehicle incidents are a leading cause of work-related fatalities, this

week aims to highlight the importance of promoting safe driving practices for all employees, whether they're operating company vehicles or commuting, aiming to reduce accidents on and off the job.

- **Wellbeing (June 22-30):** This broader safety theme recognizes that an employee's overall wellbeing—including their mental and emotional health—directly impacts their physical safety and productivity. This encourages us to understand how factors like chronic stress, fatigue, and mental health challenges can impair judgment. Promoting access to employee assistance programs (EAPs), mental health resources, and comprehensive wellness initiatives can cultivate a more resilient and safer workforce.

If you'd like to participate, the NSC provides a range of [free resources](#). By participating, you can enhance the company's safety culture and ultimately strengthen your entire business operation.

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