



WisCon Words of Wisdom

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June Awareness Topics

June 7-13: [National Trailer Safety Week](#)

June 9: [National Ride to Work Day](#)

All Month Long:

[National Safety Month](#)

OSHA's Penalties Remain the Same

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced that there will be [no inflation adjustments to civil monetary penalties for 2026](#), keeping OSHA penalty rates steady, effective May 27, 2026.

While the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act of 2015 requires annual reviews to ensure penalties remain an effective deterrent, this year's pause offers businesses welcome predictability. Maintaining these flat rates allows companies to focus their resources directly on what matters most: strengthening workplace safety programs, protecting employees, and fostering a culture of compliance.

OSHA's current maximum penalty amounts are available on their [website](#).

We want to hear from you!

What content would you like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Let us know [here](#).

Beat the Heat: Staying Cool and Safe This Summer

Summer officially starts this month, but the heat is already here. While the longer days and warm weather are great for backyard barbecues, they also bring a serious workplace hazard: heat stress. When your body can't cool itself down fast enough, it can lead to heat-related illnesses such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or even life-threatening heat stroke.

When it comes to workplace safety, getting overheated is *never* a cool look. To keep your team safe, healthy, and operating at peak performance, remember these three core pillars of heat safety: Water, Rest, and Shade.

The Heat Safety Trifecta

- **Hydrate Early and Often:** Don't wait until you're thirsty to start drinking water. By then, you're already running on a deficit. Encourage workers to drink water or drinks containing electrolytes often when working in the heat.
- **Take a Break:** Frequent, short rest breaks in a cool, designated area give the body a chance to recover. It's not slacking—it's necessary physiological maintenance.
- **Seek the Shade:** Providing a shaded or air-conditioned area for breaks is crucial. Getting out of the direct sun can lower the perceived temperature by up to 15 degrees!

Watch for the Warning Signs – Heat-related illnesses can escalate quickly. Keep a close eye on your employees, train and encourage them to look out for each other and follow the company's heat illness prevention plan if they notice signs of heat-related illnesses.

- Signs of Heat Exhaustion can include heavy sweating, dizziness, headache, nausea, weakness, and irritability.
- Signs of Heat Stroke can include confusion, slurred speech, fainting, hot/dry skin, or profuse sweating.

Don't Be a *Fan* of Complacency – remember the importance of acclimatization. The body needs time to adapt to hot environments. Gradually build up the workload and pace for new workers, or those returning from an extended absence.

Ultimately, preventing heat stress is all about teamwork and awareness. Let's look out for one another out there.

National Safety Month Spotlight: Fall Protection in Construction

June is National Safety Month – a time dedicated to raising awareness about workplace safety and preventing injuries on the job. In Federal Fiscal Year 2025, OSHA’s most frequently cited standard continued to be Duty to have fall protection ([29 CFR 1926.501](#)). This standard has been at the top of the list since 2011. This sobering statistic highlights the ongoing need for vigilance in one of the industry’s most critical safety areas.

Falls remain the leading cause of serious injuries and fatalities in the construction sector. To combat this, OSHA’s standard requires employers to provide proper safeguards whenever employees are exposed to unprotected sides or edges at heights of six feet or more. With federal inspectors issuing 6,992 citations under this standard alone in the last fiscal year, it remains the single largest hazard outstripping all other workplace violations.

Common infractions routinely encountered include:

- Unprotected roof edges and residential rafters left completely bare without conventional safety systems.
- Missing or unsecured perimeter guardrails on open commercial decks.
- Unguarded and unlabeled floor holes or unshielded skylights.
- A severe gap in education, as evidenced by the 2,216 related training violations ([29 CFR 1926.503](#), the seventh most cited standard) issued to employers who provided safety gear but failed to properly train workers on how to use it.

Even the most experienced workers are at risk when safety procedures are overlooked or rushed.

Use this year’s National Safety Month as a vital operational reminder that fall prevention saves lives. Employers should take this opportunity to apply the Hierarchy of Controls (example: prefabricating structures at ground level to eliminate height risks), mandate rigorous clearance calculations, and empower on-site competent persons to halt unsafe work immediately.

By actively focusing on fall protection and reinforcing a culture where safety is prioritized on every job site, you can reduce preventable injuries, improve compliance, and ensure your employees leave the jobsite safely at the end of the day.

Creepy-Crawly Ticks Are on the Clock

We usually associate ticks with hiking, but for many professionals such as those in landscaping, forestry, taxidermy, wildlife processing, and others, they are a serious on-the-job hazard. June is peak tick season, and exposure isn’t just limited to deep woods or brush. In fact, I recently found a tick hanging out right on my car door frame after it was parked in our workplace parking lot for an extended period. They are hitchhiking closer than you think.

Protect Your Team. Consider encouraging employees to do the following:

1. **Dress for Defense:** Wear light-colored clothing so ticks are easy to spot, and tuck pants into socks to block access to your skin.
2. **Use Repellent:** Apply EPA-registered repellents containing DEET or Picaridin. For heavy brush work, consider permethrin-treated clothing.
3. **Check Daily:** Run a thorough tick check at the end of every shift—and peek at your gear and vehicle before you head home.

Prompt Removal Matters: It typically takes 24 to 48 hours for an attached tick to transmit Lyme disease. Finding and removing them with fine-tipped tweezers at the end of the day is your best line of defense.

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