

After a fatality or serious workplace accident, OSHA will visit your location. In many cases the visit may happen within 48 hours of reporting the incident. Preparing your management team and employees is essential to properly manage an OSHA inspection. The following points should be considered when anticipating an OSHA inspection.

Before OSHA Arrives

Being prepared prior to an inspection is critical.

- Organize and have available your safety policies and employee training documentation.
- Have your current year and three prior years OSHA 300 logs up to date and available for the inspector. You're required to maintain OSHA 300 logs for 5 years.
- Prepare both your employees and the crisis management team for the inspection. Some of your employees may be interviewed by the OSHA inspector and you should spend some time preparing them in advance.

When OSHA Arrives

- Verify the identity of the Inspector (State identification with a photo and serial number). Exercise your right to verify the OSHA Inspectors credentials by contacting the local OSHA office if necessary.
- Notify the OSHA Inspector that you need to gather your key employees (Safety Director, Location Manager, Crisis Team, etc.)
- You can request the OSHA Inspector to wait in the office a reasonable period of time (30-60 minutes) for the key persons to arrive. Explain that your policy requires the presence of a management representative during any type inspection.

Opening Conference

During the opening conference the OSHA inspector will notify you as to the purpose and scope of the inspection. He may also ask for the OSHA 300 logs, training records and safety polices at this time. **DO NOT GIVE OR OFFER ANYTHING THE OSHA OFFICER DOES'NT ASK FOR.**

Key Steps during the Inspection Process

- Determine the **exact area** the inspectors are targeting and proceed to that **area only**. If an inspector sees or views anything suspect (outside of the **exact area**) they are obligated to investigate it. You should control what they see or view by keeping them in the targeted area only.
- Review the designated areas of the facility as directed by the inspector and answer any questions honestly. **Answer only the questions asked** and **DO NOT** offer any additional information. Attempt to move the inspection process along at a reasonable pace.
- Most often the inspector will ask to talk with an employee. This is often a requirement so allow them to select someone they wish to interview. You may request to be present during the interview but most often you will not be allowed.
- If any corrective action is requested, stop the process and correct it immediately if possible. If the correction is more involved, indicate that you will review the correction with Upper Management and have it corrected as quickly as possible
- Do not admit to any violations. It's the inspector's job to determine whether any safety regulations have been violated.
- Bring a camera and if the OSHA inspector takes pictures, take the same picture.
- Take notes as to what the inspector is asking about and what he or she is looking at.
- If you are not comfortable answering a question for any reason, simply state that you would like to check with the appropriate person and will respond to the inspector with the answer.
- Upon completion the inspector will notify you of the next steps which will include: when & how you will be notified of the results; the closing conference date; and how you may appeal citations & fines. If there are no violations, the inspector may close the case immediately.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I deny OSHA from inspecting? You may deny OSHA access to inspect your facility but this may not be your best option. Upon denial OSHA can, and has, obtained an inspection warrant. When an inspection warrant is involved leniency is seldom granted.

Can I reschedule the inspection? This depends on your inspector. If you know an area is out of compliance and, more importantly, you can correct the situation then attempting to reschedule the inspection may be appropriate.

What if I don't have safety programs to review? Answer all honestly but **DO NOT** offer any information that you know is out of compliance unless specifically asked to do so.