

Safety and Health Protection on the Job

THE STATE: Under the South Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Act, the State is responsible for the enforcement of occupational safety and health standards in all workplaces, both public and private, within the state of South Carolina. However, longshoring, shipbuilding, ship repairing and shipbreaking operations covered by the Longshoremen and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, as amended, remain under federal jurisdiction.

EMPLOYER: Each employer shall furnish to his employees employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or physical harm to his employees, and he shall comply with occupational safety and health standards promulgated by the Director.

EMPLOYEES: Each employee shall comply with occupational safety and health standards and all rules, regulations and orders issued by the director of Labor, Licensing and Regulation which are applicable to his own actions and conduct.

Any employee or his representative may request an inspection of his place or site of employment. Any employee may file an imminent danger complaint by telephone. All other complaints must be in writing. Complaint forms will be furnished upon request by the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. The identity of any employee filing a complaint will not be revealed without the written consent of the employee.

Employers and employees have the right to participate in inspections by means of bringing to the attention of the inspecting officer possible violations which exist in their area of work and the right to participate in the walk-around inspection. The inspecting officer shall have the right to determine the number of persons participating in the walk-around inspection.

Under state law, when the authorized representative of the employees accompanies the inspecting officer during a walk-around inspection, he shall not suffer any loss of wages or other benefits which would normally accrue to him.

Where there is no authorized representative, the inspecting officer will consult with a reasonable number of employees concerning matters of safety and health in the workplace.

DISCRIMINATION: State and federal laws prohibit discrimination against any employee if he files a complaint or causes any proceeding under or related to this Act or is about to testify in any such proceedings or because of the exercise by any employee on behalf of himself or others of any right afforded under state and federal law. The Director of Labor, Licensing and Regulation or the nearest federal OSHA offices must be notified within thirty (30) days after such discriminatory act occurs. State and local government employees should proceed with a civil action pursuant to the provisions contained in Chapter 27, Title 8 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

CITATIONS: Citations listing the alleged violations during an inspection will be mailed to the employer with reasonable promptness. State law requires such citations be promptly posted at appropriate places for employee information for three (3) days, or until the violations are corrected, whichever is later, to warn employees of dangers that may exist.

PENALTIES: An employer may be assessed a penalty up to seven thousand (\$7,000) dollars for a non-serious violation.

An employer who receives a citation for a serious violation may be assessed a penalty up to seven thousand (\$7,000) dollars for each such violation.

Any employer who willfully violates an occupational safety and health rule or regulation may be assessed a penalty not more than seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) for each violation.

Any employer who willfully violates an occupational safety and health rule or regulation and the violation causes death to an employee shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, be punished by fine, imprisonment or both.

For more information, contact:

South Carolina Department of Labor,
Licensing and Regulation
Office of OSHA Compliance
P.O. Box 11329
Columbia, South Carolina 29211
(803) 896-7665
www.llr.state.sc.us

Under a plan approved November 30, 1972 by the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the State of South Carolina is providing job safety and health protection for workers throughout the State. Federal OSHA will monitor the operation of this plan to assure that continued approval is merited. Any person may make a complaint regarding the State administration of this plan directly to the Regional Office of OSHA, U.S. Department of Labor, 61 Forsyth Street S.W., Room 6T50, Atlanta, Georgia 30303.