



What your safety committee needs to know about conducting workplace inspections

Does your workplace have a safety committee?

Generally, businesses that must have safety committees have more than 10 employees and are retail or manufacturing establishments.

Is your workplace required to have a safety committee?

If you're not sure, read the details in this booklet:

[Safety Committees and Safety Meetings](#)

An important task for your safety committee is to establish a procedure for conducting safety and health inspections; the procedure must:

- Establish how often the inspections are conducted. Most workplaces must be inspected quarterly. The exceptions are mobile workplaces and remote sites that have only a few employees; they can be inspected as often as your safety committee deems necessary.
- Establish who conducts the inspections. Those who conduct inspections do not have to be safety committee members, but they must be trained in hazard identification and must include employer and employee representatives. Training information: [osha.oregon.gov/Pages/topics/hazard-identification.aspx](https://www.oregon.gov/Pages/topics/hazard-identification.aspx)
- Have a plan for inspecting the entire workplace on a quarterly basis. Your safety committee will have to determine where the potential safety or health hazards are at your workplace. Also, adding more members to the inspection team could offer new perspectives and a more thorough review.

At many workplaces, Oregon OSHA compliance officers frequently find hazards associated with:

- **First aid supplies:** Supplies may be missing, expired, or inadequate.
- **Fire extinguishers:** Extinguishers are not inspected or maintained.
- **Electrical outlets and connections:** Outlets are missing faceplates, and connections are not properly grounded.
- **Emergency evacuation routes and exits:** Exits are blocked or not clearly identified.
- **Forklifts:** Vehicles are not properly maintained, or operators are not trained.
- **Machine guards:** Rotating shafts, belts, and wheels are not guarded.
- **Personal protective equipment (PPE):** Equipment is unavailable, improperly stored, or no hazard assessment completed.
- **Portable ladders:** Ladders are defective or not properly maintained.

- **Portable power tools:** Tools are not properly guarded, or they are used without appropriate PPE.
- **Respirators:** These are often stored improperly, such as out in the open or in a manner where they can be contaminated.
- **Storage areas:** Material is not properly stored.
- **Walking surfaces and stairways:** Surfaces are cluttered or blocked.
- **Vehicles:** Vehicles have defective brakes, lights, horns, or seat belts.
- **Hazard communication:** There is no written hazard communication program prepared, and necessary safety data sheets are not available. This includes primary and secondary container labeling.
- **Bloodborne pathogens:** Job classifications, tasks, and procedures do not identify where the employee exposure is; a written exposure control plan is not available.
- **Fall protection:** Fall hazards are not identified or properly guarded.
- **Lockout-tagout:** Potential hazardous energy sources are not properly controlled.
- **Emergency eyewashes and showers:** Eyewashes and showers are not available where employees handle substances that could get into their eyes or onto their bodies; or they are blocked; and contaminated/dirty.

Document your inspection information

Quarterly workplace inspections are an effective way of finding and eliminating hazards before they cause injuries. You should document:

- Who did the inspection.
- When the quarterly inspection was done.
- What hazards were identified during the inspection.

- Where the hazards were located.
- What will be done to correct the hazards.
- When the hazards will be corrected.

You can create your own quarterly inspection form to collect this inspection information, or you can use this [template](#).

Tips for inspections

- Create a list of potential hazards to check during the inspection.
- Give inspection duties to several people on a rotating basis, or give each person on an inspection team a different area to inspect. Sharing this responsibility raises hazard awareness for more employees and reinforces the idea that a safe workplace is the responsibility of management and employees.
- Have employees conduct inspections in areas where they don't normally work; they may find hazards that people who routinely work in the area aren't aware of.

More information

- 📄 [Energized and effective safety committees playbook](#)
- 📄 [Hazard identification resources](#)
- 📄 [Quarterly workplace safety and health inspection form](#)



Visit Oregon OSHA

Workers

Your employer cannot retaliate against you for reporting a workplace health or safety concern or violation. For more information about your rights, visit the Oregon OSHA website.

The Technical Section of Oregon OSHA produced this fact sheet to highlight health and safety programs and rules. The information is intended to explain the rules and provide best practices to employers.