

2020 Top 10 OSHA Violations

In an exclusive interview with *Safety+Health* magazine, the Deputy Director of OSHA's Enforcement Program, Patrick Kapust, announced the preliminary data for the Top 10 Violations for the year of 2020. The total number of violations in 2020 is one of the lowest totals on record and is much lower than in 2019. OSHA conducted 21,680 inspections in 2020—down from 33,401 in 2019.



While 2020's Top 10 Violations looks very similar to the Top 10 of 2019, there are some key differences.

During the first year of the pandemic, we saw an increased need for respiratory protection but did not have enough stockpiled, which explains why Respiratory Protection Violations went from the 5th highest to the 3rd highest violation. Another significant change was that Control of Hazardous Energy (LOTO) was bumped down from 4th to 6th and Ladders increased from 6th to 5th, which you can see on the following page.

2020 Top 10 Violations		2019 Top 10 Violations	
1. Fall Protection	(29 CFR 1926.501)	1. Fall Protection	(29 CFR 1926.501)
2. Hazard Communication Standard	(29 CFR 1910.1200)	2. Hazard Communication Standard	(29 CFR 1910.1200)
3. Respiratory Protection	(29 CFR 1910.134)	3. Scaffolding	(29 CFR 1926.451)
4. Scaffolding	(29 CFR 1926.451)	4. Control of Hazardous Energy	(29 CFR 1910.147)
5. Ladders	(29 CFR 1926.1053)	5. Respiratory Protection	(29 CFR 1910.134)
6. Control of Hazardous Energy	(29 CFR 1910.147)	6. Ladders	(29 CFR 1926.1053)
7. Powered Industrial Trucks	(29 CFR 1910.178)	7. Powered Industrial Trucks	(29 CFR 1910.178)
8. Fall Protection Training	(29 CFR 1926.503)	8. Fall Protection Training	(29 CFR 1926.503)
9. Eye and Face Protection	(29 CFR 1926.102)	9. Machinery and Machine Guarding	(29 CFR 1910.212)
10. Machinery and Machine Guarding	(29 CFR 1910.212)	10. Eye and Face Protection	(29 CFR 1926.102)

2020 Top 10 Violations Breakdown

Violation Category	Top 5 Violated Standards	Tips for Compliance
1. Fall Protection	1926.501(b)(13) 1926.501(b)(1) 1926.501(b)(10) 1926.501(b)(11) 1926.501(b)(4) Total Citations: 5,424	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide proper fall protection control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ for those working at heights above 4ft in general industry and 6ft in construction ◦ when working on low or steep slope roofs • Cover any visible holes to avoid slips, trips, and falls
2. Hazard Communication Standard	1910.1200(e)(1) 1910.1200(h)(1) 1910.1200(f)(6) 1910.1200(g)(8) 1910.1200(g)(1) Total Citations: 3,199	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, implement, and maintain a compliant written hazard communication program • Provide hazard communication training at new hire orientation for employees who will be working with chemicals • Retrain employees when new chemicals/hazards enter the workplace • Ensure all chemical containers are labeled and that the labels are in compliance with the globally harmonized system (GHS) requirements • Maintain up to date Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for all chemicals on site • Ensure employees have access to copies of all SDS on site
3. Respiratory Protection	1910.134(e)(1) 1910.134(c)(1) 1910.134(f)(2) 1910.134(c)(2) 1910.134(d)(1) Total Citations: 2,649	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have and maintain a compliant written respiratory protection program • Ensure employees who are required to wear tight-fitting respirators are properly fit tested prior to beginning a work assignment that requires them to wear a tight-fitting respirator • Ensure employees receive medical evaluations prior to beginning assignments where respirator use is required • Ensure that employees who wear respirators are trained prior to use • Provide each employee with their own respirator

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4. Scaffolding	1926.451(g)(1) 1926.451(e)(1) 1926.451(b)(1) 1926.451(c)(2) 1926.451(g)(4) Total Citations: 2,538	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide fall protection when working on scaffolding above 10ft • Use the proper ladders when above 2ft • Fully plank platforms on each level of scaffold • Use base plates and mud sills to properly support scaffold poles • Install proper guardrails around scaffolding
5. Ladders	1926.1053(b)(1) 1926.1053(b)(4) 1926.1053(b)(13) 1926.1053(b)(16) 1926.1053(b)(22) Total Citations: 2,129	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure extension of ladder is at least 3ft above upper landing surface • Do not use ladders for anything other than their manufactured purpose • Ensure that employees who use ladders are trained on the proper use and ladder safety • Ladders with missing rungs or other defects must be tagged "Do not use" and removed from service • Ensure employees keep 3 points of contact while climbing the ladder
6. Control of Hazardous Energy	1910.147(c)(4) 1910.147(c)(7) 1910.147(c)(6) 1910.147(c)(1) 1910.147(d) Total Citations: 2,065	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish written energy control procedures for all equipment that requires LOTO • Train both Authorized and Affected employees on site • Document the periodic inspections • Create and maintain a written program summarizing all LOTO procedures and where to find the Energy Control Procedures for each piece of equipment • Follow proper order and procedures for LOTO

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7. Powered Industrial Trucks	1910.178(l)(1) 1910.178(l)(4) 1910.178(l)(6) 1910.178(p)(1) 1910.178(q)(7) Total Citations: 1,932	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sure all operators are operating PIT machinery safely • Provide refresher training and operator performance evaluations at least once every three years and after any incidents occur • Ensure that all employees who operate PITs attend training from a certified PIT trainer • PITs in need of repair or that are defective must be tagged out of service. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Balding tires ◦ Broken seats ◦ Horn not working • Before operating PITs, operators need to inspect their PIT and document their inspection
8. Fall Protection Training	1926.503(a)(1) 1926.503(b)(1) 1926.503(a)(2) 1926.503(c)(3) 1926.503(c) Total Citations: 1,621	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees who wear fall protection must be trained by a competent person • Document fall protection training for all employees, including employee name, date and trainer name • Be sure employees fully understand the hazards and safety protections that are put in place to keep them safe • Retrain any employees who demonstrate a lack of understanding of the training and skill required to do the job safely
9. Eye and Face Protection	1926.102(a)(1) 1926.102(a)(2) 1926.102(a)(3) 1926.102(b)(1) Total Citations: 1,369	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide employees with the proper PPE when exposed to hazards such as but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, corrosives, gases/vapors, or light radiation • Provide safety glasses that have the appropriate side shields required • Provide employees who require prescription glasses either prescription safety glasses or safety glasses that are meant to fit over regular prescription glasses • Be sure all PPE complies with the ANSI consensus standards

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10. Machinery and Machine Guarding	1910.212(a)(1) 1910.212(a)(3) 1910.212(b) 1910.212(a)(2) 1910.212(a)(5) Total Citations: 1,313	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide machine guarding to all machines that create hazards via point of operation, ingoing nip points, rotating parts, flying chips and sparks • Make sure machines designed for a fixed location are securely anchored to prevent walking or moving • When installing machine guards be sure that the guards themselves are not going to create hazards

The violations listed in the table above reflect only the most common OSHA citations. CAPACCIO can assist with reducing the risk of receiving one of these top ten violations and go beyond by performing compliance audits and on-site inspections, providing written safety programs, or creating training programs based on your specific needs. Any of these solutions, especially when coupled with our EHS-Dashboard™ cloud-based software, can provide a successful combination for your organization to ensure compliance dates are met, records and documentation are tracked, accident and injury data are maintained, and much more.

Sources:

- <https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/20900-th-year-running-fall-protection-leads-oshas-annual-top-10-list-of-most-frequently-cited-violations>
- <https://ehsdailyadvisor.blr.com/2021/03/osha-reveals-the-top-10-most-cited-violations-for-fy-2020/>
- <https://ohsonline.com/articles/2021/03/04/osha-releases-information-on-top-10-most-frequently-cited-standards-for-fy-2020.aspx>
- <https://www.osha.gov/top10citedstandards>
- <https://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/21061-on-safety-a-closer-look-at-oshas-top-10-violations-part-ii>