



The Pennsylvania Consultation Connection

Winter-Spring 2014



Occupational Safety
and Health Administration

Waste Gas Fabricating Co., Inc. Achieves SHARP Award

“A company whose employees made them a leader in safety excellence”

As one of the most recent companies in Pennsylvania to enter the **Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP)** Waste Gas Fabricating Co., Inc. couldn't be happier.

Waste Gas Fabricating Co., Inc. was founded in 1975 as a rebuilder of Waste Gas Devices used by steel mills in their manufacturing process. After the decline of the steel industry the company had the foresight and customer commitment to branch out into the area of steel fabrication. Currently Waste Gas is an 80 employee sole source fabricator and processor that delivers to all industries throughout the United States and abroad. This company is both ISO 9001 & 14001 Certified and so the SHARP designation was the “icing on the cake”.

Their first experience with the PA/OSHA Consultation Program was over 15 years ago. During these surveys,



they learned about SHARP, and decided it was a goal worth working for. Over several years, several consultation visits, and a lot of hard work, SHARP certification was finally attained.

The company had a formal ceremony on December 5, 2013, at which time they were presented with a SHARP flag by Samuel Gualardo, PA/OSHA Consultation Program Director.

Congratulations

2013 SHARP Companies

- ✦ All-Size Corrugated Products
- ✦ CUE Inc.
- ✦ MLP Steel Laurel
- ✦ Seven D Truss

Interested in SHARP? **Visit our website: www.iup.edu/pa-oshaconsultation**

In the Know...

Q OSHA has a proposed rule for protecting employees from silica exposure. What does this mean for me?

A If your employees conduct operations involving cutting, sawing, drilling and crushing of concrete, brick, block and other stone products and in operations using sand products, such as in glass manufacturing, foundries and sand blasting you soon may have to comply with new regulations.

The existing permissible exposure limit (PEL) for crystalline silica enforced by OSHA for the past 40 years is outdated and inconsistent between industries and does not adequately protect worker health. This proposed rule brings all industries together and up-to-date.

About 320,000 workers are in general industry and maritime workplaces and about 1.85 million workers in the construction industry are currently exposed to respirable crystalline silica. Over 640,000 of these workers are estimated to be exposed to silica levels that exceed OSHA's proposed permissible exposure limit (PEL).

The proposed rule is expected to save nearly 700 lives and prevent 1,600 new cases of silicosis per year once the full effects of the rule are realized. Of these, over 130 lives in general industry/maritime and 560 lives in construction would be saved and over 540 general industry/maritime and 1,080 construction cases of silicosis would be prevented.

OSHA has a proposed regulation based on extensive review of scientific and technical evidence, consideration of current industry consensus standards and various other avenues dealing with stakeholders of employer and employee organizations. This proposed rule applies common sense measures that will protect employees' lungs and lives with such techniques as keeping materials wet preventing particles from becoming airborne. It provides flexibility in selecting compliance measures.

The proposed rulemaking includes two separate standards-one for general industry and maritime employment, and one for construction. Both standards include a new exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica and details widely used methods for controlling worker exposure, conducting medical surveillance, training workers about silica-related hazards and recordkeeping measures.

Major provisions of the proposed rulemaking for both General Industry/Maritime and Construction include:

1. Measure the amount of silica that workers are exposed to if it may be at or above an **action level of 25 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$** (micrograms of silica per cubic meter of air), averaged over an 8-hour day;
2. Protect workers from respirable crystalline silica exposures above the **permissible exposure limit (PEL) of 50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$** , averaged over an 8-hour day;
3. **Limit workers' access** to areas where they could be exposed above the PEL;
4. Use **dust controls** to protect workers from silica exposures above the PEL;
5. Provide **respirators** to workers when dust controls cannot limit exposures to the PEL;
6. Offer **medical exams**-including chest X-rays and lung function tests-every three years for workers exposed above the PEL for 30 or more days per year;
7. **Train workers** on work operations that result in silica exposure and ways to limit exposure; and
8. **Keep records** of workers' silica exposure and medical exams.

Control measures include wet methods, ventilation, enclosures, administrative controls and personal protective equipment (PPE) where other controls don't lower exposures to an acceptable level.



Notice how the dust levels while operating a handheld masonry saw without dust controls, (shown in the left photo) can be controlled with the addition of a water line to the cutting blade.



Again, the dust cloud (left) during uncontrolled jackhammering indicates considerably large dust cloud than the wet method on the right.



Finally here an employee is using a grinder in poorly controlled conditions, but the employee on the right is grinding with a vacuum system.

NOTE: all pictures obtained from OSHA web site resources

Affected general industry/maritime exposures include concrete products, foundries, ready-mix concrete, dental laboratories, oil & gas, and shipyards to name a few. Operations in construction include using masonry saws; using hand-operated grinders; tuck-pointing; using jackhammers; using rotary hammers or drills; operating vehicle-mounted drilling rigs; milling; rock crushing; drywall finishing using silica-containing material; and use of heavy equipment during earthmoving.



Safety Inspection Item

Synthetic-Web-Slings

Synthetic web slings are utilized in a variety of industries today because they are relatively lightweight and offer a variety of hitching options, yet still provide the ability to lift heavy loads.

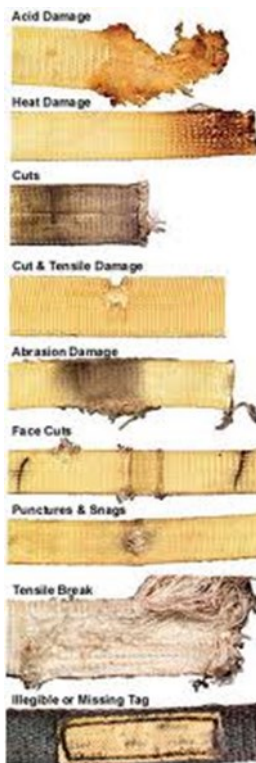
The composition of a synthetic web sling which makes it user friendly and lightweight also makes it more susceptible to damage than other forms of rigging such as chain or wire rope slings.

Each employee utilizing a synthetic web sling must rely on training and experience when determining how the load will be rigged. Slings must be selected in accordance with their intended use, based upon the size and type of load, the desired type of hitch expected be rigged and the environmental conditions of the workplace.

Most importantly **all slings must be visually inspected for damage or defects each day before being used by a competent person designated by the employer.** Additional sling inspections shall be performed during sling use, where service conditions warrant.

OSHA regulations state that synthetic web slings shall be immediately removed from service if any of the following conditions are present:

- ⇒ Acid or caustic burns;
- ⇒ Melting or charring of any part of the sling surface;
- ⇒ Snags, punctures, tears or cuts;
- ⇒ Broken or worn stitches; or
- ⇒ Distortion of fittings.



In addition, each sling shall be marked or coded to show the rated capacities for each type of hitch and type of synthetic web material.

Environmental conditions must also be considered such as:

Nylon Web Slings-Shall not be used where fumes, vapors, sprays mists or liquids of acids or phenolics are present.

Polyester and Polypropylene Web Slings-Shall not be used where fumes, vapors, sprays mists or liquids of caustics are present.

Web Slings with aluminum fittings- Shall not be used where fumes, vapors, sprays mists or liquids of caustics are present.

Further guidance on safe sling usage can be found by accessing the website below or by contacting the manufacturer of your synthetic web slings:

<http://www.osha.gov/dsg/guidance/slings/index.html>

Photos from: www.stren-flex.com/synthetic-slings-inspection-care.aspx



Post the OSHA 300A injury/illness summary

If you are a covered employer, then you must post OSHA's Form 300A, which summarizes the total number of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred during 2013 and were logged on *OSHA's Form 300, the log of work-related injuries and illnesses*. The summary must be posted between

February 1 and April 30, 2014, and should be displayed in a common area where notices to employees are usually posted. Employers with 10 or fewer employees and employers in certain industries are normally exempt from federal OSHA injury and illness recordkeeping and posting requirements. A complete list of exempt industries in the retail, services, finance, insurance and real estate sectors can be found on OSHA's web page.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS? PA/OSHA Consultation Program provides FREE and confidential on-site safety and health services for Pennsylvania employers.

Call us Toll free: 1-800-382-1241

or visit our website: www.iup.edu/pa-oshaconsultation