

Fact Sheet

AWAIR

The AWAIR Act is a MNOSHA regulation requiring employers in certain industries to establish a safety and health program known as "A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction (AWAIR)" program.

Introduction

The AWAIR Act (§182.653, subd. 8) was developed by and is enforced by Minnesota OSHA. It is a state regulation and therefore has no Federal OSHA counterpart, although Federal OSHA is currently working on a similar requirement.

Who must comply

Coverage under the AWAIR law is based on an employer's Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) or North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) code. If an employer's SIC/NAICS code appears on OSHA's list of covered industries, then the employer must comply with the regulation.

The list is updated by the state every two years, and when a new industry type is added, employers have six months to come into compliance. This list can be found here:

<http://www.dli.mn.gov/OSHA/PDF/naics08.pdf>

For the University, determining coverage under the regulation is debatable, because colleges and universities are not covered, but other types of university operations such as "farming and agriculture" are.

Regardless of actual coverage under the regulation, we strongly recommend that all locations comply with the rule for two reasons. First, the AWAIR law is widely regarded as one of the best safety regulations because it requires the employer to formally develop and document some simple and fundamental concepts (described below). Second, complying with the regulation is very simple. In other words, complying with the regulation constitutes a great deal of "bang for the buck."

What's required

The regulation requires all covered employers to develop a written program that addresses:

- How managers, supervisors and employees are responsible for implementing the program and how continued participation of management will be established, measured, and maintained.
- The methods used to identify, analyze and control new or existing hazards, conditions, and operations.
- How the plan will be communicated to all affected employees so they are informed of work-related hazards and controls.
- How workplace accidents will be investigated and corrective action implemented.

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- How safe work practices and rules will be enforced.

An AWAIR program template is available from the Office of Occupational Health and Safety (uohs@umn.edu)

Annual program reviews

The employer must conduct and document a review of the workplace accident and injury reduction program at least annually and document how the procedures included in the program are being met.

Questions

If you have questions on this topic, please contact the Office of Occupational Health and Safety at (612) 626-5008 or uohs@umn.edu, or see the website at <http://www.ohs.umn.edu>.