

## **OSHA Violations: Does Your Commercial Cleaning Company Follow the Protocol?**

Each year, OSHA publishes statistics on the most frequently cited OSHA violations in an attempt to increase awareness of the most serious dangers and to avoid injuries and fatalities that may result from employees failing to follow OSHA safety and health requirements. Construction, cleaning, and general industrial violations make up the majority of the top 7 OSHA violations for 2022. Historically, the top ten OSHA infractions have stayed the same year after year, with only minor shifts in their relative rankings. Below are the top seven OSHA violations for 2022 and some things to look out for when selecting a commercial cleaning company to work with.

### **Top 7 OSHA Violations in the Cleaning Industry**

#### **Fall Protection**

The most common OSHA infraction is failing to provide adequate fall protection for your workers. Fall prevention measures are mandated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Unprotected surfaces higher than six feet from the ground are subject to these regulations. When operating over six feet, OSHA mandates that workers have guardrails, personal fall arrest systems, a safety net, or some fall protection in place to be compliant with the safety requirements.

#### **Respiratory Protection**

If employees are exposed to air pollutants such as fumes, dust, gas, smoke, and vapors, their respiratory systems might be in danger. OSHA standards mandate the use of protective clothing and proper ventilation. Employees who use respirators must undergo medical assessments to confirm their suitability for doing so. OSHA punished companies for the second-highest number of violations during the pandemic for failing to safeguard employees' respiratory systems and provide necessary personal protective equipment (PPE).

#### **Ladders**

Using incorrect ladders or failing to get enough safety instruction are the most common reasons for construction site ladder infractions. Nearly 60 percent of ladder-related fatalities occur in the construction business, according to a data sheet from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. There are several strategies to keep safe and in compliance with OSHA while utilizing a ladder, and they are all detailed in OSHA's Ladders regulation. At Atlas, we train our cleaning team to keep the top and bottom regions of the ladder free at all times, and never use a ladder on a slippery surface without sufficient safety measures in place.

## Scaffolding

To keep employees safe when working on scaffolding that is 10 feet or higher, OSHA mandates that you hire a competent expert to design, build, and establish a plan. Structural support and guardrails are required for all scaffolding. This is particularly important when cleaning windows of high-rise buildings.

## Hazard Communication

An organization must have a documented hazard communication strategy in order to fulfill all of OSHA's regulations in this area if it handles hazardous chemicals on-site. The proper labeling of chemicals, the provision of safety data sheets, and the provision of safety training are examples of some of the requirements.

## Powered Industrial Trucks

Forklifts, tractors and platform lift trucks are all examples of motorized industrial trucks. These vehicles must be only utilized for their intended function and should be routinely serviced and cleaned. OSHA's Powered Industrial Trucks guideline states that only drivers who have undergone extensive training are allowed to operate these vehicles. When driving motorized industrial vehicles, employees must be properly taught the terms of safety precautions.

## Eye And Face Protection

Eye injuries that may have been avoided result in thousands of blinding incidents each year in the workplace. When it comes to preventing eye injuries caused by flying debris and chemical exposure, OSHA's Eye, as well as the Face Protection standard, outlines requirements. As part of these requirements, employers are obligated to offer eye and face protection PPE to their employees. Machine guards and controls, welding curtains, goggles, and face shields are examples of the protective equipment that is necessary. A readily available eyewash station, as well as instruction on its usage, should be provided by employers.

## Why Choose Atlas Facilities to Clean For You?

Before you hire a commercial cleaning company, the first thing you'll want to know is if they offer the services you need. As thousands of commercial cleaning and janitorial companies exist, it's equally important to know how they treat their employees and if they are offering the correct protective equipment to safely do their job. As any business owner knows, happy employees are not only a

reflection of their company but they also are more productive and do a better quality job. That's why Atlas Facilities is Portland's Top-Rated commercial cleaning facility since 1995.

