

# Safety & Health SPOTLIGHT

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Members Only**

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## Fed agencies ban hand-held phone use by commercial drivers

**Effective January 3, 2012**, commercial drivers are prohibited from using hand-held mobile phones while on the road. The federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Administration announced the ban on December 2.



The agencies said research indicates the most dangerous cell phone activity is taking one's eyes off the road to search for the phone and dial a number. Hands-free mobile phone use is still permitted.

[More: Ban on hand-held phone use](#)

## 2012 ANNUAL MEETING

March 31-April 3  
Tucson AZ

[Register today!](#)

## Annual Safety Awards

Since 2003, STI/SPFA has annually recognized the safe performance of your fabrication and field operations. Once again, it's time to submit your application.

The Safety Awards will be presented at the STI/SPFA Awards Dinner, Saturday, March 31, at the Annual Meeting in Tucson.

### Safety Award of Excellence

This award is made to organizations whose employees have achieved a safety record of 12 consecutive months with Zero OSHA Recordable Incidents.

### Safety Award of Achievement

Companies whose employees have achieved a minimum 10 percent reduction in the rate of OSHA Total Recordable Incidents, as compared with their average rate for the prior three years, are eligible to receive this award.



[Click here for 2011 Safety Awards Application](#)

[Click here for Annual Meeting information and registration](#)

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## 2011's most cited standards

Scaffolding and fall protection were the top two standards cited by OSHA during its inspections during the period 10/01/10-9/30/11, according to a "Top Ten" list published by the agency.

For the complete list, relevant standards and more information, [click here](#).

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Graphic courtesy OSHA



## A10.8 scaffold safety standard revised

The ANSI/ASSE A10.8 Scaffolding Standard has been revised after ten years. The revised standard is **effective February 13, 2012**. The revision was published late in 2011, on the heels of OSHA's announcement that scaffolding is the most frequently cited standard in worksite inspections.

[Click here for ASSE's Technical Brief on A10.8](#)  
[Click here to order A10.8 comparison](#)

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## OSHA ramps up enforcement

OSHA's 2012 regulatory agenda includes increased enforcement, according to McAfee&Taft's *RegLINC* newsletter. McAfee&Taft is an award-winning law firm based in Oklahoma City.

"Willful citations," with maximum penalties of \$70,000, are on the increase "in order to achieve a greater deterrent effect," said OSHA. In addition, the agency is using the general duty clause more frequently and publishing negative press releases when citations are issued.

OSHA is also seeking input and/or proposing several rules of interest to our industry:

- Combustible dust for general industry;
- Injury and illness prevention program;
- Walking working surfaces and personal fall protection systems;
- Recording and reporting musculoskeletal disorders.



[Click here for complete article](#)  
Courtesy McAfee&Taft RegLINC

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## Construction fatalities decline

The number of construction fatalities declined by nearly 10% between 2009 and 2010 and by almost 40% over the past five years, according to an analysis of new federal data prepared by the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC). The number of construction fatalities in 2010 was 751, down from 834 in 2009 and 1239 in 2006.

Courtesy [AGC](#)

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## JSA and SWA: right for your business?

OSHA's FAQs webpage answers the most frequently asked questions about compliance. Included are several from the point of view of employees, such as whether they can be punished for reporting unsafe working conditions to their employer or a government agency (of course, they cannot).

These FAQs are worth a look to help employers determine whether a "safety empowerment program" is right for their business. According to Danny Trahan, HSE director for Plant Performance Services, LLC, there are two components to such a program: job safety analysis (JSA) and stop work authority (SWA).

Job safety analysis can save money by determining where the likely hazards are in the work environment and focusing training to minimize them. Stop work authority empowers employees to spot and report safety and health violations--and possibly even issue a work stoppage. Employers may be reluctant to delegate this much authority, but with appropriate training and documentation, SWA can save money and keep the OSHA inspectors away, too, as well as protecting the health and safety of employees.

[Click here for OSHA's FAQs page](#)

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## OSHA revokes old compliance variances

Between 1975-77, OSHA granted "permanent variances" to several fabricators of cylindrical steel tanks. The variances specified alternative means of compliance with scaffold standards then in effect for falling-object and fall protection.

OSHA recently sent letters revoking these variances, stating that since the 1996 revision of the relevant standards replicates the alternative conditions, the variances are no longer necessary. Affected companies have until February 1st to comment on OSHA's proposed revocation of the variances. A sample of the letter and reprint of the Federal Register for December 19, 2011, is linked below.

[Click here for OSHA's letter](#)

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## STI/SPFA's Safety & Health resources

Find a broad array of information and resources for your safety program on STI/SPFA's [Safety & Health Committee website pages](#). If you already have a username and password, log in and click "Members" on the homepage. If you don't have Member access, [contact our office](#). Our website is a valuable resource. Check out these useful links:

- [WebNet Safety Training](#) : Train employees inexpensively, at your plant, for a full year via the internet
- [Training Resources](#) : Materials for use by Member companies for safety training sessions--more than 100 presentations and posters
- [Equipment Failures](#) : Descriptions of equipment recalls and failures, as well as solutions
- [OSHA Issues](#) : Updates to OSHA programs of current interest
- [Personnel Incidents](#) : Discussion of personnel incidents and lessons learned
- [Tank Use Mishaps](#) : STI/SPFA monthly online newsletter with stories of mishaps involving tanks and petroleum
- [Safe Tank Alliance](#) : OSHA Alliance Program with STI/SPFA, NFPA and API
- [Safety Awards](#) : Information about STI/SPFA's Safety Award of Excellence and the Safety Award of Achievement



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