**OSHA Inspections**

Occasionally we get a call from a member in a panic—OSHA is there to conduct an inspection.  After we calm the member down, we walk them through how the inspection is likely to go, what the OSHA Inspectors will want to see and how company representatives should conduct themselves during the inspection. Normally the inspector (s) will have an opening conference explaining the nature of the inspection and what they will need from the employer.  As part of the inspection, inspectors will want to review the OSHA 300 (log of occupational injuries and illnesses), safety training documentation and written compliance programs such as Hazard Communications, Blood Borne Pathogens, Lockout Tagout, etc.

There are basically four different types of inspections:

1. **General administrative inspections** designed to check randomly selected employers for compliance on a periodic basis;
2. Inspections prompted by an **employee complaint**;
3. **Special Emphasis Inspections** based on an industry’s high frequency of violations or high rate of work-related injuries; and
4. Inspections prompted by an **occupational fatality, hospitalization of one or more employees, or an employee’s amputation or loss of an eye as a result of a work-related incident.**

Catapult recommends that employers have a comprehensive written OSHA inspection policy in order to be prepared when the OSHA knocks on the door. These inspectors normally conduct themselves as professionals, but keep in mind that they are charged by law to cite employers for violations noted during the inspection. Also remember that everything said by company representatives during the inspection can, and likely will be used against the company. An OSHA inspection policy should designate specific management personnel to greet and accompany the inspector during the inspection. Contacts with other members of management should be limited to the extent possible.

As always, if you need any assistance with an OSHA issue, please don't hesitate to call Catapult’s Advice Team at 919-878-9222.

Written by a Catapult Advisor