



CONSTRUCTION

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Hensel Phelps Construction and CVI Development were issued citations totaling \$88,000 for failing to adequately protect workers at an excavation site in Austin, Texas. The fines came after a March 2015 inspection that was spurred by both a complaint and the recent implementation of OSHA's National Emphasis Program for Trenching and Excavations.

OSHA warned that multi-employer worksites mean overlapping and shared responsibilities, and vowed to hold all companies responsible if those companies fail to keep their employees safe.

## Construction Workforce Shortages Lead to Increase in Workplace Injuries

The shortage of qualified, skilled workers in the construction industry may be affecting workplace safety, according to a recent survey from the Associated General Contractors of America.

According to the survey, 15 percent of respondents said that they had experienced an increase in the number of reportable injuries and illnesses because of the workforce shortage, and 13 percent blamed the labor shortage for an increase in the number of job hazards identified in inspection reports. Additionally, 11 percent attributed their increases in workers' compensation claims to the labor shortage.

The construction industry has been facing a labor shortage since the recession, but the economic

recovery has brought with it a demand for new construction that has outpaced the labor supply. Furthermore, preparing new skilled workers can take at least 12 to 18 months of intensive training.

Though it may be necessary to hire temporary workers and subcontractors, construction firms should pay close attention to the experience and qualifications of those workers. They also should make sure that experienced supervisors maintain a diligent watch on job sites.

## Confined Spaces Rule in Full Effect in October

The temporary enforcement rule regarding construction work in confined spaces ends on Oct. 2, 2015. After that date, OSHA inspectors will be issuing citations for companies that are not in compliance with the new standard.

To make sure you're in compliance, consider using our "Permit-required Confined Spaces in Construction Program and Training Materials" piece. Inside, you'll find a compliance program, an employee handout, a safety training log, a training quiz and presentation speaker notes. Contact Atlantic Pacific Insurance today for more information.

