

Contractor Safety

Bringing outside contractors into your facility can put your employees at risk. Contractors who don't take safety seriously can expose your employees and facility to unwanted hazards. Therefore, take the initiative to evaluate the contractor's safety programs and how they implement them. It is also important to recognize that all employers have the same duty: to comply with OSHA standards and eliminate hazardous conditions that are identified.

Here are some things you can do to protect yourself and the company when working with contractors:

- Clearly define your expectations and their responsibilities.
- Determine how these responsibilities are viewed from the OSHA perspective.
- Ensure that their staff is trained to recognize health and safety hazards applicable to your facility.
- Assign Health and Safety responsibilities to one individual on each project.
- Provide that person with resources to carry out his/her responsibility.
- Make sure they have a written Health and Safety Plan.
- Understand the history of the contractors you are working with.

Accomplishing these six items is a proactive approach to worksite health and safety. You will be better prepared to address hazards and prevent serious incidents from happening. They will also help in dealing with an OSHA inspector should he/she happen to visit.

For more information, contact Cathy Pletz, Frank Gates Service Company, at (800) 777-4283.