

AWAIR (A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction Program)

Introduction

The MN AWAIR Act, (§182.653, subd. 8) is enforced by Minnesota OSHA. It is a state regulation and therefore has no Federal OSHA counterpart at this time.

Who must comply

Coverage under the AWAIR law is based on an employer's Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) or North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) code. If an employer's SIC/NAICS code appears on OSHA's list of covered industries, then the employer must comply with the regulation.

The list is updated by the state every five years, and when a new industry type is added, employers have six months to come into compliance. The link to this list can be found here:

<http://www.dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosh-compliance-awair-program>

For the University, determining coverage under the regulation is debatable, because colleges and universities are not covered, but "farming and agriculture" operations are.

Regardless of actual coverage under the regulation, it's recommend that all locations comply with the rule. Firstly, the AWAIR law is widely regarded as one of the most effective as it requires the employer to formally develop and document some fundamental safety management concepts. Secondly, complying with the regulation is very simple. In other words, complying with the regulation constitutes a great deal of "bang for the buck."

What's required

The regulation requires all covered employers to describe the following in writing:

1. How managers, supervisors and employees are responsible for implementing the program and how continued participation of management will be established, measured, and maintained.
2. The methods used to identify, analyze and control new or existing hazards, conditions, and operations.
3. How the plan will be communicated to all affected employees so they are informed of work-related hazards and controls.
4. How workplace accidents will be investigated and corrective action implemented.
5. How safe work practices and rules will be enforced.

Annual program reviews

The employer must document a review of the workplace accident and injury reduction program at least annually and document how the procedures included in the program will be improved.

Questions

If you have questions on this topic, please contact University Health and Safety at (612)626-6002.

University Health and Safety Website:
<https://www.uhs.umn.edu/>