
OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 1

Region 1 News Release: 10-554-BOS / BOS 2010-186

April 30, 2010

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US Labor Department's OSHA proposes \$558,000 in fines to US Postal Service for electrical hazards at Providence, RI, mail processing facility

PROVIDENCE, R.I. – The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for alleged willful and serious violations of safety standards at the Providence Processing and Delivery Center, 24 Corliss St. in Providence. The Postal Service faces a total of \$558,000 in fines, chiefly for electrical and lockout/tagout of energy start-up hazards, following an OSHA inspection conducted in response to employee complaints.

"These sizable fines reflect the severity and ongoing nature of these hazards," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "The Postal Service ignored long-established safety standards and knowingly put its workers in harm's way."

OSHA's inspection found untrained or unqualified workers were performing tests on live electrical equipment, and doing so without adequate training, personal protective equipment, safety-related work practices and warning signs, as well as working on equipment that had not first been de-energized. In addition, inspections of hazardous energy control procedures were conducted by employees who lacked the knowledge and training to determine if those procedures were performed correctly.

As a result of these conditions, OSHA has issued the Postal Service eight willful citations, with \$530,000 in proposed fines. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health.

"The Postal Service exposed workers at the Providence facility to the serious and potentially fatal hazards of shock, electrocution and arc-flash. That is unacceptable and needlessly placed the health of these workers at risk," said Michaels.

In addition, four serious citations, with \$28,000 in fines, have been issued for failure to develop procedures and provide training for locking out machines' power sources to prevent their unexpected startup during servicing and other related hazards. OSHA issues serious citations when death or serious physical harm is likely to result from hazards about which an employer knew or should have known.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and proposed penalties to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Providence Area Office; telephone 401-528-4667. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 5

Region 5 News Release: 10-605-CHI

May 10, 2010

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US Labor Department's OSHA fines US Postal Service processing center in Bedford Park, Ill., \$210,000 for willful safety violations

CHICAGO. - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service with three alleged willful violations at its Bedford Park, Ill., processing center. The Postal Service faces a total of \$210,000 in fines, for electrical and protective equipment hazards, following an OSHA inspection conducted in response to employee complaints.

OSHA's inspection, which began in November 2009, found that the Postal Service failed to provide required electrical safety training for its workers; to ensure workers used safety-related work practices while working on electrical equipment; and to provide workers with appropriate personal protective equipment while working on energized equipment. A willful violation is one committed with intentional, knowing or voluntary disregard for the law's requirement, or plain indifference to employee safety and health.

"These sizable fines reflect the severity and ongoing nature of these hazards," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "The Postal Service ignored long-established safety standards and knowingly put its workers in harm's way."

Within the past five years, OSHA has conducted more than 900 inspections at USPS facilities across the country and has issued more than 600 citations. The Bedford Park location has more than 800 employees and has received several OSHA citations during the past four years.

The company has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Calumet City Area Office; telephone 708-891-3800. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 3

**Region 3 News Release: 10-777-PHI (osha 10-80)
June 8, 2010
Contact: Leni Fortson
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**US Labor Department's OSHA fines US Postal Service nearly \$500,000
for exposing workers to electrical hazards at 2 Philadelphia facilities**

PHILADELPHIA - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for workplace safety violations related to electrical hazards found at two Philadelphia facilities after receiving complaints about both locations. Combined proposed penalties total \$497,000.

OSHA's inspections of the Network Distribution Center at 1900 Byberry Road and the Processing and Distribution Center at 7500 Lindberg Blvd. found inadequately trained employees performing work without the proper personal protective equipment while being exposed to live parts. As a result of these conditions, OSHA cited the NDC with four willful violations with a proposed penalty of \$280,000. The P&DC was cited for three willful violations with a penalty of \$210,000 and one serious violation with a penalty of \$7,000.

"The Postal Service's disregard for workplace safety standards has left workers at these facilities exposed to unnecessary dangers including electric shock, electrocution, fires and explosions," said Al D'Imperio, director of OSHA's Philadelphia Area Office.

OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health. A serious citation is issued when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result and the employer knew, or should have known, of the hazard.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its citations to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Philadelphia Area Office; telephone: 215-597-4955. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 3

Region 3 News Release: 10-772-PHI (osha 10-82)

June 8, 2010

Contact: Leni Fortson

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**US Labor Department's OSHA fines US Postal Service nearly \$300,000
for exposing workers to electrical hazards at Pittsburgh, Pa., facility**

PITTSBURGH, Pa. - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for workplace safety violations related to electrical hazards found at the Pittsburgh mail processing facility located at 1001 California Ave. Proposed penalties total \$299,500.

OSHA initiated an inspection in October 2009 in response to a complaint alleging the hazards. Inspectors cited the Postal Service with four willful violations carrying a penalty of \$265,000; one repeat violation, with a penalty of \$25,000; and two serious violations with a penalty of \$9,500.

"The Postal Service's blatant disregard for workplace safety standards has left workers at this facility exposed to unnecessary risk of serious injury," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels.

The willful violations include inadequate training for employees exposed to electrical hazards, failure to provide electrical protective equipment to protect employees from arc-flash hazards and electrical current, and failure to use appropriate safety signs, safety symbols or accident prevent tags to warn employees about electrical hazards. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health.

The repeat violation is due to the facility's failure to use approved covers for electrical junction boxes. A repeat citation is issued when a substantially similar violation is found at any of an employer's facilities in federal enforcement states within three years of a previous citation.

The serious violations include the use of an unapproved junction box in a wet and damp location, and a failure to provide voltage-rated tools. OSHA issues a serious citation when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result and the employer knew, or should have known, of the hazard.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its citations to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Pittsburgh Area Office; telephone 412-395-4903. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 10

Region 10 News Release: 10-820-SEA (10-179)

June 21, 2010

Contact: Jeannine Lupton

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**US Labor Department's OSHA proposes \$77,500 in fines against US Postal
Service for electrical hazards at Portland, Ore., mail processing facility**

SEATTLE - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for alleged willful and serious violations of safety standards at the Portland, Ore., Processing and Distribution Center, located at 715 N.W. Hoyt St. An OSHA inspection conducted in response to employee complaints resulted in a total of \$77,500 in fines for electrical hazards and a failure to adequately lock out machines' power sources to prevent unexpected startups.

"The Postal Service disregarded basic electrical safety practices, which left workers at this facility exposed to unnecessary risk of serious injury," said Richard S. Terrill, OSHA regional administrator in Seattle.

OSHA's inspection found workers were performing tests on live electrical equipment and doing so without adequate personal protective equipment, safety-related work practices and warning signs, as well as working on equipment that had not first been de-energized.

As a result of these conditions, OSHA has issued the Postal Service one willful citation with a proposed fine of \$70,000. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health.

In addition, two serious citations with \$7,500 in fines have been issued for failure to adequately lock out machines' power sources to prevent unexpected startup during servicing and for inadequate insulation on electric cables. OSHA issues serious citations when death or serious physical harm is likely to result from hazards about which an employer knew or should have known.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and proposed penalties to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Portland Area Office; telephone 503-326-2251. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 1

Release Number: 10-822-BOS/BOS 2010-272

Mon., June 28, 2010

Contact: Ted Fitzgerald

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US Labor Department's OSHA proposes \$430,000 in fines against US Postal Service for electrical hazards at Scarborough, Maine, mail processing facility

AUGUSTA, Maine -- The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for alleged willful and repeat violations of safety standards following an inspection at the Southern Maine Processing and Distribution Center in Scarborough, Maine. The Postal Service faces a total of \$430,000 in fines, chiefly for exposing workers to electrical hazards.

"These citations and sizable fines reflect the Postal Service's failure to equip its workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to safely work with live electrical parts," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "The Postal Service knew that proper and effective training was needed for the safety of its workers but did not provide it."

OSHA's inspection, which began Dec. 29, 2009, in response to a complaint from workers at the Scarborough facility, found employees working with or near live electrical equipment without adequate training or qualifications, personal protective equipment, safety-related work practices and warning signs.

These conditions exposed the workers to electric shock, arc flashes and arc blasts and resulted in OSHA issuing six willful citations, with \$420,000 in proposed fines, to the Postal Service. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health.

In addition, OSHA found that access to electrical panels was blocked in several instances by materials being stored adjacent to them. This situation resulted in one repeat citation, with a \$10,000 fine, since the Postal Service had been cited in November 2007 for the same type of hazard at a Toledo, Ohio, postal facility.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and proposed penalties to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Augusta Area Office; telephone 207-626-9160. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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OSHA Trade News Release

U.S. Department of Labor
OSHA, Office of Communications

Release Number: 10-945-NAT

July 6, 2010

Contact: Elizabeth Alexander Diana Petterson

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US Department of Labor files worker safety complaint against USPS
Complaint requests enterprise-wide remedy, a 1st

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Labor's solicitor today filed a complaint against the U.S. Postal Service for electrical work safety violations. The complaint, which asks the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission to order USPS to correct electrical violations at 350 facilities, marks the first time the department has sought enterprise-wide relief as a remedy.

The request for enterprise-wide relief is based upon the discovery of numerous, similar electrical work safety violations in the course of investigations conducted by the department's Occupational Safety and Health Administration of USPS mail processing and distribution facilities across the country. These violations increase the risk of injury from electrical shock, including electrocution. While today's complaint arises from violations discovered in the Providence, R.I., facility, the requested remedy would apply to all 350 USPS processing and distribution centers, all of which contain similar equipment.

"When the same safety violation is discovered in multiple locations of an organization, we need an enterprise-wide remedy to protect workers from the hazard," said Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith. "The Department of Labor will seek other opportunities to utilize this remedy."

OSHA's inspections have revealed numerous violations of similar worker safety standards at USPS facilities throughout the nation. The complaint alleges that USPS's actions demonstrate an enterprise-wide policy that resulted in ongoing systemic electrical work safety violations. USPS failed to adequately train workers in recognizing electrical hazards and how to work safely around such hazards, and did not provide workers with the appropriate tools and personal protective equipment to avoid injury or death while working around and on electrical equipment. The complaint also seeks \$558,000 for the eight willful and four serious violations discovered in Rhode Island.

"Even though it was aware of the hazards, USPS failed to institute the necessary measures to protect its workers," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "The complaint filed today seeks to put a stop to this irresponsible behavior."

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA's role is to assure these conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit <http://www.osha.gov>.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 3

Region 3 News Release: 10-947-PHI (osha 10-123)

July 12, 2010

Contact: Leni Fortson

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US Labor Department's OSHA proposes \$272,000 in fines against US Postal Service for exposing workers to electrical hazards at Capitol Heights, Md., facility

CAPITOL HEIGHTS, Md. - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for workplace safety violations related to electrical hazards found at the Capitol Heights Processing and Distribution Center. Proposed penalties total \$272,000.

"These citations and sizable fines reflect the Postal Service's failure to equip its workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to safely work with live electrical parts," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "The Postal Service knew that proper and effective training was needed for the safety of its workers but did not provide it."

OSHA initiated an inspection in January 2010 in response to a complaint alleging the hazards. Inspectors cited the Postal Service with four willful violations carrying a penalty of \$265,000 and one serious violation with a penalty of \$7,000.

The willful violations include inadequate training for workers exposed to electrical hazards, failing to provide electrical protective equipment to protect workers from arc-flash hazards and electrical current, and failing to use appropriate safety signs, safety symbols or accident prevention tags to warn employees about electrical hazards. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health.

The serious violation includes the facility's failure to provide voltage-rated tools. OSHA issues a serious citation when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result and the employer knew, or should have known, of the hazard.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its citations to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Baltimore/Washington Area Office, which can be reached at 410-865-2055. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

The U.S. Department of Labor has filed an enterprise-wide complaint against the U.S. Postal Service for electrical work safety violations. The complaint asks the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission to order the USPS to correct electrical violations at all its facilities nationwide. This complaint marks the first time OSHA has sought enterprise-wide relief as a remedy.

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OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 1

Region 1 News Release: 10-1022-BOS/BOS 2010-330

Thurs., July 29, 2010

Contact: Ted Fitzgerald

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US Labor Department's OSHA proposes \$420,000 in fines against US Postal Service for electrical hazards at Vermont mail processing facility

CONCORD, N.H. - The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration has cited the U.S. Postal Service for six alleged willful violations of safety standards following an inspection at the White River Junction Processing and Distribution Center in White River Junction, Vt. The Postal Service faces a total of \$420,000 in fines, chiefly for exposing workers to electrical hazards.

OSHA's inspection, which began Jan. 30, 2010, in response to worker complaints, found untrained or unqualified employees at the White River Junction distribution center routinely performing troubleshooting, servicing, voltage testing and maintenance on or near live electrical equipment, such as mail sorting and cancelling machines. The machines had not first been deenergized and the workers also lacked personal protective equipment, insulated tools and were not provided electrical lockout/tagout procedures to use.

"The conditions cited here exposed workers to the swift and potentially deadly hazards of electric shock, arc flashes and arc blasts," said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Dr. David Michaels. "This large fine reflects both the gravity of these hazards and the Postal Service's ongoing knowledge of and failure to correct them."

As a result of its inspection, OSHA has issued six willful citations to the Postal Service for the conditions at the White River Junction facility. OSHA defines a willful violation as one committed with plain indifference to or intentional disregard for employee safety and health.

The Postal Service has 15 business days from receipt of its latest citations and proposed penalties to comply, meet with the OSHA area director or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission. This inspection was conducted by OSHA's Concord, N.H., Area Office; telephone 603-225-1629. To report workplace accidents, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-6742.

The U.S. Department of Labor has filed an enterprise-wide complaint against the U.S. Postal Service for electrical work safety violations. The complaint asks the Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission to order the USPS to correct electrical violations at all its facilities nationwide. This complaint marks the first time OSHA has sought enterprise-wide relief as a remedy.

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