



OSHA REGIONAL NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

DIRECTIVE NUMBER: CPL 04-00 (LEP 010) **EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 1, 2004

SUBJECT: Local Emphasis Program for Construction of Telecommunication Towers

REGIONAL IDENTIFIER: Region V

ABSTRACT

Purpose: To expand and continue a Region V Local Emphasis Program (LEP) for Safety and Health Inspections during construction activities of Telecommunication Towers, to develop enhanced expertise in the Area Offices and promote consistency in enforcement of applicable standards.

References: OSHA Notice CPL 02-00-103 Field Inspection Reference Manual (FIRM)
OSHA Instruction CPL 04-00-001 Procedures for Approval of Local Emphasis Programs (LEPs)

Action Offices: Region V Area Offices

Originating Offices: Cleveland and Cincinnati Area Offices

Contact: Assistant Regional Administrator
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By and Under the Authority of
Michael G. Connors
Regional Administrator

1. Purpose. The purpose of this Notice is to continue a Local Emphasis Program (LEP) for safety and health inspections of Telecommunication construction projects in Region V, to develop enhanced expertise in the Area Offices and promote consistency in enforcement of applicable standards.
2. Scope. This Notice applies to the Area Offices in Region V.
3. References. OSHA Notice CPL 02-00-103 Field Reference Manual (FIRM), OSHA Instruction CPL 04-00-001 Procedures for Approval of Local Emphasis Programs and OSHA Instruction CPL 02-01-036, Interim Inspection Procedures During Communication Tower Construction Activities.
4. Expiration. This Notice expires September 30, 2005.
5. Action. The Area Director will use the procedures described in Paragraph 8 of this Notice as the basis for developing and implementing an emphasis program focusing on Telecommunication Tower construction projects, specifically directed at serious hazards such as fall protection, safe access and improper erection techniques.
6. Policy. The Area Director shall use the LEP as described herein as the basis for scheduling safety and health inspection activities at Telecommunication Tower construction projects.
7. Background. Due in part to the increased demand for wireless communication services and updated technology within the industry, there has been an increase in the construction of Telecommunication Towers. Information compiled by OSHA and NIOSH reflects that the increased tower erection activity has also resulted in a notable increase in fatalities due to falls, tower collapses and impacts from loads. In a study conducted by NIOSH (based on the National Traumatic Occupational Fatalities (NTOF) Surveillance System), a total of 136 fatalities were reported within the industry from 1980-1994. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) reported 93 total fatalities within the industry from 1992-1997. Additional information compiled by NIOSH reflects 72 incidents involving fatal accidents on communication towers during 1997. A study conducted by the National Association of Tower Erectors (NATE) compiled from OSHA's database for the period from January, 1988 through February 3, 1999 indicated that there had been 84 accidents involving communication towers or similar structures, which represented 90 fatalities during that period. An analysis of the accidents by NATE attributed the cause of the fatal accidents to such factors as: riding the line or load, collapse of the structure, free climbing, installation, movement or removal of the gin pole, or specific activities (e.g. contact with live electrical parts, struck-by falling objects, demolition, etc.). According to NATE, the number of tower construction companies has increased significantly, with a number of new employers and

employees engaged in tower erection activities which heretofore may have had little direct interaction, interventions or inspection activities with OSHA. Information concerning tower erection activities is often unavailable through OSHA's normal procedures for developing programmed construction worksite registers (e.g. F.W. Dodge Reports and the University of Tennessee Construction Resource Analysis (CRA) group). While OSHA has implemented a number of special emphasis programs focusing resources on fall hazards, trenching and excavations, etc., inspections within the telecommunication industry have often been reactive in nature following a serious accident or fatality, rather than being proactive in nature. It is believed through a Local Emphasis Program that increases awareness and accelerates enforcement activity, injuries and fatalities can be reduced within the telecommunications industry. This emphasis program is intended to supplement existing OSHA targeting programs, focusing additional resources as necessary to monitor job sites, promote voluntary compliance and promote awareness of safety and health hazards within the telecommunication industry.

8. Procedures. The following procedures will be used in targeting and the scheduling of inspections conducted under this LEP.
 - A. Hazards related to the construction of Telecommunication Towers are normally transient and of limited duration. Inspections conducted under this LEP will be initiated by several methods: outreach activities with other Federal, State and local agencies (e.g. FAA, FCC, DOT and EPA); contacts with major owners of the sites; formal and non-formal complaints; referrals from outside sources; and CSHO observance.
 - B. Each report of activity on a tower site shall be evaluated and a determination made whether an onsite inspection or other intervention activity may be appropriate. When activities are believed to be ongoing at the job site, an inspection will be scheduled and may include all phases of telecommunication tower erection activities, including demolition of existing structures, site preparation, erection of steel tower components and related wireless telecommunication tower activities as well as maintenance of existing towers.
 - C. Inspections will assure compliance with CPL 02-01-036, Employee Access by Hoist.
 - D. Inspections will be conducted in accordance with the FIRM and will normally use the focused inspection criteria.

9. IMIS Coding. Inspections conducted under this program will be coded as “h” Planned in Item 24, and Item 25c, Local Emphasis Program will be coded “COMTOWER.” In addition, inspections will be coded under Item 42 (Optional Information) on the OSHA-1 Form as: N-16-COMTOWER.

10. Evaluation Procedures. It is important that this program be evaluated in a timely manner in order to assess its potential future value and to make any necessary modifications.
 - A. Utilizing information provided by each Area Director, a composite evaluation report for each of the Federal Enforcement States will be submitted to the ARA/EP no later than October 31, 2005. The evaluation shall be in accordance with CPL 2.102 and include a brief description of inspections conducted, results of the inspections, an evaluation of the program in general, and a recommendation for continuing the LEP.