



FIRST QUARTER 2005

HR Compliance 101, LLC

Putting Companies in the Safety Zone Since 1978

Helping Your Employees Buy into Safety:

Joint Loss Management Committee

Missing electrical face plates . . . unmarked exits . . . blocked walkways . . . a fire extinguisher that's out of the green zone . . . unlabeled containers. They add up to trouble.

Any one of those hazards could cause an expensive accident to an employee; give a disgruntled employee or ex-employee an excellent excuse to complain to government agencies; and, finally, expose you to major fines. Fortunately, the State of New Hampshire has regulations that help you engage your own employees in creating a safe work environment and preventing trouble.

The primary vehicle is the Joint Loss Management Committee. Representatives of both employees and management sit on the committee to develop safety programs, identify workplace hazards and take corrective and preventive action. If you have five or more employees working in NH full-time, part-time or seasonally, you must set up a Joint Loss Management Committee. If you don't, the State of New Hampshire may fine you up to \$1,000 per day per. If you have ten or more employees, you must also file a biennial Safety Summary Form with the State, describing your safety program (see *Compliance Alert* on page 2).

The Joint Loss Management Committee can have as few as two members (one elected by the employees and one representing management). The members receive enough training in workplace hazard identification and accident/incident investigation to fulfill the responsibilities of the committee. At least once a year, the committee members conduct a health and safety inspection of the workplace. They meet quarterly to review their findings,

note any new safety concerns and decide how to handle safety issues. The minutes of their meetings are an official record of your attention to safety, and they are made available to all employees.

HR Compliance 101, LLC, has set up Joint Loss Management Committees for many of our clients. We train committee members, review programs, develop agendas and minutes for each meeting, define and document workplace hazards, recommend corrective action, and file the Department of Labor Safety Summary Form.

As described in RSA 281-A:60, "The purpose of a Joint Loss Management Committee is to bring workers and management together in a non-adversarial, cooperative effort to promote safety and health in each workplace. A Joint Loss Management Committee assists the employer and makes recommendations." When employees participate in creating a safe work environment, have a place where they can go to complain about problems before problems escalate and have proof of management's concern, there's much less chance for accidents or for any employee to complain to OSHA. Your employees are safer—and so is your business.

From Our Customers

"The rules keep changing and Pauline is aware of what is going on. She made it easy for us to get into compliance . . . We're in a better situation now than we were a year ago." Rick Kohlorgen, owner and operator of the Woodbound Inn in Rindge, NH

This newsletter refers to some of the regulations that may currently apply to small businesses.

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Pauline Mathews

P.O. Box 713

Fitzwilliam, NH 03447

E-mail: paula@hrcompliance101.com

Phone/Fax: 603-585-3139



HR Compliance 101, LLC
Putting Customers in the Safety Zone since 1978

P.O. Box 713
Fitzwilliam, NH 03447

Phone:
603-585-3139

E-mail: paula@hrcompliance101.com

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Compliance Alert

Did you file your biennial Safety Summary Form (WCSSF) with the State of New Hampshire, Department of Labor? If you have ten or more employees working in New Hampshire, you must file the completed form on January 1 of odd numbered years.

If you missed the January 1, 2005 deadline, you can still avoid fines. Show good faith by filing as soon as possible.

Safety Summary Form summarizes your safety program. No program in place? The State of New Hampshire requires a written safety program for any company who employs ten people in the state, full-time, part-time or seasonally. Please contact HR Compliance 101, LLC, for assistance in completing your safety program.



Workplace and Training Solutions

Q. I have a forklift that isn't being used. Well, in a way it is being used—as a machine building bench. So could someone report me to OSHA for breaking rules?

A. OSHA regulations require that an operator be certified for typical forklift usage. They also require you to maintain documentation showing regular inspections and evaluations of the equipment. If the forklift isn't being operated, those regulations don't apply. But you should keep documentation on hand explaining why there is no certified operator for the forklift.