

OSHA Develops Plan To Publish Injury And Illness Data Online

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Workplace Safety

The U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) contends that giving greater publicity to data on workplace injuries and illnesses will allow employers to distinguish themselves as workplaces that are committed to safety. That is one of the stated reasons behind OSHA's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Improve Tracking of Workplace Injuries and Illnesses.

If the new rule goes into effect after a period for notice and comment, then employers with 250 or more employees will be required on a quarterly basis to submit electronically to OSHA, the injury and illness data that they are already currently required to maintain under existing recordkeeping regulations. In addition, small employers with 20 or more employees in certain industries with higher rates of workplace injuries will be required to submit data annually.

In announcing the proposed rulemaking, OSHA cited Bureau of Labor Statistics data that an estimated 3 million workplace injuries or illnesses occurred in 2012. OSHA claims that online posting of injury and illness data will encourage employers to improve workplace safety and health "to support their reputations as good places to work or do business with." [According to its news release announcing the plan](#), OSHA believes that the data will be useful for OSHA to better target its enforcement and compliance efforts and will allow employers to compare themselves with others in their industries. For large employers, the rule will not require new record-keeping but will only require that the data be submitted electronically, according to OSHA.

[The Notice of Proposed Rule Making is available here](#). Public comments on the proposed rules can be submitted electronically, by fax, or in hard copy through Feb. 6, 2014. In addition, OSHA is planning to hold a public meeting on the subject of its proposed new rule, which is scheduled for Jan. 9, 2014, in Washington, D.C.

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