

Safety Lines

Harvest season brings grain hazards, precautions to the forefront

Autumn in Minnesota means harvest season. This is a great time to think about the hazards in the grain industry and refresh safety and health precautions. Hazards when working around grain may include: entrapment or engulfment in grain; falls; equipment entanglement; combustible dust explosions; electrocutions; and being struck by an object.

Each year, Purdue University publishes a *Summary of U.S. Agricultural Confined Space-related Injuries and Fatalities*, most recently for incidents in 2024. Nationwide, in 2024, there were 34 grain-related entrapments reported, representing a 25% increase from 2023. Purdue University also noted 22 of those entrapments (65%) were fatal. Other hazards noted in the report included falls, asphyxiation, entanglement, and fires and explosions. In fact, there were nine additional grain-dust explosions noted, though with no fatalities.

Unsurprisingly, in the past five years, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance's most cited standards in the grain industry related to grain bin entry and walking-working surfaces. Other commonly cited standards included those for preventive maintenance, housekeeping, training, machine guarding and permit-required confined spaces (such as boot pits).



Resources

Employers and employees can learn more about these standards and grain-industry hazards, as well as ways to protect workers' lives in the grain industry, from the following resources:

- 29 CFR 1910.272, Grain handling facilities standards;
- the federal OSHA grain-handling webpage at [osha.gov/grain-handling](https://www.osha.gov/grain-handling);
- the MNOSHA Compliance grain-handling webpage at dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-grain-handling-information-fatalities; and
- MNOSHA Compliance at 651-284-5050, 877-470-6742 or osha.compliance@state.mn.us.

Rulemaking update: Hazard communication, PPE; lead rulemaking process

Hazard communication, PPE

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance has proposed to adopt technical corrections to the federal OSHA hazard communication standard and its personal protective equipment (PPE) in construction standards. These proposed adoptions were published in the *State Register* on Aug. 25, 2025.

The proposed modifications to the hazard communication standard, 29 CFR 1910.1200, include but are not limited to:

- revised criteria for classification of certain health and physical hazards to better capture and communicate the hazards to downstream users;
- revised provisions for updating labels;
- new labeling provisions for small containers (including provisions addressing the labeling of small containers and the relabeling of chemicals that have been released for shipment);
- new provisions related to concentrations or concentration ranges being claimed as trade secrets;
- technical amendments related to the contents of safety data sheets; and
- related revisions to definitions of terms used in the standard.



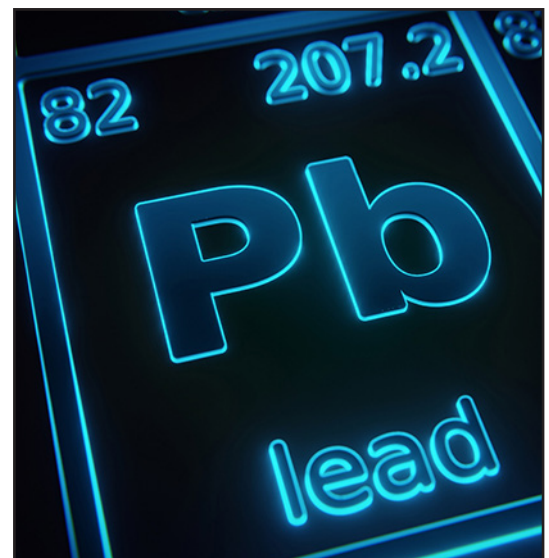
The revision to 29 CFR 1926.95, Criteria for Personal Protective Equipment in Construction, makes explicit the existing requirement that employers in the construction industry must ensure PPE worn by employees fits. This update states employers must ensure all employee PPE is of safe design and construction for the work being performed and the PPE is selected to ensure it properly fits each affected employee.

Lead rulemaking process

Minnesota OSHA is conducting a rulemaking process required by the Minnesota Legislature as a result of the 2024 session. The Legislature passed a bill requiring MNOSHA to conduct rulemaking to reduce the blood lead level at which an employee is removed from exposure to lead and to reduce the blood lead level at which an employee may be returned to work with exposure to lead.

MNOSHA has posted [proposed draft standards](#) and appendices online for public review. Many of the proposed changes to the standards were taken from [California's](#) newly adopted lead standards. This posting does not begin the formal rulemaking process outlined in Minnesota Statutes section 182.655. That process will begin when the proposed rules are officially published in the *Minnesota State Register*.

The official comment period will also begin after the proposed rules are published in the *Minnesota State Register*. When the Department of Labor and Industry has developed and proposed the final adoption in the *State Register*, all interested stakeholders will be able to participate in the formal rulemaking process.



Adoption of ‘Transportation Tank Cleaning’ local emphasis program

In the past two years, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance has investigated three fatalities in Minnesota that occurred in permit-required confined spaces. Two of these fatalities involved transportation tank trailers and one involved a sanitary sewer manhole.

Permit-required confined space entries require the employer to identify and evaluate the hazards of permit spaces before employees enter them. The employer must then develop and implement the means, procedures and practices necessary for safe permit space entry operations.

In response to these events, MNOSHA Compliance is adopting a “Transportation Tank Cleaning” local emphasis program. This program will be based on the federal OSHA Chicago region’s [“Regional Emphasis Program for Transportation Tank Cleaning Operations,”](#) dated Aug. 2, 2021.



Employers performing work in these types of permit-required confined spaces should review their practices and procedures to ensure these types of fatalities are prevented in the future. Employers that would like assistance are encouraged to reach out to MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation at osha.consultation@state.mn.us, 651-284-5060 or 800-657-3776.

MNOSHA fatality, serious-injury investigations summaries online

Each month, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance publishes current, updated summaries of its fatality investigations and serious-injury investigations.

For the federal-fiscal-year that began Oct. 1, 2024, MNOSHA Compliance has investigated 17 fatalities as of Aug. 29.

The information provided about each investigation is: the inspection number, date of incident and worksite city; the type of business and number of employees; a description of the event; and the outcome of the MNOSHA Compliance investigation.

The summaries, plus other helpful workplace safety and health information from MNOSHA, are available on the [MNOSHA Compliance: Resources for all industries webpage](#).



Minnesota's newest MNSHARP Construction worksites



Ryan Companies US • Black Bear Project – Boston Scientific • Maple Grove, Minnesota

Workplace safety and health representatives from the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry recently recognized two [Ryan Companies US](#) projects as Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) Construction worksites.

The worksites are the Black Bear Project – Boston Scientific in Maple Grove, Minnesota, and the Lee and Penny Anderson Multipurpose Arena in St. Paul, Minnesota.

MNSHARP Construction is a Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation program that recognizes major-construction companies where managers and employees work together to develop safety and health programs that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses. Only construction projects at least 18 months in duration are eligible for participation in MNSHARP Construction.

[Complete information about MNSHARP Construction](#), including eligibility requirements, is available online.



Ryan Companies US • Lee and Penny Anderson Multipurpose Arena • St. Paul, Minnesota

Number of assaults on private-hospital employees increases

By Gideon Ondieki, Research and Data Analytics

Assaults on private-hospital employees have increased since 2011. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) released counts and rates of assaults on hospital employees annually from 2011 to 2020 and once every two years starting with 2021 through 2022. (The 2023 through 2024 data will be released next month.)

Biennial SOII results show the estimated number of assault cases with days away from work for private industry hospital employees in Minnesota increased by 340 cases, from 110 cases in 2011 through 2012 to 450 cases in the 2021 through 2022 biennium. This represents a 309% increase in estimated cases over the decade. The number of assaults in Minnesota private industry increased by 630 cases (128%) during the same period. Figure 1 shows the numbers of assaults on private-hospital employees compared with assaults in all private ownership industries.

During the same period, the rate of assaults resulting in one or more days away from work for private-hospital employees has gone up by 18.0 incidents per 10,000 full-time-equivalent (FTE) workers (174%). The incidence rate was 10.3 cases per 10,000 FTE workers in 2011 through 2012 and 28.3 cases per 10,000 FTE workers in 2021 through 2022, an all-time high. Figure 2 shows the rate of assaults on hospital employees compared to all private industry. The entire private industry saw a 60% increase in the assaults incidence rate. In 2011 through 2012, private industry had a rate of 2.0 incidents per 10,000 FTE workers and, in 2021 through 2022, the rate was 3.1. The rate of assaults for private hospitals has historically been higher than overall private industry, but that gap has widened considerably since 2015 through 2016 with the rate of assaults in 2021 through 22 more than nine times that of private industry (28.3 versus 3.1 per 10,000 FTE workers).

Assaults on hospital workers increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2019, SOII recorded 100 assault cases. That number increased by 180%, to 280 cases, in 2020. A similar, but less dramatic, increase was observed in the private sector, with assaults rising from 350 in 2019 to 590 in 2020, a 40% increase. See figure 3 on the next page.

Figure 1. Counts of assaults in private industry and hospitals, Minnesota, 2011-2022

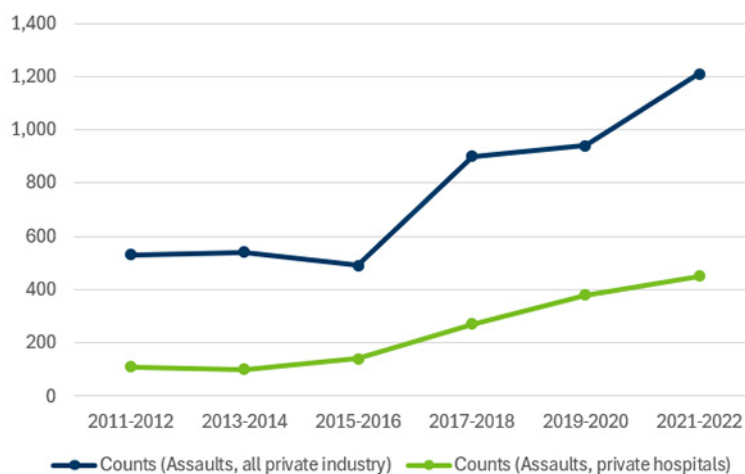


Figure 2. Rates of assaults in private industry and hospitals, Minnesota, 2011-2022

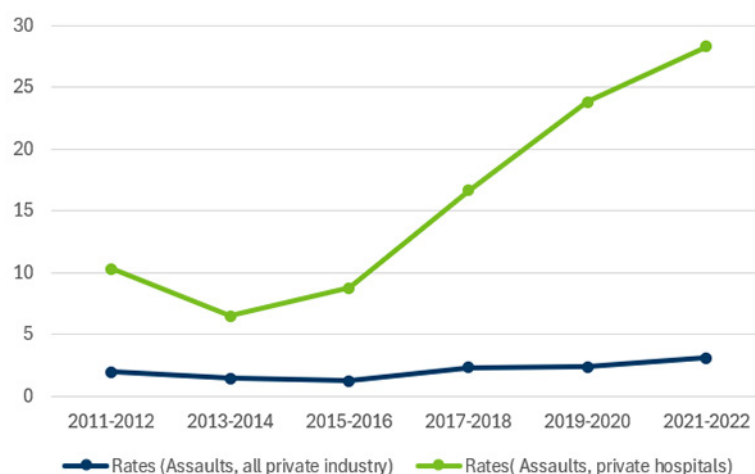
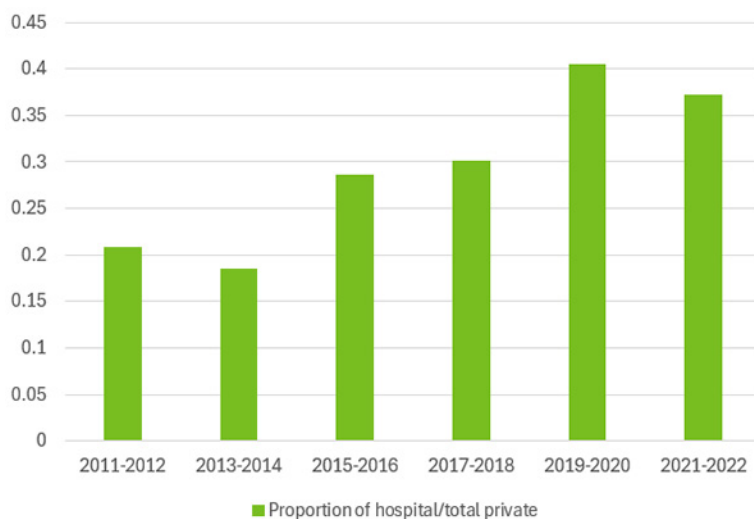


Figure 3. Total number of assaults with days away from work for private industry and hospitals, 2011-2022

Year	Total assaults to workers in private industry	Total assaults to workers in private hospitals
2011	230	50
2012	300	60
2013	340	70
2014	200	30
2015	190	50
2016	300	90
2017	480	170
2018	420	100
2019	350	100
2020 ¹	590	280
¹ Single-year data is only available through 2020. Beginning in 2021, BLS now releases case and demographic results on a biennial basis.		

Hospitals account for an increasing percentage of assaults to workers in private-ownership industries. In 2011 through 2012, the proportion of assaults in private hospitals compared to the entire private industry was 21%. That number peaked in 2019 through 2020 (40%). In 2020 alone, assaults on hospital employees accounted for 47% of the overall assaults in the private industry. Figure 4 shows the proportion of hospital assaults was down to 37% of all private industry in 2021 through 2022.

Figure 4. Assaults to private-hospital employees as a percentage of all assaults in the private industry, 2011-2022



Don't miss the next Construction Seminar: Tuesday, Nov. 18

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance offers free [Construction Seminars](#) every other month – September through May – that feature a presentation about a specific construction safety or health topic, with time for questions, answers and input. MNOSHA Compliance also provides a general update about what's happening regarding investigations.

The Construction Seminars are set up for interaction with the audience, leading to better understanding of the topic and more practical learning, and providing a safe environment for participants to ask real worksite questions and get real worksite safety and health solutions.

The next Construction Seminar is at 7 a.m., Tuesday, Nov. 18; topic being determined. Dates for the seminars in 2026 are Jan. 20, March 17 and May 19.

The Construction Seminars are now being offered in person, virtually or both. The in-person location is the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Road N., St. Paul, MN ([get directions](#), [maps to free visitor parking](#)). Mark your calendar now and [subscribe to the Construction Seminar email list to receive notice about each event](#).

Minnesota's newest MNSHARP worksite recognized



Northern Pride, Inc. • Thief River Falls, Minnesota

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Workplace Safety Consultation recently recognized [Northern Pride, Inc.](#), in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, as a Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) worksite.

MNSHARP recognizes companies whose managers and employees work together to develop safety and health programs that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses.

[Complete information about MNSHARP](#), including eligibility requirements, is available online.

Apply now: Ergonomic safety grant funds available until June 2026

The Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) received additional one-time funding to administer a safety grant program specifically designed to aid employers covered under [Minnesota Statutes section 182.677, Ergonomics](#), as part of the 2023 legislative session. More than \$1 million in ergonomics safety grant funds are available until June 30, 2026.

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Workplace Safety Consultation administers the program, which provides matching funds up to \$10,000 for qualifying employers to make ergonomic improvements recommended by an on-site safety survey. Funds are available to the following.

- **Health care facilities**, meaning hospitals having a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code of 622110, 622210 or 622310; an outpatient surgical center with a NAICS code of 621493; and a nursing home with a NAICS code of 623110.
- **Warehouse distribution centers**, meaning a site in Minnesota with 100 or more employees and a NAICS code of 493110, 423110 to 423990, 424110 to 424990, 454110 or 492110.
- **Meatpacking sites**, meaning a site in Minnesota with 100 or more employees and a NAICS code of 311611 to 311615, except 311613.

Designated employers covered by workers' compensation insurance and those approved as self-insured employers are eligible to apply for safety and health matching grants to abate ergonomic-related hazards in their workplace.

The safety and health hazards must have been identified in an on-site survey conducted by one of the following:

- a MNOSHA Compliance safety or health investigator;
- a MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation safety or health consultant;
- an in-house employee safety and health committee;
- a workers' compensation insurance underwriter;
- a private safety and health consultant; or
- a person under contract with the Assigned Risk Plan.

The on-site safety and health survey must have resulted in specifically recommended safety or health practices, or equipment, training for purchased equipment or tuition reimbursement designed to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal disorders to employees. Costs eligible for program participation are all or part of the cost of purchasing and installing recommended equipment intended to prevent musculoskeletal disorders, training required to operate recommended equipment, tuition reimbursement related to identifying ergonomic-related issues, the cost of operating or maintaining the equipment, or the cost of purchasing or renting real property, if necessary, to meet criteria established by the on-site safety and health survey.

Since the inception of the program, MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation has received 95 ergonomics safety grant applications and approved funds for 89 employers making ergonomics improvements, which reduces the risk of musculoskeletal disorders.

For more information, contact MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation at dli.grants@state.mn.us or 651-284-5060, or visit the [Safety Grant Program – ergonomics webpage](#).



APPLY NOW



Training: OSHA recordkeeping basics offered online in January

The Department of Labor and Industry is offering a free, online introductory-level training seminar about OSHA recordkeeping requirements in January 2026, date to be determined. Maintaining an accurate OSHA log of recordable work-related injuries and illnesses is an important skill that benefits employers, workers, safety professionals and government agencies.

Topics

- Recordability of injuries and illnesses
- Counting time
- How many logs to keep
- Creating a log summary
- Recording COVID-19 cases
- Differences between OSHA cases and workers' compensation claims
- Classifying cases
- Privacy cases
- Maintaining logs
- Reporting log data to OSHA



More information

Learn more about the session and how to register to attend (required) on the [MNOSHA Compliance: Recordkeeping standard webpage](#).

Free on-site safety and health consultations available

Minnesota OSHA Workplace Safety Consultation offers free consultation services, where employers can find out about potential hazards at their worksites, improve safety management systems and apply for grants to abate safety standards. The program targets small, high-hazard businesses. It is separate from Minnesota OSHA Compliance inspection activities and no citations are issued as part of a consultation visit.



Learn more and request a consultation

Web: dli.mn.gov • Email: osha.consultation@state.mn.us • Phone: 651-284-5060 or 800-657-3776

Translated materials, webpages, Language Line available via DLI website

The Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) posts its available translated materials online at dli.mn.gov/translations. It has documents available in Chinese, Hmong, Karen, Somali and Spanish. A few other documents throughout the website are available in additional languages.



Also, the DLI website now provides Google Translate near the upper left corner of all webpages on its site, allowing visitors to choose the language for the website text.

In addition, DLI has access to Language Line, a free language translation phone service for limited-English speakers. If DLI help is needed, view the contact information at dli.mn.gov/about-department/about-dli/contact-us, call and a DLI employees will get in touch with an interpreter in the needed language.

MNOSHA Compliance signs safety, health partnership



Bauer Design Build, LLC • U-Haul • Ramsey, Minnesota

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance recently signed a Level 3 Cooperative Compliance Partnerships with [Bauer Design Build, LLC](#) at its U-Haul project in Ramsey, Minnesota. Level 3 is the peak level of the compliance partnerships, with applicants striving to be an industry leader with very comprehensive safety and health programs. The project is scheduled to be completed April 15, 2026.

The partnership was signed under the initiative between MNOSHA Compliance and the Minnesota Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors (MN ABC).

The partnerships acknowledge the importance of providing a safe, healthful work environment in construction and seek a working relationship that creates mutual trust and respect among all parties – including project owners and construction workers – involved in the construction process.

The MNOSHA Compliance partnership programs aim to reduce the number of injuries, illnesses and fatalities on construction sites, with a focus on eliminating injuries and fatalities resulting from the hazards that are the four leading causes of death on construction sites: fall; struck-by; caught in or between; and electrocution.

Through the partnership programs, contractor managers and supervisors work together to develop safety and health management systems that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses.

View complete information on the [MNOSHA Compliance: Partnership programs webpage](#).

Minnesota OSHA's calendar of events*

November 2025

Nov. 18 **Construction Seminar: Topic to be determined**
dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-construction-seminars

December 2025

Dec. 5 **Occupational Safety and Health Advisory Council**
dli.mn.gov/about-department/boards-and-councils/occupational-safety-and-health-advisory-council

Dec. 5 **Occupational Safety and Health Review Board**
dli.mn.gov/about-department/boards-and-councils/occupational-safety-and-health-review-board

January 2026

Jan. 20 **Construction Seminar: Topic to be determined**
dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-construction-seminars

***All dates subject to change.**

See more at dli.mn.gov/about-department/about-dli/events-minnesota-osh

Are you registered to vote?

The Minnesota Secretary of State website has everything you need to know about voting in Minnesota. Visit sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting to: register to vote; find out where and how you can cast your vote; what's on your ballot; and more.

Sixteen- and 17-year-olds can now pre-register to vote in Minnesota.

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