



Paying for Safety: Sizing Up OSHA's Final Rule on Payment for Personal Protective Equipment

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A flurry of articles followed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Nov. 17, 2007, release of the long awaited final rule on payment for employee personal protective equipment (PPE). Most employer and union safety professionals were quick to conclude that the rule had limited effect on most construction employers' current practices. However, a month later, the rule does pose challenges and creates confusion for some employers.

Regardless of questions as to who must pay for PPE, the employer must never lose sight of their obligation to constantly evaluate the ever-changing construction workplace and ensure that employees utilize proper PPE. Employers under collective bargaining agreements should address PPE issues when contracts expire prior to May 15, 2008, and investigate mid-term bargaining for agreements which may not expire prior to May 15, 2008.

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