OSHA May Soon Start Flexing Its Muscle

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Employers Should Prepare Now for Stricter Occupational Safety and Health Administration Enforcement.

Industry, beware: A tougher Occupational Safety and Health Administration has stepped to the forefront. After years of less stringent, cooperative enforcement, the pendulum is swinging back toward more vigorous enforcement of OSHA standards, thanks to a chorus of calls from the media, labor unions, academia and politicians.

As most employers know, the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 requires every employer to furnish a safe place of employment and to comply with all applicable workplace safety standards. The term "employer" is defined broadly under the act to mean any person who employs people engaged in business "affecting commerce." OSHA has mandated specific standards that apply to employers in construction, manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, utilities and transportation.

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