



## **Safely and legally managing your workers wherever they are: Tips for off-site employee safety**

Insights

1.20.14

Construction employers have made progress in managing individual employees and crews at multiemployer sites. Similarly, although mistakes still occur, we've got over 40 years experience complying with OSHA on the shop floor.

Unfortunately, neither setting represents the increasingly common work situation where small groups of employees or individual technicians work on customer sites far from their actual "supervision." Consider these challenges in managing these remote employees and crews:

- Employees operate from their homes or report to supervision at a different location from their reporting site.
- Employees rarely gather together for any type of meeting, let alone regular safety briefings.
- Employees increasingly work alone and, even when working alongside other companies' workers, they remain responsible for means and methods, safety, and often even quality assurance. No "supervisors" or safety professionals are present from their employer.
- Often no manager or auditor checks on or approves the work.
- "General industry" has experienced an explosive growth in technology-driven jobs, from linemen to an infinite variety of technicians. Similarly, many healthcare employees work alone or in small crews at patient homes or onsite at hospitals or clinics. "Drivers" may now be "representatives" and perform tasks at the customer's location. New technology requires ever more sophisticated hardware and software and the technicians to maintain it. The variety of jobs is nearly endless.
- OSHA standards, many of which are more than 40 years old, did not anticipate the newer work settings and do not often consider that no supervisor may be present and the employer has no control of the site.
- Many of these employees may not have the tradition of safety developed over time by construction craft workers. They may not view their worksite as hazardous.

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