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Did You Know...

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, workers between the ages of 14 – 19 suffered more than 38,000 work-related injuries and illnesses involving days away from work in 2004?

Resources Available

OSHA states that teen workers are at a higher risk for workplace injuries due to many reasons, including a lack of experience, physical and emotional development characteristics, and a failure to recognize hazards or ask questions.

In an effort to help prevent accidents and reduce the number of work-related injuries and illnesses suffered by minors, OSHA has many resources available for employers, teen workers, and their parents. OSHA's web site provides general information on such topics as sun exposure and heat stress, working with pesticides, and avoiding strains and sprains as well as guidance for specific industries, such as agriculture and restaurants.

In addition, OSHA has developed a multi-year campaign titled "Teen Summer Job Safety." This year, the campaign is focusing on the landscaping industry. A resource kit addressing topics such as the typical hazards found in landscaping jobs and tips for preventing injuries is available on OSHA's web site.

An employer that allows a minor to perform prohibited job duties can be fined or receive a penalty from both the federal and New York State Departments of Labor. If the violation results in a minor's serious injury or death, the penalty can be three times the maximum penalty allowed. A minor who is injured while performing prohibited work receives double the normal workers' compensation award. The employer must pay the additional payment and is not allowed to be insured for this amount.

Avoiding Disaster

Keep your workplace and teen workers safe this summer with the following tips:

- Learn more about OSHA's "Teen Summer Job Safety" campaign at www.osha.gov/SLTC/teenworkers/index.html. There is also extensive information on employing minors in the agricultural industry at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/agriculture/index.html> and in the restaurant industry at <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/youth/restaurant/index.html>. This information is useful even if your organization doesn't employ minors.

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- Make sure your organization's policies and safety program address the work hours and job duty restrictions pertaining to the employment of minors.

- Have your Safety Committee conduct a safety audit of the workplace if one hasn't been done recently.

- Provide safety training to all new employees, especially those under the age of 18.

- Don't allow minors to perform any work that is prohibited by federal or state regulations or where there is the potential for injuries.

- Educate both supervisors and minors on the regulations pertaining to the employment of minors.

- Make sure teen workers are adequately supervised.

- Place warning stickers on all machinery and equipment that minors are not permitted to operate or clean. Stickers are available from the U.S. Department of Labor at www.youthrules.dol.gov.

If you have questions or for more information about the employment of minors, contact AMTEK's Human Resource Hot Line at **1.800.457.8829.**

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