



Continuously evolving safety requirements in the New York construction industry should have building owners on alert to stay within guidelines

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With the projected increase of commercial construction estimated by industry experts to be at 17% for 2014, the need for site safety professionals to ensure that everyone involved in the build-out process is aware of and operating within safety guidelines are important factors. Despite the backlog of demand experienced at the start of the recession, this industry eventually saw demand plummet because of failing businesses and very low household disposable income. However, experts expect that the five years to 2019 will be a period of robust revenue growth for commercial construction companies, mainly due to the economic recovery, according to business economists. Falling vacancy rates mean that businesses will require more office space, while rebounding disposable incomes will raise demand for retail, office, health care, and additional types of revenue increasing buildings.

Projected growth in the construction industry is not limited to the commercial sector, instead economists expect that there will be significant growth throughout. Single family housing will grow 26% in dollars, corresponding to a 24% increase in unit starts, to 785,000, multifamily housing will rise 11% in dollars and 9% in units. Commercial building will increase 17%, a slightly faster pace than the 15% gain that was estimated for 2013. Institutional building will edge up 2%, turning the corner after five years of decline. Public works construction will drop 5%, pulling back after a 3% gain in 2013 that was lifted by several large highway and bridge projects. Electric utility construction will retreat 33%, continuing the 55% correction estimated for 2013 that followed the current dollar high reached in 2012. (McGraw Hill; Engineering News Record)

With this expected growth within the construction industry suggested by economists, managing workplace safety provisions and remaining within compliance can save time and money by avoiding stop work orders, violations and citations. The most significant goal in the construction process is the end product being constructed in a proficient and timely manner; working within compliance of safety guidelines enforces this goal. Safety provisions are updated periodically as new knowledge about site equipment and procedures becomes prevalent, and the importance of following and being aware of such developments is a necessity.

For example, Local Law 148 of 2013 which will be effective March 30th, involves updating and enhancing the Fire Code following the triennial review pursuant to New York City Administrative Code Â§29-104. Local Law 100 of 2013 which will be effective October 1st, relating to hazardous materials installations in areas of special flood hazard. These examples are simply a few of the revisions made to the New York City Fire Code, which is heavily relevant considering the fact that buildings above 20 stories or 250 feet high need certified fire safety professionals, among the other construction site types. These recent developments need to be known and shared on the sites to

protect the employees and staff to manage time and money spent on these projects by avoiding disruption by city and state agencies.

"Total Safety Consulting, the premier professional safety consulting firm in N.Y., works hand in hand with CM firms and building owners to ensure that everyone is aware of the current standards and that the workforce is operating safely, within the confines of all applicable codes," said John Connolly, director of field operations in the company's technical services group. "Environmental health and safety training, safety supplies and safety oversight are all part of the comprehensive services offered to our clients to help them meet safety code compliance."

Employers who are required to keep the OSHA 300 form which is an injury and illness log, must conspicuously post OSHA form 300A, the summary of work related injury and illness information between the dates of February 1st and April 30th. A direct compliance act such as this one could be the reasoning behind citations and potential monetary fines resulting in a loss or revenue to the investor. OSHA requires at 29 CFR 1926.21(b)(2) that, "The employer shall instruct each employee in the recognition and avoidance of unsafe conditions and the regulations applicable to his work environment to control or eliminate any hazards or other exposure to illness or injury."

OSHA requires that the employer is responsible for providing and requiring the wearing of appropriate PPE in all operations where employees are exposed to hazardous conditions. In addition, if a hazard-specific regulation requires that you provide PPE, then you must do so. These items may all seem minuscule in comparison to the projects at hand, but avoidance of these items may result in losses that could have been forsaken if the developments of new provision were enforced and maintained throughout the development period.

TSC companies offer the expertise of skilled and professional site safety veterans and EH&S training, and sister company Site Safety Unlimited (SSU) offers personal protective equipment (PPE). SSU provides the latest in PPE equipment to contractors and firms alike, even traveling to work sites to offer protective wear and accessories including but not limited to fire safety products. TSC is the turnkey solutions provider to the site safety and construction industry of the NYC metro area and beyond, ensuring that all sites we work with have the best advantages by working with the industry's highest qualified safety professionals.

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