



## OSHA

Find it in OSHA



For Workers ▾ For Employers ▾ Law & Regulations ▾ Data & Statistics ▾ Enforcement ▾ Training & Education ▾

News & Publications ▾ English About OSHA A to Z Index Contact Us FAQs What's New

|  
Spanish

OSHA News Release - Table of Contents

# OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor**  
**Office of Public Affairs**

**Region 1**

U.S. Department of Labor | September 1, 2016

BOS 2016-140

**OSHA cites Connecticut diagnostic laboratory for inadequately protecting  
its employees against chemical hazards**

***Quest Diagnostics Corp.'s Ameripath faces \$152K in fines for 17 violations***

**BRIDGEPORT, Conn.** - Concerned because they were experiencing sore throats, headaches and difficulty with breathing, employees of Quest Diagnostic Corp.'s Ameripath diagnostic laboratory in Shelton filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration. The agency's Bridgeport Area Office began an inspection on March 6, 2016.

The inspection identified violations of OSHA's laboratory safety standard, which requires employers to protect their employees against the effects of hazardous chemicals used in laboratories. Safeguards include a complete and effective chemical hygiene plan stating the employer's policies, procedures and responsibilities for protecting employees.

OSHA found that the Shelton laboratory did not:

- Provide each laboratory employee who displayed signs and symptoms of exposure to hazardous chemicals the opportunity for an appropriate medical examination.
- Inform each laboratory employee of the signs and symptoms of exposure to acetic acid, alcohols, formaldehyde, xylene and other chemicals used in the laboratory.
- Train laboratory employees on how to detect the presence or release of hazardous chemicals.
- Conduct a hazard assessment to determine what type of personal protective equipment laboratory employees would need and use.
- Inform employees of the location and availability of the laboratory's chemical hygiene plan and provide them training about the plan.
- Implement each section of the chemical hygiene plan for laboratory employees exposed to health hazards associated with xylene, acetic acids, alcohols and formaldehyde.
- Ensure that the plan contained procedures for the safe separation and removal of incompatible chemical waste and included procedures to ensure proper and adequate performance of protective equipment.
- Provide laboratory employees with, or post, the results of chemical exposure monitoring and sampling.

"A laboratory chemical hygiene plan is not a paper exercise. It's a continuous ongoing process that is key to preventing employees from being sickened by the hazardous chemicals with which they work. Our inspection found several serious deficiencies concerning the Shelton laboratory. For the safety and health of its employees, Quest must ensure that correct and effective safeguards are in place and in use at all its laboratories," said Robert Kowalski, OSHA's area director in Bridgeport.

The inspection also determined that the Shelton laboratory failed to:

- Prevent construction workers working in the lab from having contact with xylene, acetic acid and alcohols and monitor or evaluate them for exposure to formaldehyde.
- Post a summary of the laboratory's work-related illnesses or injuries for calendar year 2015.
- Remove plastic covers from sprinkler heads and carbon monoxide detectors in newly renovated sections of the laboratory.

As a result of all these conditions, OSHA cited Quest Diagnostics for 15 serious and two other than serious violations of workplace safety standards. Proposed penalties total \$152,435. The citations can be viewed [here](#).

To ask questions, obtain compliance assistance, file a complaint, or report amputations, eye loss, workplace hospitalizations, fatalities or situations posing imminent danger to workers, the public should call OSHA's toll-free hotline at 800-321-OSHA (6742) or OSHA's Bridgeport Area Office at 203-579-5581.

# # #

**Media Contact:**

Ted Fitzgerald, 617-565-2075, fitzgerald.edmund@dol.gov  
James C. Lally, 617-565-2074, lally.james.c@dol.gov

Release Number: 16-1783-BOS

U.S. Department of Labor news materials are accessible at <http://www.dol.gov>. The department's Reasonable Accommodation Resource Center converts departmental information and documents into alternative formats, which include Braille and large print. For alternative format requests, please contact the department at (202) 693-7828 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (federal relay).

[OSHA News Release - Table of Contents](#)

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Occupational Safety and Health Administration  
200 Constitution Ave., NW,  
Washington, DC 20210  
☎ 800-321-6742 (OSHA)  
TTY  
[www.OSHA.gov](http://www.OSHA.gov)

**FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

White House  
Affordable Care Act  
Disaster Recovery Assistance  
USA.gov  
Disability.gov  
Plain Writing Act  
Recovery Act  
No Fear Act  
U.S. Office of Special Counsel

**OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH**

Frequently Asked Questions  
A - Z Index  
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)  
Read the OSHA Newsletter  
Subscribe to the OSHA Newsletter  
OSHA Publications  
Office of Inspector General

**ABOUT THE SITE**

Freedom of Information Act (FIOA)  
Privacy & Security Statement  
Disclaimers  
Important Web Site Notices  
Plug-ins Used by DOL  
RSS Feeds from DOL  
Accessibility Statement