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# Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations: Occupational Safety and Health Administration Renews National Emphasis Program

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The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”) announced on September 1st that it is renewing its National Emphasis Program (“NEP”) on Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations.

OSHA states in support of renewing the NEP that warehousing and distribution center operations continue to be a major focus because employees in the industry more than doubled between December 2015 and 2025.

Injury and illness rates in warehousing, distribution, courier, and related industries are stated to remain above the national average. Bureau of Labor Statistics data from 2020-2024 indicates that general warehousing and storage operations had an average recordable injury and illness rate of 5.2 cases per 100 full-time workers and Days Away Restricted or Transferred (DART) rate of 4.4. National averages for all private industries are stated to have been 2.6 and 1.6 respectively.

The NEP on Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations was first established in July 2023. The updated NEP will remain in effect for five years.

OSHA enforcement resources are directed by the NEP toward warehousing and distribution centers, postal processing and distribution centers, parcel delivery/courier services, local delivery operations, and certain other warehousing industries.

The NEP does not create new regulatory requirements but instead provides OSHA with procedures for conducting inspections and enforcing existing OSHA standards at facilities within the covered industries.

The NEP renewal states that OSHA has identified several common hazards that may receive particular attention which include:

- Powered industrial vehicles and forklift operations;
- Material handling and storage;
- Walking-working surfaces;
- Means of egress;
- Heat-related hazards;
- Ergonomic hazards; and
- Fire protection.

A copy of the NEP can be found [here](#).

