



Point

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Raising The Standard



This newsletter is to inform you of recent changes & trends regarding health and safety.

The Turning Point is a monthly newsletter covering topics from various industries and sectors. The Turning Point will respond to your inquiries and inform you of current services and updates regarding

Raising the Standard Consulting Inc.



MAKE 2026 THE YEAR YOU TRULY PROTECT YOUR COMPANY AND EMPLOYEES

2026 can be the year you truly protect your company by making safety a proactive priority. By ensuring every employee is properly trained, knowledgeable, and supported by strong safety measures, you create a culture where prevention comes first. Full compliance, clear procedures, and consistent training reduce risk before incidents occur—because safety doesn't start after an accident happens, it starts with the practices you put in place today to prevent one.

Raising the Standard Consulting helps you achieve safety and compliance by providing expert training, hands-on consulting, and tailored solutions that fit your operations. We partner with your team to strengthen knowledge, improve processes, and ensure all requirements are met—so safety is built into everyday work, not treated as an afterthought.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATES & OSHA in 2026



CONSTRUCTION UPDATES AND OSHA IN 2026: SAFETY, COMPLIANCE, AND INDUSTRY TRENDS

The construction industry is entering 2026 facing a mix of opportunity, regulation, and transformation. From major infrastructure investments and labor shortages to evolving safety expectations, contractors can no longer afford to treat compliance as an afterthought. At the center of this shift is OSHA, whose 2026 priorities are reshaping how construction projects are planned, staffed, and executed.

Understanding the latest construction updates and OSHA trends for 2026 is critical for staying compliant, avoiding costly penalties, and protecting workers on increasingly complex job sites.

Construction Industry Updates Heading Into 2026

1. Infrastructure and Commercial Growth Continues

Public infrastructure spending and private-sector development remain strong entering 2026. Transportation projects, data centers, renewable energy facilities,

and advanced manufacturing plants are driving demand for skilled construction labor.

Key impacts:

- Larger, multi-employer job sites
- Longer project timelines
- Increased OSHA scrutiny on high-risk projects

2. Technology Is Now Central to Jobsite Safety

By 2026, technology is no longer optional in construction. Contractors are increasingly relying on digital tools to manage safety, compliance, and productivity.

Common jobsite technologies include:

- Drones for inspections and hazard identification
- Wearable devices to monitor fatigue and heat exposure
- Digital safety logs and incident reporting systems

These tools are also changing how OSHA evaluates compliance, with more emphasis on documented, proactive safety programs.

3. Labor Shortages Increase Safety Risks

The ongoing shortage of skilled construction workers means more new hires and less experienced labor on job sites. OSHA has made it clear that lack of training is not an excuse for violations, placing responsibility squarely on employers.

Expect increased focus on:

- Comprehensive onboarding safety training
- Language-accessible instruction
- Supervisor accountability

OSHA's Focus Areas in 2026

Enhanced Enforcement and Inspections

OSHA's enforcement strategy in 2026 emphasizes targeted inspections. Rather than random visits, inspectors are prioritizing high-risk construction activities such as:

- Falls from height
- Trenching and excavation
- Crane and heavy equipment operations

Repeat offenders and contractors with prior violations are especially vulnerable.

Fall Protection Remains the Top Priority

Falls continue to be the leading cause of fatalities in construction. In 2026, OSHA is expanding enforcement related to:

- Improper guardrail systems
- Misuse of personal fall arrest systems
- Inadequate training for elevated work

Contractors should expect stricter interpretations and fewer warnings before citations.

Heat Illness and Worker Health Standards

As extreme heat events become more common, OSHA is increasing oversight around heat-related illnesses.

Construction employers are expected to implement:

- Heat exposure monitoring
- Mandatory rest and hydration breaks
- Heat illness prevention plans

Failure to address environmental hazards may result in citations under OSHA's General Duty Clause.

Documentation and Recordkeeping Requirements

In 2026, OSHA inspections are increasingly document-driven. Inspectors now expect:

- Digital access to safety plans
- Up-to-date training records
- Incident and near-miss documentation

Poor recordkeeping alone can trigger violations—even if no accident has occurred.

What Construction Employers Should Do Now

To prepare for OSHA expectations in 2026, contractors should:

- Audit current safety programs and update written policies
- Invest in supervisor safety leadership training
- Leverage technology to track compliance and incidents
- Partner with safety consultants or workforce specialists
- Stay informed on OSHA guidance and enforcement trends

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WHY SAFETY CAN'T BE AN AFTERTHOUGHT AFTER AN ACQUISITION

When the acquired company joined an organization where Safety First is a core value, everything changed, not because of a memo, but because of a mindset. Safety stopped being a checklist and became a culture. And that culture rests on two pillars: awareness and action.

If anyone asks why safety matters after an acquisition, the answer is clear. It works. It saves lives. It delivers results.

If your safety plan relies on luck, you are already losing. Luck is great for lottery tickets, but not for keeping people alive.

I was in those meetings after the acquisition where many of our managers leaned back and said, "Why do we have to do all this safety stuff now? We didn't have to before. And honestly, I got it. Change feels like someone just dumped a 300-page manual on your desk and said, "Read this or else."

But here is the truth: the fact that you did not have to do it before is not proof you

were doing it right, it is proof you were lucky. And luck runs out.

I was there to see leadership make or break this process. It took a lot of prodding to get supervisors, managers, and executives to show up at safety meetings – not just to nod and leave, but to actually participate. It sent a message: This matters. When they model safe behaviors (yes, even wearing the hi-viz safety vest), it changes the game.

At one of the new company's safety retreats, our new executive said something that stuck with me: "If your safety plan is based on luck, you will eventually fail." That is not just a slogan; it is the truth.

Safety is not just about avoiding fines or filling out OSHA logs. It is about making sure everyone comes to work safe, works safely, and goes home with all their fingers and toes. It is about creating a culture where safety

is taken seriously. That does not happen overnight or with a memo; it happens when leadership sets the tone and employees buy in.

But leadership cannot do it alone. Employees drive the culture. You cannot enforce safety with a clipboard. You have to make it something people live every day. That means empowering folks to speak up, report hazards, and hold each other accountable; and yes, sometimes that means calling out your friends for doing something unsafe. Awkward? Sure. Necessary? Absolutely.

A company that once treated safety like a buzzword now faced a reality check; this is where HOP flipped the script. Instead of hearing, "Why is the new company forcing us to do things that slows production and don't really change anything?" HOP responds with benefits, not burdens. It is not about drowning people in rules for the sake of compliance; it is about building smarter systems that make work safer, smoother, and a whole lot less stressful.

HOP says, "Look, mistakes happen. People aren't robots." And that is the point. Rather than punishing errors, HOP focuses on designing processes that anticipate them and prevent them from becoming disasters. The payoff? Fewer accidents, less finger-pointing, and a culture where employees feel trusted instead of terrified. As another executive said: "If you reward good behavior, people repeat it. If you punish everything, you create a mess."

And here is the bigger picture: when a company that barely paid attention to safety gets acquired by one where safety is a core value, it might feel overwhelming at first; however, it is probably the best thing that

could have happened. Why? Because they are moving from a culture that gambles with luck to one that invests in people. They are joining an organization that does not just want compliance; it wants commitment. That is not punishment – it is called progress.

Does this take effort? Absolutely. You need clear communication about why safety matters. You need training that explains the "why," not just the "what." You need to celebrate wins and recognize people who live the values. And you need to keep improving, because culture isn't built in a day. It is built in a thousand small moments where people choose to do the right thing, and that means even when no one is watching.

So, back to that question: "Why do we have to do all this safety stuff now?" Because now, you are part of a company that does not gamble with lives. Because safety is not just a rulebook, it is who you are. And because the payoff is worth it: fewer accidents, higher morale, better retention, and a stronger, more resilient organization; and who knows, you might just get more production out of a workforce that feels more secure in their new surroundings.

When the acquired company joined an organization where Safety First is a core value, everything changed, not because of a memo, but because of a mindset. Safety stopped being a checklist and became a culture.

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TOTAL WORKER HEALTH RESOURCES FROM AIHA

Total Worker Health, a strategy from NIOSH, is defined as policies, programs, and practices that integrate protection from work-related safety and health hazards with promotion of injury and illness-prevention efforts to advance worker well-being.

Many companies are pursuing this strategy and research is always being added to help employers.

For example, the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) offers an extensive library of resources developed by AIHA Volunteer Committees in their areas of specialty on various topics of interest.

"Well-being is comprised of several interconnected dimensions, including physical and mental health as well as general safety. Well-being is impacted through a complex interaction of factors, including exposure to environmental agents, psychosocial and economic stressors, personal behaviors, and

individual genomics. Advancements in science and technology are facilitating the more robust collection and integration of these factors to inform health-related interventions and decision-making in the workplace," the AIHA noted.

The following are some resources:

- AIHA Guidance on Total Worker Health® and Issues Relevant to Advancing Worker Well-Being Guidance Document (Ver.2 08/2025)
- Psychosocial Hazard Talking Points for the OEHS Professional
- Sensors Talking Points for the OEHS Professional
- Ergonomics Talking Points for the OEHS Professional
- TWH Talking Points for the OEHS Professional

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MAN KILLED IN TRENCH COLLAPSE AT HUNTSVILLE WORKSITE

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (WHNT) — A man has died after becoming trapped in a trench collapse at a construction site in Huntsville, according to officials with Huntsville Emergency Medical Services Inc. (HEMSI).

HEMSI spokesperson Don Webster said first responders were called to the scene at approximately 2:47 p.m. Tuesday. The incident occurred at a construction site near the intersection of Old Jim Williams Road and Martin Road, where crews were working on a large drainage project.

Huntsville Fire and Rescue crews spent several hours at the site attempting to extricate the man from the collapsed trench. The Huntsville Police Department and the Madison County Sheriff's Office also responded and assisted with operations at the scene.

Despite rescue efforts, authorities later confirmed the man died as a result of the collapse. Investigators say the incident remains under review as officials work to determine the exact circumstances surrounding the failure.

Madison County Sheriff's Office spokesperson Brent Patterson said the investigation is still in its preliminary stages and provided details about what occurred at the site.

"There was a large drainage ditch that was being dug, and at which time this individual was in the ditch, unfortunately, the walls caved in, causing him to, to pass away," Patterson said.

Officials have not released the victim's identity. Patterson said the sheriff's office will wait to notify the man's family before sharing his name publicly.

Construction-related trench collapses are considered among the most dangerous hazards on job sites, often requiring specialized rescue operations due to unstable soil conditions. Authorities did not immediately indicate whether the site was part of a public or private construction project.

Originally reported by Taylor Mitchell, Kayla Smith in WHNT.

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Raising The Standard

RTS

CONSULTING INC.

RTS OSHA 30hr Construction

OSHA mandates that all employees receive training to identify workplace hazards, understand safety regulations, and apply safe work practices. This 30-hour course is tailored for construction professionals responsible for ensuring workplace safety, including: Construction Foremen and Superintendents: Leaders managing day-to-day site operations. Engineers and Inspectors: Professionals overseeing technical and compliance aspects. Other Safety Leaders: Construction workers with responsibilities for maintaining a safe environment. Participants will gain comprehensive knowledge of hazard recognition, safety regulations, and effective practices to create and sustain a safe and compliant work environment.

RTS OSHA 30hr General Industry

This 30-hour training course is designed for safety directors, foremen, supervisors, managers, and other general work personnel responsible for ensuring a safe work environment. Participants will receive: OSHA Compliance Training: In-depth coverage of OSHA regulations relevant to the general industry. Practical Application: Guidance on implementing OSHA standards effectively within the workplace. Safety Leadership: Tools and strategies to maintain safety and compliance at the job site. This course provides essential knowledge for those in charge of workplace safety, equipping them with the skills needed to meet OSHA requirements and promote a culture of safety.

For more information please contact Hailey Mesner at hmesner@rtsconsulting.com

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TRAINING SERVICES



Raising the Standard Consulting will raise the standard of EH&S in your organization through the development of new and innovative strategies and programs driven by your own individual needs.

We want to build relationships with our clients to help create lasting change in their organizations. Contact us today to build a safer tomorrow.

With Aloha,

Stanford Brown, B.Sc., CSP, CSHP, CRSP, CHSC, Senior
Consultant, President & CEO