



"The Public Interest"

Health/Safety and Environmental Issues

the PASMA way to shared knowledge

Public Agency Safety Management Association

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Front Page:

Welcome, Year of the Snake Pg. 1-2

Legal Case For JSA/JHA Pg. 3-4

Hazard Categories Pg. 4

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**"LIFE IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT"
PASMA'S EXISTENCE AND SUCCESS
DEPENDS ON YOU - VOLUNTEER
YOUR TIME.**



Editorial Message

**According to the Chinese New Year, 2025
is the year of the Wood Snake.**

As we prepare to welcome 2025, the Chinese Zodiac introduces us to the Year of the Wood Snake. Known for its transformative energy, intellectual depth, and mysterious charm, this year promises growth, introspection, and steady

progress.

The Snake: An Overview of Its Symbolism

The Snake, the sixth sign in the Chinese Zodiac, is synonymous with wisdom, elegance, and intuition. People born in Snake years (e.g., 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013) are often perceived as intelligent, resourceful, and graceful. They thrive on analyzing situations and making calculated moves, embodying a quiet but potent strength.

Key Characteristics of the Snake:

- Positive Traits: Strategic, insightful, charismatic, resourceful, and calm under pressure.
- Negative Traits: Can be secretive, overly cautious, or prone to overthinking.

The Element of Wood in 2025

Each Chinese Zodiac year is influenced by one of the five elements: Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water. 2025 is governed by Wood, which softens the Snake's typically reserved nature, infusing it with creativity, compassion, and a thirst for growth.

What Wood Brings to the Snake:

- Flexibility and Adaptability: Wood adds an element of growth and expansion, encouraging adaptability in challenges.
- Creative Problem-Solving: This year is ideal for innovation, whether in personal projects, professional goals, or relationships.
- Focus on Harmony: Wood Snake years emphasize fostering better relationships and improving communication skills.

Themes of the Year of the Wood Snake

2025 is a year of reflection, recalibration, and renewal, offering a mix of calm energy and intellectual challenges. The Snake's intuitive wisdom, paired with the nurturing Wood element, creates a time to refine your long-term goals and strengthen personal and professional relationships.

Major Themes:

- Transformation: A year for letting go of what no longer serves you and embracing meaningful change.
- Strategic Growth: Success will favor those who plan meticulously and act wisely.
- Deepening Connections: Introspection and emotional intelligence will help navigate relationships, promoting empathy and understanding.



2025 PASMA Challenge

My personal challenge to **ALL** our members, think **SMART**, act **WISELY** but mostly look for **PROGRESS**, not perfection. Success means continued and sustained efforts. Be well, my friends.

With that in mind, consider four workplace safety resolutions to prioritize in the coming year:

1. Commit to Measurable Safety Goals

We've all made a new year's resolution only to feel our commitment faltering three weeks into January. This year let's increase our chances of success by setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (**SMART**) safety goals.

Instead of simply aiming to reduce accidents, commit to "reducing slips, trips, and falls by 50% by Q3 2025". Then develop tactics like purchasing slip-resistant mats and teaching staff to walk like a penguin. This approach allows you to take specific actions, track progress and celebrate successes.

2. Find the Right Fit for Personal Protective Equipment

Proper PPE is crucial, but ensuring it fits correctly is equally important. This is especially vital for women and individuals with unique anatomical needs. Ill-fitting PPE can compromise safety and lead to preventable injuries.

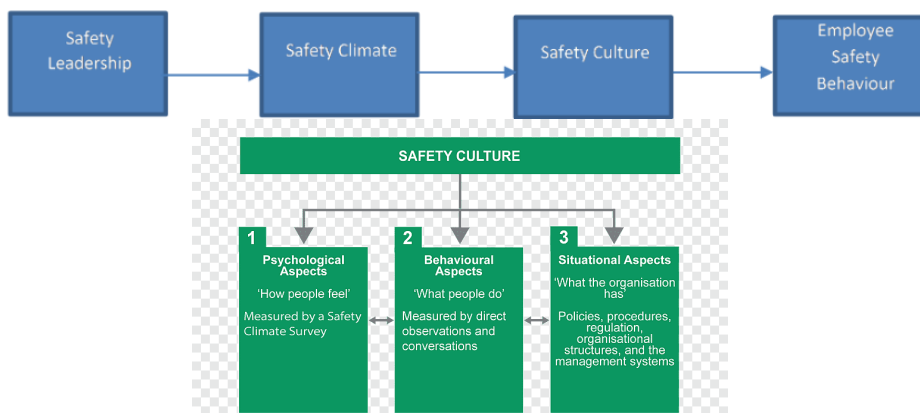
Start the year by conducting a **job hazard analysis** to identify where PPE is needed, then implement a PPE assessment plan to guarantee every employee has equipment that fits properly and provides optimal protection. After all, evidence thereof **is required in T8CCR 3380(f)(1&2)**

3. Identify Trends to Stay Ahead of the Curve

Don't wait for an incident to occur before conducting safety training. Stay informed about industry best practices and emerging trends like [Cal](#) and [Fed/OSHA's top ten](#) most cited violations. Consider using AI tools to analyze your accident data and develop targeted training programs. That meet the definition of "EFFECTIVE"

4. First create and foster a CLIMATE for Safety

Encourage open communication between management and employees regarding safety concerns. Regularly inspect your workplace, involve employees in safety investigations, and empower them to report hazards without fear of reprisal. After all the ultimate responsibility for safety belongs to each person and employer. (see OSHA General Duty Clause [5\(b\)](#) and Cal/Labor Code Section [6406 and 6407](#))
By embracing these resolutions, you'll not only make 2025 the safest year yet but also manage your workers' comp costs.





Implementing SMART GOALS in the workplace

Integrating **SMART** principles into your organization’s safety program involves a structured approach. Here are some practical steps to get started:

Step 1: Conduct a Safety Assessment

Begin by evaluating current safety practices and identifying common hazards in the workplace. Involve workers in this process, as they can provide valuable insights into potential risks and improvement areas.

Step 2: Set SMART Goals

Based on the safety assessment, collaborate with team members to establish SMART goals. Ensure that these goals are communicated clearly across the organization, fostering a shared understanding and ownership of safety priorities.

Step 3: Develop an Action Plan

Create a detailed action plan outlining the steps needed to achieve the SMART goals. This plan should include timelines, responsible parties, and necessary resources. Encourage worker involvement to promote buy-in and accountability.

Step 4: Monitor and Measure Progress

Regularly review progress against the established objectives. Use tools such as safety audits, incident reports, and worker feedback to assess the effectiveness of safety initiatives. If goals are not being met, analyze the reasons and adjust strategies as necessary.

Step 5: Foster a Safety Culture through a Conducive Safety Climate

Encourage a workplace culture that prioritizes safety. Recognize and reward workers who contribute to safety initiatives and create open lines of communication for discussing safety concerns. A strong safety culture reinforces the importance of adhering to established protocols and can lead to sustained improvements over time.

The Benefits of SMART Goals

Adopting SMART principles can yield numerous benefits for organizations, including:

- Improved Safety Performance: By setting clear, measurable goals, organizations can focus their efforts on reducing workplace injuries and enhancing safety.
- Increased Engagement: Involving the workforce in safety initiatives fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, leading to greater participation in safety programs.
- Enhanced Compliance: Adhering to SMART principles can help organizations meet OSHA regulations more effectively, reducing the risk of penalties and legal issues.
- Positive Workplace Culture: Prioritizing safety contributes to a healthier work environment, promoting well-being and job satisfaction.

Closing Remarks

SMART principles provide a framework for organizations seeking to enhance workplace safety. By setting objectives that are specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time-oriented, organizations, even the public sector can create a safer work environment that benefits both workers and the organization. Implementing these principles not only **fulfills regulatory obligations** but also fosters a culture of safety that can lead to long-term success. Lastly, in meeting the challenges of 2025, consider implementing, promoting and signing a safety and health pledge for both managers and employees. There are lots of examples on the open web.

Cal/OSHA "What's New" Archive – The year 2024 in Review and the opportunity to Learn from the mistakes of others. See URL https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/dosh_archive.html

2024

December 2024	
December 19, 2024	Standards Board Votes to Adopt Permanent Standard Protecting Workers from Silica Hazards
December 17, 2024	Cal/OSHA cites Harbor Animal Services Center \$563,250 for willful serious accident-related violations after worker mauled
December 12, 2024	Cal/OSHA issues \$276,425 citation for willful-serious heat violations
October 30, 2024	Translation app is helping Cal/OSHA connect with workers
August 27, 2024	Cal/OSHA cites nine employers in Sun Valley for silica health and safety violations
August 22, 2024	Cal/OSHA bolsters staff to investigate the most egregious violations, referring them for criminal prosecution
July 24, 2024	California indoor heat protections approved and go into effect
February 22, 2024	Cal/OSHA Increases Civil Penalty Amounts for 2024

2025 workplace safety and compliance continue to take center stage. With Cal/OSHA preparing to implement key updates to its standards and regulations, it's essential for businesses and organization's S&H professionals to stay informed so they can comply with these new requirements.

New safety legislation and rulemaking updates to pay attention to:

- **Assembly Bill 1976** will require California employer to **stock** naloxone hydrochloride (Narcan) or other FDA-approved opioid antagonist and usage instructions in workplace first aid supplies. **Cal/OSHA must propose a regulation by December 1, 2027** and adopt the standard by December 1, 2028.
- **Assembly Bill 2975** directs the Cal/OSHA Standards Board by March 1, 2027 to incorporate this weapons screening requirement at designated entrances of hospitals.
- **Senate Bill 1350** hopes to expand workplace protection under Cal/OSHA to household domestic workers performing work on a permanent or temporary basis. This bill will go into effect July 1, 2025.
- **Assembly Bill 3258** will expand the current process safety management standards for refineries, chemical plants, and certain other manufacturing facilities to also apply to biofuel, asphalt, and petrochemical feedstock facilities too. Cal/OSHA must propose and adopt a regulation by January 1, 2026.

Other safety updates to be aware of in 2025:

- **Cal/OSHA Standards Board passes updated regulation on Feb 15, 2024 for LEAD.** The regulation will be in effective on January 1, 2025 and has revised many aspects of the previous regulation including the Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL) reducing from 50 mg/m³ to 10 mg/m³ over an 8-hour TWA and the Action Level (AL) lowering from 30 mg/m³ to 2 mg/m³

- The Cal/OSHA Standards Board has developed a proposed amendment to **Section 5204 Silica in General Industry** which will primarily apply to countertop manufacturing, artificial stone manufacturing, and similar types of companies. This proposed regulation is still pending approval from the board but will most likely continue to see movement in 2025.
- The Division of Workers’ Compensation (DWC) has posted an updated DWC Form 7 (Notice to Employees—Injuries Caused By Work) with additional information for workers. This new form will be effective January 1, 2025.
- Cal/OSHA Standards Board has voted to align its residential construction and roofing fall protection trigger to meet Fed/OSHA’s standard of 6 feet. The proposed revision has been sent to the Office of Administrative Law for review and approval. An effective date is undetermined at this time.
- The COVID-19 Non-Emergency Regulation is coming to an end on February 3, 2025. There are currently no information on whether Cal/OSHA intends to adopt this non-emergency regulation as a permanent regulation or will let it expire without any additional requirements.
- Assembly Bill 3278 will remove the requirement for commercial vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of under 26,001 lbs. from California’s mandatory 90-day vehicle inspection program (BIT Inspection). All commercial vehicles, under 26,001 GVWR will be now subject to the federal annual inspection requirements in Part 396 of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSRs). Commercial Vehicles at or above 26,001 GVWR will still be required to conduct the 90-day inspection. This will be effective on January 1, 2025.

OSHA Certification Requirements for Live Entertainment Events (AB 2738)

Vendors involved in live entertainment event set-ups, operations, and teardowns must meet strict training and certification standards:

- *Employee Training:* Employees must complete Cal/OSHA-10, OSHA-10/General Entertainment Safety, or industry-specific OSHA-10 training.
- *Department Heads or Vendor Certification:* Department heads must complete Cal/OSHA-30, OSHA-30/General Entertainment Safety, or equivalent training, or vendors must certify in writing that all employees and subcontractors are fully trained.

Contracts between vendors and event venues must also (1) specify the names of employees and subcontractors involved; and (2) provide details of completed training and certifications.

Violations are enforced through citations and civil penalties under Labor Code Section 6317, with appeal rights available under Section 6319. Penalties apply to vendors, venues, and contracting entities, though individual employees are exempt from liability. Alternatively, prosecutors may pursue enforcement by seeking injunctive relief and imposing fines of up to \$500 per violation, bypassing the standard enforcement and appeals process. Courts may award reasonable attorney’s fees to prevailing plaintiffs.

The law remains in effect until Jan. 1, 2029, with ongoing applicability for any actions filed before the repeal date.

CAL/OSHA Indoor Heat Rule

On **July 23, 2024**, Cal/OSHA’s **Indoor Heat Illness Prevention Standard took effect**. The rule applies to most California workplaces where indoor temperatures reach 82°F or higher, requiring employers to take specific measures to protect workers from heat illness.

Covered workplaces include restaurants, warehouses, and manufacturing facilities where indoor temperatures frequently rise. However, the standard does not apply to prisons, local detention and juvenile facilities, telework locations outside employer control, or emergency operations protecting life or property.

Covered employers must implement several key measures to comply. These requirements include, but are not limited to:

- *Heat Illness Prevention Plan:* Establish and maintain a written plan detailing procedures for providing water, cool-down areas, training, and emergency aid.
- *Cool-Down Areas:* Provide easily accessible, open-air, or ventilated areas shielded from heat sources.
- *Drinking Water:* Ensure employees always have access to potable drinking water.
- *Health Monitoring:* Observe employees for signs of heat illness, especially during acclimatization. Employees showing symptoms cannot be ordered back to work until at least five minutes have passed since the last observed symptom.
- *Supervisor Training:* Train supervisors on recognizing and responding to heat illness symptoms, including activating emergency procedures.
- *Reporting Time Pay:* Pay nonexempt employees at least half of their scheduled work hours if excessive heat suspends operations.

The standard includes several exceptions. It does not apply where employees experience incidental heat exposure between 82°F and 95°F for less than 15 minutes in any 60-minute period, excluding vehicles without functional air conditioning. Teleworking employees outside employer-controlled environments and those engaged in emergency operations directly protecting life or property are also exempt.

While many requirements mirror Cal/OSHA's outdoor heat illness standard, the indoor rule introduces additional temperature monitoring obligations. Employers must measure and record the greater of the temperature or heat index when temperatures reach 87°F, or 82°F in high-radiant-heat or restrictive-clothing work environments.

Non-compliance with Cal/OSHA's indoor heat illness regulations may result in significant penalties. Regulatory or general violations carry fines of up to \$15,873 per violation. Willful or repeat violations may cost employers up to \$158,727 per violation. Serious violations may result in fines up to \$25,000 per violation, depending on specific circumstances. Additionally, failure to provide a required cool-down rest period will result in one hour of premium pay at the employee's regular rate for each missed recovery period, as mandated by California Labor Code Section 226.7. Employers should review their workplace heat illness protocols to enhance compliance and avoid costly penalties.

Employee Rights and Responsibilities Poster Requirement (AB 2299)

This new law requires all California employers to post a notice outlining employee rights and responsibilities under existing whistleblower laws. That notice must be in a font larger than 14 point and contain the whistleblower hotline number for the California State Attorney General's office. The California Labor Commissioner has developed a [model notice](#) and employers displaying this notice will be deemed compliant with state posting requirements.

Under existing law, employers must post general workplace notices about whistleblower protections, but no specific notice from the Labor Commissioner is mandated. AB 2299 codifies the requirement for the Labor Commissioner to create a compliant model notice to eliminate uncertainty and ensure consistency in how whistleblower rights are communicated in the workplace.

Next Month: "A safety policy" is **NOT** a "Program"
"Why HR needs to actively engage and support Safety"
"Helpful Hints from Dick"

Be well my friends; talk soon, Ed