

MIOSHA

Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MIOSHA)
Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO)

AGENCY INSTRUCTION

DOCUMENT IDENTIFIER:

MIOSHA-COM-26-1

DATE:

September 11, 2026

SUBJECT: Contact Fatalities – State Emphasis Program (SEP)

- I. Purpose. This instruction establishes a state emphasis program (SEP) to reduce contact fatalities, which covers a wide array of categories, including struck-by, struck against, cave in, caught in or between, and crushed-by.
- II. Scope. This instruction applies to the Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division, the Construction Safety and Health Division (CSHD), the General Industry Safety and Health Division (GISHD), and the Technical Services Division (TSD).
- III. References.
 - A. Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-11-1, [Cross-Citing Hazards](#), as amended.
 - B. Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-13-1, Dual, One-MIOSHA, Intra-Office Assistance, and Transfer of Inspections/Investigations, as amended.
 - C. Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-17-1, [Complaint Processing](#), as amended.
 - D. Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-20-1, Companion and Expanded Inspections, as amended.
 - E. Agency Instruction MIOSHA-SHMS-12-1, MIOSHA Safety and Health Management System (SHMS), as amended.
 - F. Agency Instruction MIOSHA-TRG-04-1, [Training for MIOSHA Personnel](#), as amended.
 - G. Division Instruction CSHD-COM-09-1, [Construction Inspection Targeting](#), as amended.
 - H. Division Instruction CSHD-TRG-09-1, [Training for Construction Safety and Health Division \(CSHD\) Staff](#), as amended.
 - I. Division Instruction GISHD-COM-16-1, [Tree Trimming Operations](#), as amended.
 - J. Division Instruction GISHD-GEN-16-1, Fatality Prevention – Using Michigan Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (MIFACE) Materials, as amended.
 - K. Division Instruction GISHD-TRG-05-1, [Training for General Industry Safety and Health Division \(GISHD\) Staff](#), as amended.
 - L. General Industry Safety and Health Division, [General Industry System for Programmed Inspections](#), April 2024.
 - M. Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act, [MCL 408.1001 et seq., P.A. 154 of 1974](#), as amended.
 - N. MIOSHA Fatality Procedures Manual, as amended.

- O. [MIOSHA Field Operations Manual](#), as amended (FOM).
 - A. [MIOSHA Strategic Plan FY 2024-2028 Summary](#).
- IV. Distribution. MIOSHA Staff; Federal OSHA; S-drive Accessible; MIOSHA Messenger; and Internet Accessible.
- V. Cancellations. None. This is a new instruction.
- VI. Next Review Date. To be reviewed one year from date of issuance.
- VII. Contact. [Augustine Syrov](#), Acting CET Director; [Dan W. Maki](#), CSHD Director; [Adrian Z. Rocskay](#), GISHD Director; and [Samantha Birsan](#), TSD Director
- VIII. Originator. Barton G. Pickelman, Director
- IX. Background. Over the past five years, the number of MIOSHA-covered fatalities due to contact hazards has been steadily increasing, peaking in 2025 with 30 contact fatalities. As of July 26th, there have been 18 contact fatalities in 2026, which is 86 percent of all fatalities. The graph in [Appendix A](#) illustrates the trend during 2021-2025. To counter the increase, this SEP has been established to help reduce the number of contact fatalities.

Addressing contact hazards is not new for MIOSHA. Since its inception, the agency has worked to identify and mitigate those hazards; controlling such hazards is a routine part of the agency's activities. Thus, this SEP is primarily aimed at increasing awareness of these hazards among employers, employees, and the general public. In addition, this SEP will ensure that the agency's enforcement activities are aligned and properly calibrated to the high proportion of fatalities associated with these hazards. This SEP describes efforts that began in 2026 in response to the 2025 spike in contact fatalities, and it outlines initiatives that will be implemented in the next 12 months.

This SEP will support the agency's goal in its 2024-2028 strategic plan to decrease the number of general industry fatalities by 10 percent and decrease the number of construction fatalities by 5 percent over the five-year strategic plan. Fatalities are the most adverse outcome of an uncontrolled safety hazard and preventing them is a priority for MIOSHA, in any year.
- X. Significant Changes. None. This is a new instruction.
- XI. Outreach.
 - A. CET will undertake a comprehensive outreach program to raise awareness of contact fatalities and the safety hazards that lead to them. The program components will include consultation, hazard surveys, training (both on-site at establishments and through the MIOSHA Training Institute), the creation of a webpage for the SEP, and a symposium. Messaging to stakeholders will occur through multiple communication channels such as the MIOSHA News, MIOSHA eNews, and Michigan worker death notifications by GovDelivery. See [Appendix B](#) for the full outreach plan.
 - B. Part of the outreach program will be a symposium hosted by MIOSHA where stakeholders are able to share best practices to lower contact fatalities. The format

for the symposium will be a virtual town hall. Invitees will include MIOSHA Alliance Program, Michigan Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program, MIOSHA Partnership, and Michigan Voluntary Protection Program contacts. The array of programs and materials gathered from the meeting will be made available on the SEP webpage.

XII. Enforcement.

A. Inspection Scheduling.

1. Unprogrammed Activities. The enforcement divisions will continue to assess complaints, referrals, and fatality reports alleging contact hazards to determine if an inspection is warranted. The guidance in Chapter IV of the FOM and the MIOSHA Fatality Procedures Manual will be used to determine whether an inspection will be conducted and the type of inspection to be conducted when a contact hazard is alleged. Procedures for receiving and evaluating complaints are described in Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-17-1, Complaint Processing, as amended.
2. Programmed Inspections.
 - a) CSHD.
 - (1) CSHD will continue to use its current targeting system as described in Agency Instruction CSHD-COM-09-1, Construction Inspection Targeting, as amended, to identify worksites for inspection. The current targeting system uses Dodge Reports and building permits to identify locations for inspections.
 - (2) When scheduling programmed inspections, the safety officer (SO) will give priority to those worksites with greater potential for contact hazards. These worksites include those where large construction equipment is being used (such as site preparation and land clearing, heavy civil construction, demolition, and roadway construction and maintenance) and roadways where workers are close to moving traffic.
 - (3) Per Division Instruction CSHD-COM-09-1, Construction Inspection Targeting, as amended, an SO can conduct an on-site inspection based on the SO identifying contact hazards on construction projects that are viewed while traveling in their work areas. These programmed inspections are referred to as a strategic plan targeting inspections. SOs will follow the inspection priority required by the FOM; otherwise, it is at the discretion of the SO as to when the programmed inspection will be conducted.
 - b) GISHD.

- (1) GISHD will use its General Industry System for Programmed Inspections to generate programmed assignments aimed at identifying contact hazards. Most of the high-hazard industries listed in the General Industry System for Programmed Inspections (e.g., the manufacturing sector) have contact hazards.
 - (2) GISHD will review its list of outstanding programmed inspection assignments to ensure that assignments are available in the industries most affected by contact hazards. The North American Industry Classification System codes include 332, Fabricated Metal Products, and 561, Landscaping Services, which includes tree trimming. If assignments are not available, GISHD will generate assignments for those industries.
3. Self-Initiated Inspections.
 - a) SOs/industrial hygienists (IHs) can self-initiate inspections of employers whenever they observe someone working in a situation with contact hazards that could cause a serious injury or fatality. These observations may occur during the SO/IH's normal workday travel or while enroute to or during other MIOSHA inspections. In this context, self-initiated inspections are those where the SO/IH has no programmed or unprogrammed assignment for the employer or worksite.
 - b) Whenever an inspection is self-initiated under this SEP, the SO/IH shall include a description of the circumstances that prompted the inspection in the case file field narrative.
 - c) CSHD. Per Division Instruction CSHD -COM-09-1, Construction Inspection Targeting, as amended, SOs are expected to stop and conduct an inspection when potential imminent danger conditions are viewed, including those caused by contact hazards. Such conditions include employees working in trenches greater than five feet deep, where there is a high probability of cave-in and there are no protective systems in place to prevent a cave-in and employees working on roadway projects where the lack of traffic control may result in an immediate hazard.

d) GISHD.

- (1) Per Division Instruction GISHD-COM-16-1, Tree Trimming Operations, as amended, SOs are permitted to self-initiate inspections of contact hazards associated with tree trimming operations. The specific contact hazards provided in the instruction are missing or inadequate signs in the road for approaching vehicles of roadside tree-trimming operations ahead; an employee standing under, in the path of, or in close proximity to limb cutting, limb dropping, or tree felling; or a poor limb or tree felling procedure that could cause an employee to be struck by falling limbs or trees.
- (2) To open a self-initiated inspection, the SO/IH must first contact a supervisor to receive authorization. The SO/IH will describe the situation and their observations to the supervisor, and the supervisor will determine whether a self-initiated inspection is warranted.

B. Scope of Inspection.

1. Safety Inspections.

- a) On all programmed safety inspections assigned as comprehensive, the SO will continue to evaluate the establishment or construction worksite for contact hazards. The SO will assess the employer's compliance with applicable MIOSHA rules pertaining to contact hazards.
- b) During unprogrammed activities, the SO will address contact hazards alleged in the complaint, referral, or fatality report. If contact hazards are not alleged in the complaint, referral, or fatality report, and the SO discovers contact hazards, the SO will expand the scope of the inspection to address the contact hazards using the procedures in Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-20-1, Companion and Expanded Inspections, as amended.
- c) Per the FOM, if the inspection scope is partial, the SO must expand the scope to address any potentially serious contact hazards in plain view or otherwise discovered during the inspection process. Potentially serious contact hazards can be uncovered during review of injury and illness logs, review of other documents and written programs, or brought to the attention of the SO by employees, the employee representative, or management representatives. Consistent with Section 29 of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act, and division priorities, the SO/IH shall use professional judgment to determine the necessity for expansion of the inspection scope, based on the additional information gathered.

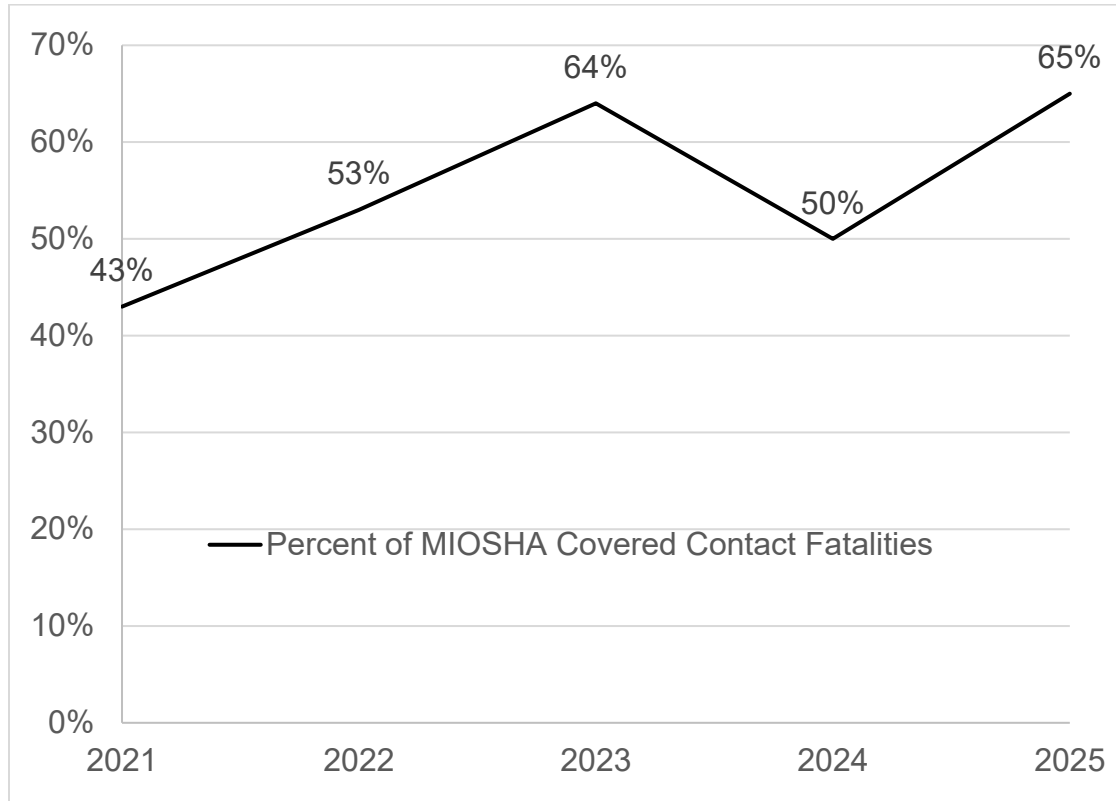
2. Health Inspections. If an IH finds an uncontrolled contact hazard or potential MIOSHA rule violation related to a contact hazard, the IH will contact a safety supervisor for the geographic area to discuss the possibility of an intra-office assistance (IOA) request for the contact hazard in accordance with Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-13-1, Dual, One-MIOSHA, Intra-Office Assistance, and Transfer of Inspections/Investigations, as amended. This discussion can result in any of the following:
 - a) The IH cites a violation of a MIOSHA safety standard with the assistance of the safety supervisor in line with Agency Instruction MIOSHA-COM-11-1, Cross-Citing Hazards, as amended.
 - b) The safety supervisor assigns an SO to initiate a dual inspection at the establishment due to the complexity of the contact hazard, the number of the contact hazards, or the complexity of the applicable rules.
 - c) No additional action is taken if the situation is not deemed a violation or hazard by the safety supervisor.
- C. Prompt Abatement. The SO/IH will encourage the employer to abate any contact hazard promptly while the SO/IH is at the establishment or worksite or soon after. Due to the severity of certain contact hazards, the SO/IH will discourage the employer from waiting until the abatement deadline on a citation to mitigate the hazard.
- D. Resources for Employers.
 1. The SO will provide the employer with information and resources on preventing contact hazards. This can include materials on the webpage for the SEP, MIOSHA fact sheets, sample written programs, and other publications at the MIOSHA website. [Appendix B](#) contains a list of MIOSHA fact sheets related to contact fatalities. The SO can show the employer where to find these materials on the employer representative's own computer or smartphone.
 2. CSHD. The SO will communicate to the employer the severity of contact hazards by sharing their own experience with contact fatalities or other construction contact fatalities in operations similar to the inspected worksite.
 3. GISHD. As described in Division Instruction GISHD-GEN-16-1, Fatality Prevention – Using Michigan Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (MIFACE) Materials, as amended, before conducting each inspection, the SO will identify a MIFACE fatality summary or MIFACE investigation report applicable to the employer's operations. The priority should be given to contact fatalities. During the inspection, the SO will use the MIFACE fatality document to alert the employer to the severity of the contact hazards that can be present in the employer's industry.

4. The IH will provide the employer with information and resources on preventing contact hazards if they are proposing a citation, safety recommendation, or notice of potential hazard for a contact hazard.
 - E. Program Evaluation. Each quarter the enforcement divisions will check to see if a sufficient number of inspections are being conducted where contact hazards are evaluated. If there is not a sufficient number of inspections, program modifications will be made.
- XIII. Staff Training.
- A. Staff in CET, CSHD, and GISHD will receive training on the requirements of the SEP.
 - B. Field staff in CET, CSHD, and GISHD will receive refresher training on identifying and controlling contact hazards. The training will cover trends in contact fatalities, descriptions of recent contact fatalities, applicable MIOSHA standards and rules, questions to ask employers, questions to ask employees, employer documents to review, and locations to visit within a worksite.
 - C. Field staff in CET, CSHD, and GISHD will continue to receive training on contact hazards during new employee training and ongoing on-the-job training as indicated in Agency Instruction MIOSHA-TRG-04-1, Training for MIOSHA Personnel, as amended; Division Instruction CSHD-TRG-09-1, Training for Construction Safety and Health Division (CSHD) Staff, as amended; and Division Instruction GISHD-TRG-05-1, Training for General Industry Safety and Health Division (GISHD) Staff, as amended.
- XIV. Safety and Health of MIOSHA Staff.
- A. The SO/IH must never expose themselves to a safety or health hazard while conducting an inspection for a contact hazard or attempting to start a self-initiated inspection of a contact hazard. The safety and health of the SO/IH is the first and primary duty of an SO/IH.
 - B. The SO/IH will keep their eyes on the road when driving. If they see a potential-struck by hazard, they will pull off the road and observe and take photos and videos from a safe location. The same precautions will be taken if a contact hazard is noted during an inspection.
 - C. The SO/IH must comply with all safety and health guidance and requirements developed in Agency Instruction MIOSHA-SHMS-12-1, MIOSHA Safety and Health Management System (SHMS), as amended. This includes adhering to MIOSHA regulations, best practices for safety and health, and the safety and health program of the visited establishment and worksite. The SO/IH will contact their supervisor if they are unable to follow any safety and health guidance, if there are conflicts between the various guidance, the SO/IH does not have the required personal protective equipment, or if following any guidance is infeasible.

XV. Database Coding.

- A. Occupational Safety and Health Administration Information System (OIS).
 - 1. All enforcement inspections conducted under this SEP shall be coded as “CONTACT” in the State Emphasis Program field on the Inspection tab in the Inspection Data section.
 - 2. In enforcement, for all programmed inspections initiated using the targeting methods under this SEP, code “CONTACT” in the Primary Emphasis Program field on the Inspection tab in the Inspection Data section.
- B. Training and Consultation (T&C) Database. Whenever a consultation request/visit is made related to this SEP, the code “CONTACT” shall be recorded in the appropriate field selected on the Consultation request/visit forms in the T&C database.

APPENDIX A
MIOSHA-Covered Contact Fatalities, 2021 – 2025



APPENDIX B

Outreach Plan

Name of Initiative: Preventing Contact Fatalities – Stay Alert for Everyone (SAFE)

Initiative Liaison: Dave Magno **Email:** MagnoD@michigan.gov **Telephone:** 906-251-8232

Date Submitted: June 22, 2026

Check all that Apply: ☐ New/Revised Standard ☐ New Targeted Industry ☒ New Targeted Hazard

Divisions Involved:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ Administration | ☐ Appeals | ☒ CET Division
(Lead) |
| ☒ CSHD | ☒ GISHD | ☒ TSD |

Purpose/Scope:

This plan identifies MIOSHA outreach activities that will be completed for the SEP to educate employers, employees, and the general public in the State of Michigan about the SEP and how to identify and reduce or eliminate worker exposures to contact hazards in general industry and construction that are leading to fatalities. The SEP is aimed broadly because contact hazards are found over many industries, but the SEP also targets specific industries known to have the higher exposures to contact hazards.

1. Policy/Procedure

☒ New or revised MIOSHA policies, procedures, instructions, or interpretations.

2. Staff Training

☒ MIOSHA Staff Training. Staff in CET, CSHD, and GISHD will be trained in their responsibilities under the SEP. Training will be held virtually and recorded for those unable to attend. Additionally, awareness training will be provided for field staff on prevention of contact fatalities.

3. Communication (Check all that apply.)

- ☒ Press Release – Although MIOSHA does not typically issue a release for new SEPs, a press release will be created to inform the public about the increased incidents and emphasis that MIOSHA has put on controlling hazards associated with contact fatalities.
- ☒ MIOSHA News – CSHD, GISHD and/or the CET Division will author one or more article(s) during the SEP.
- ☒ MIOSHA eNews - This SEP will be highlighted, when published, as an article in the MIOSHA eNews.

☒ MIOSHA Website – Create a webpage for the SEP. The current title of the webpage is SAFE. The webpage topics include hazard recognition, employer resources, request consultation assistance, and training and videos. Materials and links will be reviewed and updated periodically. Employer resources will include:

- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration Construction eTool >> Struck-by](#)
- [Current Fact Sheets](#)
 - Brake Monitors
 - Crane Operator Certification
 - Crane Operator Evaluation Summary
 - Cranes and Derricks – Operator Qualification – Part 10 Questions and Answers
 - Dangers of Pneumatic Nail Guns with Contact Triggers
 - Electroplating - Automated Hoist/Transfer Systems
 - Excavation Training by the Numbers
 - Excavation, Trenching, and Shoring Updates
 - Fork Trucks (Rough Terrain in Construction)
 - Landscape and Horticulture Services Industry
 - Landscape and Horticulture Services Industry - Spanish
 - Lockout/Tagout for Construction
 - Machine Specific Lockout
 - Masonry Wall Bracing
 - Masonry Wall Bracing – Part 2 Questions and Answers
 - Oil and Gas Drilling and Service Operations
 - Pinch Points
 - Press Brakes: Operator Protection
 - Pressurized Piping Systems
 - Quick-Couplers
 - Rough Terrain Fork Trucks
 - Safety Blocks
 - Situational Awareness
 - Standard Hand Signals
 - Steel Erection – Setting Columns Using Proper Rigging
 - Struck-By Vehicles and Equipment
 - Tire Inflation Hazards
 - Traffic Control for Part 58 - Aerial Work Platforms
 - Tree Care Industry
 - Trenching and Excavation Protective Systems
 - Two-Hand Controls
 - Wood Truss Bracing
 - Youth Worker Safety - Landscape and Horticulture Services Industry
 - Youth Worker Safety - Landscape and Horticulture Services Industry - Spanish

- ☒ MIOSHA Messenger – When the SEP is effective, announcement will be made to MIOSHA staff.
- ☒ GovDelivery Message – When the SEP is effective, CET will send an announcement to its subscribers.
- ☒ Social Media – When the SEP is effective, CET will post an announcement on its social media platforms.
- ☒ Participation in Trade Shows and Conferences – Offer Situational Awareness presentation at 2027 Michigan Safety Conference and Upper Michigan Safety Conference. Participate in other trade shows and conferences at which MIOSHA has a booth, shows videos, distributes handouts, offers resources, and/or provides educational seminars. One example is the Michigan Green Industry Association Annual Trade Show & Convention held in March.

4. Educational Resources (Check all that apply.)

- ☒ Promote existing videos available via the MIOSHA video streaming service that are available for internal and external use by any Michigan employer.
- ☒ New reference materials for MIOSHA staff use.
- ☒ New or revised MIOSHA publications/fact sheets. Revise fact sheet on landscaping and horticulture to highlight contact fatalities while operating riding groundskeeping equipment.
- ☒ New or revised MIOSHA presentations/training – Create webinar on preventing contact fatalities using the context of situational awareness.
- ☒ Other – Generate MIOSHA Training Institute (MTI) course for Situational Awareness. Add information on situational awareness for contact hazards into existing courses such as Conveyors: Hidden Hazards, Job Safety Analysis Made Easy, and Construction Standard [Part 13, Mobile Equipment](#) and Work Zone Safety in next MTI review cycle.

5. Outreach Activities (Check all that apply.)

- ☒ Develop, revise, and conduct training program. Offer live webinar on preventing contact fatalities to stakeholders on agency's email distribution list. Post taped webinar on webpage for the SEP.
- ☒ Targeted consultation. CET staff to receive list of companies that received a letter to offer targeted consultations.
- ☒ Alliances/partnerships with impacted public or private organizations.
 - Contact all alliance partners with potential contact exposures.
 - Target co-sponsors and Michigan Voluntary Protection Program companies or alliances (e.g., Homebuilders Association of Michigan, Construction Association of Michigan, Associated General Contractors of Michigan, Detroit Training Center, Walbridge, Holly Construction Company, Marathon Petroleum Corporation, DTE Energy).
 - Seek participation of all stakeholders to participate in symposium.
- ☐ Letters to target industries
- ☒ Targeted enforcement – As specified in SEP.
- ☒ State-wide outdoor advertising.
- ☐ No outreach activities needed.

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September 11, 2026

Contact Fatalities – State Emphasis Program (SEP)

6. Data Generated (Check all that apply.)

☒ Number of training seminars conducted.

☒ Number of employees trained.

☒ Number of consultation activities conducted (and what type).

☒ Number of compliance inspections conducted.

7. Workgroup

☐ Create a workgroup to implement outreach plan.

Anticipated Launch Date: October 1, 2026 **Length of Initiative:** 1 fiscal year