



OSHA Regional News Brief - Region 4

U.S. Department of Labor

Please note: As of January 20, 2017, information in some news releases may be out of date or not reflect current policies.

March 16, 2015

OSHA cites Nova Southeastern University for exposing faculty to high levels of formaldehyde

Employer name: Nova Southeastern University

Inspection site: 3301 College Ave., Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314

Date inspection initiated: The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration initiated the investigation on Nov. 5, 2014, after receiving a complaint about faculty in the anatomy lab being exposed to formaldehyde.

Inspection findings:

OSHA issued 10 serious citations to the employer for not providing [personal protective equipment \(/SLTC/personalprotectiveequipment/\)](/SLTC/personalprotectiveequipment/) to workers exposed to [formaldehyde \(/SLTC/formaldehyde/\)](/SLTC/formaldehyde/); exposing workers to formaldehyde levels beyond the safe exposure limits; not providing a medical surveillance program for workers found to be over the [short term exposure limit \(/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/formaldehyde-factsheet.pdf\)](/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/formaldehyde-factsheet.pdf); not taking corrective action to reduce worker exposure; and not providing eyewash stations in the work area where workers prepared a formaldehyde solution. Additionally, the employer failed to provide the employees who were over the exposure limit their sampling results and neglected to take the necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the exposure. A serious violation occurs when there is substantial probability that death or serious physical harm could result from a hazard about which the employer knew or should have known.

Quote: "Nova Southeastern University failed to protect its workers from the hazards of over-exposure to formaldehyde," said Beatriz Cabrera acting area director of OSHA's Fort Lauderdale Area Office. "Formaldehyde can irritate the eyes and nose, and cause coughing and wheezing. It is a sensitizer, which means that it can cause allergic reactions of the lungs, skin and eyes, such as asthma, rashes and itching. It also has been linked to cancer."

Proposed Penalties: \$50,000

View citations here: <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/osha/OSHA20150332fs.pdf>
(<https://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/osha/OSHA20150332fs.pdf>)

Nova Southeastern University has 15 business days from receipt of its citations and proposed penalties to comply, request a conference with OSHA's area director or contest the findings before the independent [Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission \(http://www.oshrc.gov/index.html\)](http://www.oshrc.gov/index.html). To ask questions, obtain compliance

assistance, file a complaint or report 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 the agency's Fort Lauderdale Area Office at 954-424-0242.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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Washington, DC 20210
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TTY (<http://www.dol.gov/dol/contact/contact-phonecallcenter.htm>)
www.OSHA.gov (/)

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