



## Do our contractors know when to involve OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program? What is the difference between the "consultation" role and the "compliance" role?

Among our industry customers, there has been a long-standing misconception that OSHA involvement means something's not right and we may get in trouble. We have a unique opportunity and responsibility to correct this misconception, and to remind our contractors and their crews that OSHA is here to help our businesses and protect our workers.

OSHA's main mission is that everyone be given the proper equipment and training to work safely and to go home at the end of the day. There are things we can do to educate our own team and our contractors about when an OSHA consultation could be beneficial on the job.

1. Define the difference between the OSHA Consultation and OSHA Compliance Programs, and the rules regarding communication between the two.
  - a. OSHA Consultation personnel are not allowed to discuss contractors or job site consultations with OSHA Compliance personnel.
  - b. OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program should be considered when a contractor has become overwhelmed with trying to understand and implement compliance. OSHA Consultation can help you figure out solutions to any safety concerns you may have.
  - c. The OSHA Compliance Program is designed to ensure that employers are given the tools and training to follow the minimum required safety standards to protect their employees.

### On-Site Consultation



OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program offers no-cost and confidential occupational safety and health services to small- and medium-sized businesses in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and several U.S. territories, with priority given to high-hazard worksites. On-Site Consultation services are separate from enforcement. Consultants from state agencies or universities work with employers to identify workplace hazards, provide advice for compliance with OSHA standards, and assist in establishing and improving safety and health programs.

## 2. Educate contractors.

- a. Contact your local OSHA office to gain an understanding of both the Compliance and Consultation aspects of OSHA.
- b. Raise awareness of NAXSA and its mission of zero deaths in trenches due to cave-in by speaking with both OSHA and contractors. Add everyone to the email list to receive the monthly NAXSA newsletter.

*Annually, on average, responding to requests from small employers looking to create or improve their workplace safety and health programs, OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program conducts over 26,000 visits to small business worksites covering approximately one million workers across the nation.*

The no-cost, confidential safety and health On-Site Consultation Program is completely separate from OSHA's inspection effort. It allows smaller businesses to learn about potential hazards at their workspace, improve programs that are already in place, and even qualify for a one-year exemption from routine OSHA inspections. No citations or penalties will be issued, and your only obligation is to correct serious job safety and health hazards in a timely manner—a commitment that you are expected to make prior to the on-site visit.

Because OSHA consultation is voluntary, an employer must request it. An OSHA consultant will discuss your specific needs and coordinate a visit date. The consultant will study your entire workspace, pointing out safety and health risks (some of which may not have an applicable OSHA standard). After the walk-through, the consultant will review the findings verbally with you before leaving and send you a detailed written report explaining the findings and confirming any agreed-upon abatement measures.

By proactively building a relationship with OSHA, we can eliminate the negative connotation some associate with OSHA's role, and we can partner with OSHA to share knowledge and resources to meet NAXSA's goal of zero deaths and injuries.

Click here to see [OSHA's On-Site Consultation Brochure](#)



**OSHA** Occupational Safety and Health Administration

**ON-SITE CONSULTATION PROGRAM**



*Disclaimer: This document does not provide or address all information, laws, standards, regulations, codes, requirements and safety procedures applicable to excavations, trench protection and shoring options. Readers should comply with all such measures.*