



Ergonomics

Real People Real Problems Real Solutions

Changes from February Draft Ergonomics Proposal

OSHA has made many changes to both its economic analysis and its proposed standard following release of a draft in February and review by small businesses under the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act. The issues raised by small businesses and suggested alternatives are discussed extensively in the preamble and regulatory analysis, and the agency is soliciting further comments on these issues. Following are some of the major changes from the draft proposal.

November 1999 Proposal

Work Restriction Protection—
100% pay and benefits for light duty
90% pay, 100% benefits for time off work
to recover from injury (reduces costs for
employers by \$300 million).

Quick Fix option added.

Cost estimates reviewed and increased in
response to small business concerns
that OSHA's estimates were too low—
annual costs to employers now estimated at
\$4.2 billion—more than two times greater than
earlier estimates.

Problem job fix required for the “same” job in
which a covered musculoskeletal disorder
(MSD) occurred.

Incremental abatement process added (do not
have to eliminate all MSDs to be in compliance).

Training need not be repeated if employees
have already received ergonomics training.

Covered manufacturing and manual handling
jobs identified with examples.

February 1999 Working Draft

Medical Removal Protection—100% pay and
benefits for light duty and time off work to
recover from injury.

Full program required for all covered MSDs.

Preliminary annual costs for comparison
purposes would have been \$1.75 billion.

Problem job fix required for “similar” job to
job in which a covered MSD occurred.

No definition of when employer is in
compliance.

Full training for all current and new
employees in problem jobs.

No examples of manual handling jobs
covered.

