

OSHA Checklist for the Dental Office

The “Occupational Safety and Health Administration” (better known as OSHA) is a federally mandated group of “Standards” to assure the safety and health of American workers. South Carolina is one of 26 states that operate an OSHA-approved plan (basically meaning that the State enforces the standards).

The following checklist does not cover every part of the standards but summarizes requirements that normally apply to dental offices. The details concerning items on the checklist should be covered in OSHA training for the dental office and/or obtained in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (29CFR).

As an employer, it is up to you to obtain and follow the all of the standards that pertain to the dental office. The complete text of OSHA regulations are available (most at no charge) on the OSHA website at www.osha.gov or by calling the OSHA toll-free number at 1-800-321-OSHA(6742).

Bloodborne Pathogen Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030)

This is the most frequently requested and referenced OSHA standard affecting medical and dental offices. Some basic requirements of the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens standard include:

- _____ - A written exposure control plan, that is updated annually.
- _____ - Use of universal precautions
- _____ - Consideration, implementation and use of safer engineered needles and sharps.
- _____ - Use of engineering and work practice controls and appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, face and eye protection, gowns).
- _____ - Hepatitis B vaccine provided to exposed employees at no cost.
- _____ - Medical follow-up in the event of an “exposure incident”
- _____ - Use of labels or color-coding for items such as sharps disposal boxes and containers for regulated waste, contaminated laundry and certain specimens.
- _____ - Employee training. (at time of employment and annually)
- _____ - Proper containment of all regulated waste

Hazard Communication Standard (29 CFR 1910.1200)

The hazard communication standard is sometimes called the “employee right-to-know” standard. It requires employee access to hazard information. The basic requirements include:

- _____ - A written hazard communication program.
- _____ - A list of hazardous chemicals (such as alcohol, disinfectants, anesthetic agents, sterilants and mercury) used or stored in the dental office.
- _____ - A copy of the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) for each chemical (obtained from the manufacturer) used or stored in the dental office.
- _____ - Employee training. (at time of employment and annually)

Ionizing Radiation Standard (29 CFR 1910.1096)

This standard applies to facilities that have an x-ray machine and requires the following: (In South Carolina this standard is regulated by DHEC)

- _____ - A survey of types of radiation used in the facility, including x-rays.
- _____ - Restricted areas to limit employee exposures.
- _____ - Employees working in restricted areas must wear personal radiation monitors such as film badges or pocket dosimeters.
- _____ - Rooms and equipment may need to be labeled and equipped with caution signs.

Exit Routes Standards (29 CFR Subpart E 1910.35, 1919.36, 1910.37, 1910.38, and 1910.39)

These standards include the requirements for providing safe and accessible building exits in case of fire or other emergency. It is important to become familiar with the full text of these standards because they provide details about signage and other issues. OSHA consultation services can help, or your insurance company or local fire/police services may be able to assist you. The basic responsibilities include:

- _____ - Exit routes sufficient for the number of employees in any occupied space.
- _____ - A diagram of evacuation routes posted in a visible location.

Electrical Standards (Subpart S – Electrical 29 CFR 1910.301 to 1910.399)

These standards address electrical safety requirements to safeguard employees. OSHA electrical standards apply to electrical equipment and wiring in hazardous locations. If you use flammable gases, you may need special wiring and equipment installation. In addition to reading the full text of the OSHA standard, you should check with your insurance company or local fire department, or request an OSHA consultation for help.

OSHA Poster

Every workplace must display the OSHA poster (OSHA Publication 3165), or the state plan equivalent. The poster explains worker rights to a safe workplace and how to file a complaint. The poster must be placed where employees will see it. You can download a copy or order one free copy from OSHA's website at www.osha.gov or by calling (800) 321-OSHA.

Resources:

- *Medical and Dental Offices: A guide to compliance with OSHA standards.*
- South Carolina OSHA Office: Ms. Dainnya Busbin at 1-803-896-7661 or at www.llr.state.sc.us