

What to do when DOSH (formerly WISHA) comes to inspect

The Department of Labor & Industries, Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Formerly WISHA) is stepping up its inspections at restaurants for safety violations. If you are uncertain how your facility will measure up during an inspection, conduct a self audit right away. However, if the inspector is walking through your front door right now, remember the following:

1 As an employer, you have the right to accompany the inspector at all times—take advantage of this right.

Your employees also have the right to select an employee representative to join you during the inspection. *Your employees should select their representative now.* Otherwise, the inspector will randomly select employees to talk to during the inspection.

2 There are two reasons for an inspection.

One is a special inspection on the basis of a complaint, and the other is a general walk-through inspection. *If you are facing a special inspection,* DOSH can only investigate the areas of the complaint. *However,* they can include any violations obviously visible to the inspector while walking to and from the area referenced in the complaint. *Upon arrival, ask the inspector which of the two types of inspections they are conducting.* If it is a complaint, the inspector must present a copy. Take the inspector directly to the areas in question. If the inspector wants to wander your facility, politely refuse by explaining the rules of a complaint-based inspection.

3 Be sure to have the following documents available at all times. The inspector will request to see your:

- Accident Prevention Program documents
- Right-to-Know program and training documents
- All safety committee records
- Safety Bulletin Board
- OSHA 300's
- First Aid Certifications
- New employee safety orientation manuals
- Any industry-specific safety standard program policies.

By joining WRA's Retro program, you will ensure all of these documents are completed appropriately, thus ensuring compliance.

4 During the walk-through, if the inspector points out any items of non-compliance, make every effort to correct it immediately.

If they request information you do not have on-hand, delegate someone else to get the information so you can present it at the closing conference.

5 At the closing conference:

- Ask the inspector to clarify everything you don't understand.
- If samples were taken for testing and the results are not immediately available, request a second conference.
- If you receive a violation, ask for a solution.
- Take detailed notes of the inspector's comments and write down the basis for a citation.
- Request a copy of the inspector's working papers (or field notes).
- Do not argue with the inspector. However, if you feel further information would answer a question, or change the seriousness of a violation, ask for additional information from the inspector.



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