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OSHA administrator outlines accomplishments

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Recently, OSHA Administrator David Michaels spoke about his accomplishments after over three years on the job. These included:

1. The launch of the new Severe Violator Enforcement Program to target the worst of the worst violators.
2. Issuance of a record number of significant and egregious enforcement cases — including the largest fine in OSHA history.
3. Issuance of three major standards.
4. Approval of hundreds of new VPP sites and enhanced the integrity of the program.
5. Strengthening of the protection of whistleblowers.
6. The launch of several new National, Regional and Local Emphasis inspection programs, including the Campaign to Prevent Fatal Falls in Construction, the “Water. Rest. Shade.” campaign, to prevent heat related illnesses and deaths, and the National Emphasis Program for Nursing and Residential Care Facilities.
7. Conducting some 42,000 federal OSHA inspections, along with approximately 51,000 state OSH program inspections.
8. Responded to over 200,000 calls to OSHA’s 800 number or emails to OSHA.
9. Receipt of more than 200 million visits to OSHA’s website.
10. Provided free on-site assistance to some 30,000 small and medium-size businesses, to help protect more than 1.4 million workers nationwide.

11. Aligned the Hazard Communication standard with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS).

12. The launch of OSHA’s Spanish-language home page.

Michaels also stated that in 2013, he would continue to pursue vigorous enforcement of employers who refuse to follow the law, continue to utilize the Severe Violator Enforcement Program to pursue the worst of the worst offenders, continue to recognize the best of the best employers through the VPP and SHARP programs, and to offer compliance assistance to small businesses in need of help. ▲

The number of employers fined has dipped in last five years, but size of fines has soared

State OSH inspectors in 2008 found violations classified as ‘serious’ or higher in 475 workplaces, for which they fined Kentucky employers \$2,223,440. According to an analysis by the KY OSHA Journal, five years later, in 2012, they found violations classified as ‘serious’ or higher in only 419 workplaces, and →

KOSH fines issued to Kentucky employers
2008 compared 2012

Month	2008	2012	% Change
January	\$395,770	\$368,750	-6.8
February	185,175	520,300	181.0
March	126,700	275,650	117.6
April	124,000	567,400	357.6
May	196,500	370,700	88.7
June	179,850	566,650	215.1
July	135,400	156,950	15.9
August	188,275	475,350	152.5
September	223,745	375,800	68.0
October	165,775	618,550	273.1
November	196,000	370,750	89.2
December	106,250	924,700	770.3
	\$2,223,440	\$5,591,550	151.5

Over the three-year period of 2010-2012, under its director, David Michaels, OSHA conducted 42,000 federal inspections and state plans conducted approximately 51,000.