

OSHA Enforcement: Manchester, Connecticut, Environmental Laboratory Proposed Penalties for Alleged Violations



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

10/03/2022

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (“OSHA”) issued a September 16th news release stating that it is proposing penalties for Phoenix Environmental Laboratories, Inc. (“Phoenix”) for alleged violations.

The Manchester, Connecticut, facility is described as an environmental laboratory specializing in analysis and testing of water, soil, sludge, air, and solid samplings.

Employees at the environmental laboratory are stated to have complained to management about faulty ventilation systems at the worksite. Symptoms were stated to have included dizziness, light-headedness, headaches, and unsteady walking.

OSHA alleges that:

. . . Due to inadequate ventilation and recurring leaks from equipment in work areas, plus the use of methylene chloride in analyzing environmental samples, employees sustained exposures to methylene chloride, including some above the permissible exposure limit.

OSHA’s inspection is stated to have determined that Phoenix failed to:

- Ensure employees were not overexposed to methylene chloride.
- Perform initial exposure monitoring and inform employees of monitoring results.
- Determine employees’ exposure levels when the control methods were known to be inadequate.
- Ensure adequate ventilation during procedures that exposed employees to methylene chloride.
- Implement procedures to detect, contain and safely dispose of leaking methylene chloride.
- Provide employees with adequate skin, eye and face protection from methylene chloride and other solvents.
- Make medical surveillance available and provide medical exams to exposed employees.
- Provide employees with information and training on the hazards associated with the chemicals they use.
- Ensure that chemical fume hoods functioned properly and did not leak onto employees.

OSHA is proposing a penalty of \$907,000.

Phoenix has 15 days from the receipt of its citation and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's Area Director, or contest the findings before the Independent Occupation Safety and Health Review Commission.

A copy of the news release can be downloaded [here](#).