



OSHA Compliance: What Texas Construction Contractors Should Watch For in 2026

With one year of the second Trump Administration complete, federal OSHA's regulatory agenda has come into sharper focus, and it contains several items of import for construction contractors. Throughout 2025, OSHA continued to consider the Biden administration's proposed Heat Injury and Illness Prevention rules and contemplated changes designed to reduce regulatory burdens on businesses. For Texas contractors—who often manage crews in hot and variable outdoor conditions—the fate of the proposed heat regulations is of vital importance. Even if OSHA ultimately narrows or revises the heat proposal, employers should expect continued enforcement attention on heat-related hazards through OSHA's existing General Duty Clause and standard-specific obligations, making proactive heat controls and recordkeeping essential.

The key unknown for 2026 is whether OSHA will finalize the Biden-era heat proposal as written, withdraw it, or revise it in material ways. OSHA has indicated we should learn more in 2026, which suggests that planning assumptions should include multiple scenarios: potential adoption of a national heat standard, the adoption of a narrowed or re-scoped rule, or a new approach to heat related hazards.

Apart from the heat, OSHA's agenda includes proposed rules to revise certain substance-specific respirator requirements. The aim is to allow the use of different types of respirators and to align substance-specific requirements with OSHA's broader respiratory protection standard. Substances flagged in the proposal include asbestos, benzene, cadmium, inorganic arsenic, and lead, among others—chemicals that can be encountered on certain construction and renovation projects, industrial maintenance work, and demolition. Alignment with the general respiratory protection framework could simplify program administration for contractors if finalized, though the precise impact will depend on the final text and implementation timelines.

These OSHA proposals are described as consistent with Executive Orders that emphasize reducing regulatory burdens on businesses. For contractors, that may translate into flexibility in equipment choices or harmonization across overlapping standards, but it does not eliminate the need for strong written safety programs, documented safety training, safety evaluations where required, and competent-person oversight on jobsites.

As OSHA has signaled that more clarity will come in 2026, now is a good time to assess policies, training, and supplier options so you can adjust quickly when final rules and compliance dates are announced. Building this agility into your safety programs will help your teams stay productive and compliant as OSHA's agenda takes shape.

For further information on these developments, please contact [Tony Stergio](#).