



'TIS THE SEASON FOR CROWD CONTROL

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Overly exuberant shoppers have turned holiday spirit into tragedy on several occasions in recent years as surging crowds have caused serious, even fatal, injury to employees and customers. Retail risk managers should be ready to take precautions. To help, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has released a fact sheet entitled “Crowd Control Safety Tips for Retailers.” The fact sheet provides suggestions to help employers and store owners avoid injuries during sales events.

The new OSHA guidelines cover four key areas:

- **Planning** – Employees should know where to be and what to do, and extra security help may need to be hired.
- **Pre-Event Setup** – Barricades help control crowds; so do clear plans on how the event will proceed.
- **Controls During the Sales Event** – Be sure staff is in place and communication is continual among employees and customers.
- **Emergency Situations** – Make sure no one blocks exits, and be ready to call for help or provide it yourself.

The new fact sheet does not establish a new standard or regulation, nor does it create new legal obligations or alter existing obligations under OSHA standards. Under OSHA’s General Duty Clause Section 5(a)(1), each employer is required to provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

We encourage all of our retail clients to review and become familiar with the official OSHA rules as well as these OSHA safety tips. Safety measures should be incorporated into any retailer’s holiday season and special sales promotional events.

This fact sheet is available at OSHA web site at the following link:

http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/Crowd_Control.pdf



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