




Reply to the attention of:

DEP/OCPSEI/SMK


JUN 10 2013.

MEMORANDUM FOR: REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS
STATE PLAN DESIGNEES

THROUGH:


GREGORY J. BAXTER
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary

FROM:


THOMAS GALASSI, Director
Directorate of Enforcement Programs

SUBJECT:

Adequate Means of Egress at Workplaces

In light of the recent disastrous fire and explosion that killed at least 119 workers on June 4, 2013, at a poultry processing plant in China, the Directorate of Enforcement Programs wants to reiterate the importance of maintaining adequate means of egress at not only poultry processing facilities, but at all workplaces where fire and explosion hazards exist. In September 1991, we experienced a similar tragic incident when 25 workers were fatally injured because of a large fire at a chicken processing facility in Hamlet, NC. The high death count in the Hamlet incident was mainly attributed to the workers' inability to escape from the building due to locked exit doors.

During inspections of all workplaces, CSHOs should be mindful of whether the employer has provided and maintained adequate means of egress from work areas, e.g., adequate number of exit routes are provided, exit routes are free and unobstructed, and exit doors are not locked. If a CSHO observes violations of OSHA's Subpart E, Means of Egress requirements, the CSHO should inform the employer immediately and request that the observed hazard be abated. Citations should be issued accordingly.

Please contact Sanji Kanth of my staff at 202-693-2135, if you have any questions.