

Adhesives Company Faces Big OSHA Fines

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Sealant maker HB Fuller, operating as Adhesive Systems Inc., is facing proposed penalties totaling \$587,564 for 18 health and safety violations that the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) says it discovered at the company's facility in Frankfort, Ill.

OSHA cited HB Fuller for failing to provide employees with respirator fit tests and respirators appropriate for hazardous atmospheres; require bonding and grounding when transferring flammable liquids; ensure that electrical equipment was approved for use in hazardous atmospheres; and conduct a personal protective equipment assessment. According to OSHA, the violations occurred in January, February and May of this year.

"This employer failed to provide a safe and healthful workplace," said OSHA Chicago South Area Office director Kathy Webb. "The company needlessly exposed workers to hazards by failing to provide necessary training or conduct a required workplace hazard assessment."

Heather Bacigalupo, HB Fuller corporate communications manager, said the company is in ongoing conversations with OSHA about the matter and wouldn't issue a formal comment at this time.

HB Fuller has 15 business days from receipt of citations and penalties to comply, request an informal conference with OSHA's area director, or contest the findings before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

HB Fuller, based in St. Paul, Minn., makes sealant and adhesive products for the construction, woodworking, clean energy, electronics, disposable hygiene, medical, transportation and packaging industries, as well as other consumer businesses. It has locations in 42 countries and reaches customers in more than 100 countries, employing approximately 3,700 workers worldwide.

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