



## Competent Person

The **Competent Person** is one of the most underutilized safety persons on any site. Many employers don't realize they are required to assign a Competent Person on every job site.

The term "Competent Person" is used in many situations. An OSHA "competent person" is defined as "one who is capable of identifying existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to employees, and who has authorization to take

prompt corrective measures to eliminate them" [ [https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.32#1926.32\(f\)](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.32#1926.32(f)) ]

### By way of training and/or experience, a Competent Person has:

- Knowledgeable of applicable standards
- Is capable of identifying workplace hazards and
- Has the authority to correct them

### What is OSHA looking for?

You guessed it- OSHA will ask you if you know who your competent person is. They do this for two reasons: 1) to see if other employees know who their competent person is and 2) evaluate their knowledge and level of authority to correct any issues at hand.

**As an employer, it is important that you select the right person for this job and they should fully understand the responsibilities that come with it.**

It is equally as important that you make it known to all of the workers who your Competent Person is. It is vital that this position is not taken for granted. An employer should select a competent person for each work site and this should be made based on experience, skills, and knowledge.

If the site has multiple hazards such as excavation activities, fall hazards, crane hazards, or scaffolding operations, there may need to be additional training. In this case, the employer will need to get the "competent person" candidate up to speed as soon as possible through competent person training. Empowering these site-level workers to take more responsibility, and giving them the authority to act will increase the safety of any job site, helping to prevent injury, death, equipment damage, and regulatory fines.

**For more information go to:**

[https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.32#1926.32\(f\)](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.32#1926.32(f))