

# MIOSHA Fact Sheet

## Health Hazards in the Green Industry



### What is the Michigan green industry?

In this fact sheet, the green industry refers to businesses engaged in lawn and landscape maintenance, tree trimming and removal, snow removal, lawn and landscape installation, irrigation, and retail or wholesale garden centers.

### What health hazards are often found in the green industry?

- Noise
- Heat and cold stress
- Ergonomic hazards
- Hazardous chemicals
- Animal bites, insect stings, or allergic reactions
- Lack of available toilet or hand washing facilities
- Lack of available shower/eyewash or medical treatment
- Bloodborne infectious diseases

### MIOSHA health standards that may be applicable to the green industry:

**Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act, [MCL 408.1001 et. seq., P.A. 154 of 1974](#), as amended; Section 11(a) – the General Duty Clause**

The general duty clause of the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act requires employers to provide employees with employment that is free from recognized hazards that can cause death or serious physical harm to the employee. The general duty clause is invoked when there is no specific MIOSHA standard that addresses the hazard. The general duty clause can be used for hazards such as heat and cold stress, ergonomic

hazards, and animal bites, insect stings or allergic reactions.

### [General Industry Standard Part 380, Occupational Noise Exposure in General Industry](#)

Much of the equipment used in the green industry generates noise levels well above 85 decibels (dB); i.e., leaf blowers, chain saws, trimmers, mowers, woodchippers, and other motorized equipment. Repeated exposures to noise above 85 dB will result in loss of hearing. If an employee is exposed above 85 decibels (dBA) of noise based on an 8-hour, time-weighted-average (TWA), the employer must implement a hearing conservation program that includes initial noise monitoring, providing hearing protectors, baseline and annual audiograms and annual noise training. If employees are exposed to noise above 90 dBA based on an 8-hour TWA, employees must be required to wear hearing protection.

### [General Industry Standard Part 301, Air Contaminants for General Industry](#)

This standard lists permissible exposure limits (PELs) for a large number of hazardous air contaminants. Employees may not be exposed to these air contaminants above the PELs. Most pesticides or herbicides are not listed in General Industry Standard Part 301, Air Contaminants for General Industry. They are regulated under Federal Insecticides, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) pesticide regulations. Additional information can be found on the MDARD website at <https://www.michigan.gov/mdard>.

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(GISHD Fact Sheet #025 • 1/13/2026)



**General Industry Standard [Part 451, Respiratory Protection](#)**

If employees are required to wear respirators (due to requirements under MDARD or because they are over-exposed to hazardous chemicals), the employer must comply with the provisions in General Industry and Construction Standard Part 451, Respiratory Protection and MDARD. General Industry and Construction Standard Part 451, Respiratory Protection mandates the development and implementation of an effective written respiratory protection program that address elements such as medical evaluations, fit-testing, employee training, and proper maintenance/storage of respirators.

**General Industry Standards [Parts 92 and 430, Hazard Communication](#)**

If employees use or are exposed to hazardous chemicals, employers are required to develop and implement a written hazard communication program that includes the following: providing safety data sheets (SDSs), employee training, and container labeling. These requirements supplement MDARD and FIFRA labeling requirements for pesticides and also apply to hazardous chemicals such as compressed gases used for welding, hydraulic fluid and other chemicals used during maintenance.

**General Industry Standard [Part 474, Sanitation \(toilet and handwashing facilities\)](#)**

This standard requires employers to provide handwashing and toilet facilities. When employees are moving around to multiple work locations during a day, having bottled hand sanitizers and allowing time for employees to go to public restrooms would satisfy this requirement.

**General Industry Standards [Parts 92 and 430, Hazard Communication](#)**

All employers are required to perform a hazard assessment to determine if the use of PPE is required. If PPE is required, employees must be provided with that PPE and trained on its use. Examples of required PPE are safety glasses, gloves, steel-toed shoes, and hard hats.

**General Industry Standard [Part 472, Medical Services and First Aid](#)**

This standard requires employers to provide a suitable eyewash or shower when employees are potentially exposed to corrosive or injurious material. Acids, bases, or other chemicals such as pesticides are examples of such materials. The standard also requires employers to make medical consultation readily available. The availability of an emergency medical service or a medical clinic within 3-4 minutes would satisfy this requirement.

**General Industry Standard [Part 554, Bloodborne Infectious Diseases](#)**

If an employee has a designated job duty that involves actual or potential exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIMs), they would be considered category A and are covered by the standard. A written exposure control plan, hepatitis B vaccinations, follow-up procedures in the event of an exposure incident, and employee training are among the main requirements for an employer who has category A employees. Employees who are required to provide first aid to co-workers are considered category A. If management relies on 911 or an occupational health clinic that is within 10 minutes of travel, instead of designating company employees as first aid providers, the company would not be covered under this standard.

**Additional Information**

Please note that additional MIOSHA standards may also be applicable.

For additional information, please contact the MIOSHA Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division at 517-284-7720 or visit the MIOSHA website at [www.michigan.gov/cet](http://www.michigan.gov/cet).