What L&I Inspectors Look For



TOPIC 01 / WRITTEN LESSON

Prepare a truthful, organized inspection response and connect records to actual conditions.

Understand the visit

This series concerns Washington L&I's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH). A safety inspection differs from an industrial-insurance audit or a wage investigation. Ask what inspection scope applies and identify the employer representative, employee representative and backup contact. Do not coach workers to conceal concerns or create backdated records.

Follow the inspection sequence

An opening discussion establishes the purpose and participation. During the walk-around, the inspector may examine physical conditions, equipment, work practices and relevant records, and speak with workers. A closing discussion addresses findings and next steps. The written Citation and Notice, if issued, supplies the actual violations and deadlines; a verbal conversation is not a substitute for reading it.

Show a working prevention system

Keep the current accident prevention program, hazard assessments, applicable training records, meeting or committee records, required notices and injury-recordkeeping decisions accessible. A polished binder is weak evidence when the workers' tasks and conditions contradict it. Assign a custodian and backup to each record rather than expecting one person to remember every location.

Respond to actual hazards

Protect people from immediate exposure using the site's approved response. Keep factual notes on requests, supplied records, observations and corrections. Preserve appropriate evidence without delaying protection or interfering with required reporting. Workers have protected participation and reporting rights. Ask for clarification when a request is unclear; do not invent an answer.

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TOPIC 01 / INSPECTION AND EVIDENCE

What an inspector may review

- Current operations and hazards, not the course certificate alone
- Worker understanding and protected participation
- Written programs, training and required postings
- Whether earlier corrective actions actually changed conditions

Records and evidence to locate

- Contact tree and employee-representative process
- Current program and training index
- Request/response register with custodian
- Observed correction evidence and dates

Typical gaps to correct

- Records that cannot be located
- Generic programs that do not match actual work
- Uncorrected exposure despite a completed checklist

Worked example - fictional Harbor Supply

Fictional Harbor Supply receives a safety inspection while the usual manager is away. A training binder is locked in that manager's office.

The backup representative locates the current record index, identifies any genuinely unavailable records and documents the request. The team protects an observed blocked route immediately and records who will verify the correction. It does not reconstruct training dates from memory.

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TOPIC 01 / FACILITATOR KIT

Before the meeting

Choose a relevant, safe example; check the current rules and site procedure. Review open hazards, recent investigations and the prevention program. Arrange language or accessibility support.

0-3

State the topic, review previous corrective actions, and invite worker observations without retaliation.

3-10

Use the lesson and the worked example. Ask workers to identify the exposure, the control and the responsible person.

10-17

Using a tabletop example, have a backup representative locate three current records and explain how a worker reports a concern. Do not stage a hazardous demonstration.

17-20

Use the teach-back questions. Record actual attendees and topics, assign actions and a verification date. This 20-minute agenda is a suggested teaching plan, not a universal meeting-frequency rule.

Teach-back discussion

- Who speaks for the employer and who is the backup?
- How do records connect to a current task?
- What requires protection now, before paperwork?

Use actual attendees and topics in the meeting record. Do not enter private medical details here or treat a fictional exercise as proof of a real correction.

Official references

L&I workplace safety and health inspection guide

WAC 296-800-14005: written prevention program

L&I required workplace posters and current valid dates

L&I free onsite safety consultation

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TOPIC 01 / FILLABLE WORKPLACE EXERCISE

Use the fictional example first. Keep real personnel and medical records in your approved secure systems.

Site / department / task

Actual observation and evidence reference

Workers consulted / language needs

Existing control and observed gap

Protective action and responsible person

Due date / verification method

What changed / remaining concern / follow-up date

Explain it back

Who speaks for the employer and who is the backup?

How do records connect to a current task?

What requires protection now, before paperwork?