

OSHA CITES HOME DEPOT FOR REPEAT AND SERIOUS SAFETY HAZARDS



OSHA, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration has found Home Depot guilty of exposing its workers to electrical hazards at its store on North Avenue in Chicago and proposed a fine of upwards of \$69,000. OSHA investigated the store following complaints of blocked electrical panels a couple of months ago. The negligence evoked stiff penalty as the Depot has been cited for similar matters earlier in 2009 and 2010. OSHA takes strict cognizance of repeat offenses and fines for repeated offenses can be extremely, not to speak of the continued monitoring of the workplace by OSHA, that puts such workplaces under their scanner. "Left uncorrected, these conditions expose employees to shocks, eye injuries and potential electrocution," said Kimberly Castillon, OSHA's area director in Albany. "Employers with multiple locations who correct hazards at one location should take effective steps to ensure that similar hazards do not occur at other workplaces." OSHA's stringent safety measures make it mandatory to mark all electrical equipment, specify what it is intended to be used for, its voltage. Moreover, the instructions should be legible and clearly visible to all workers. "The Home Depot has a responsibility to protect the safety of its employees by minimizing exposure to hazards, such as by clearly marking electrical boxes," Diane Turek, director of OSHA's Chicago North Area Office in Des Plaines, said in a statement. The home improvement chain has 15 days to comply with OSHA regulations or request a hearing on the complaint.