



California Occupational Safety and Health Administration Competent or Qualified Person Definitions

Several California Occupational *Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA)* regulations specify the need for a Competent or Qualified person to address critical aspects of workplace safety.

An example of the skills and training required for these designations are found in the excavation and scaffolding regulations and provide clarification of these roles:

Competent person means 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.

Qualified person means one who, by possession of a recognized degree, certificate, professional standing, or who by extensive knowledge, training and experience, has successfully demonstrated his ability to solve or resolve problems relating to the subject matter, the work, or the project. This is why supporting systems design shall be by a qualified person.

Regulations do not specify the particular training requirements for competent or qualified persons. Instead, each category is defined by capability. Each job must be evaluated to determine the use of a competent person or qualified person.

Successful completion of training does not alone necessarily establish an individual as a competent person. The definition of a competent person compels the employer to select an employee based upon their capability to identify hazards. The type and extent of knowledge will vary depending on what is necessary to successfully perform the task required.

Competence and Qualification are defined by Cal/OSHA based on the extent of experience, education, training, and the specific requirements of the task at hand. Refer to Cal/OSHA Construction and General Industry Safety Orders, Instruction and Training Requirements for additional guidance.

Vince Moretto, M.S., State Fund Industrial Hygienist, is a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) certified specialist in the practice of occupational safety and health.

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