

Minnesota safety report: research highlights

By Brian Zaidman, Senior Research Analyst; Policy Development, Research and Statistics

Minnesota's occupational injury and illness rate remained at an all-time low, although the number of injuries and illnesses increased slightly during 2006. The most recent injury and illness figures show an estimated 107,100 recordable injury and illness cases in 2006; about 27,700 cases involved one or more days away from work. The comparable figures for 2005 were 104,100 total cases and 27,400 days-away-from-work cases. There were 78 work-related fatalities in 2006, down from 87 in 2005.

Later this spring, the Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) will release its annual *Minnesota Workplace Safety Report*, detailing injury and illness rates and workplace fatalities for 2006. The report is based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses* and *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* (CFOI). The report will be available on the DLI Web site at www.doli.state.mn.us/rsreport.html. The following are the major highlights from the new report.



Nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses

- Minnesota's total rate of workplace injuries and illnesses was 5.1 cases per 100 full-time-equivalent (FTE) workers in 2006, unchanged from 2005. This represents a 3.8 percent decrease from the 2004 rate of 5.3 cases per 100 FTE workers.
- The rate of cases with days away from work (the most severely injured workers) was 1.3 per 100 FTE workers in 2006 and 2005.
- Minnesota's industry sectors with the highest total injury and illness rates per 100 FTE workers were: agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (8.1); construction (7.8); manufacturing (6.8); and health care and social assistance (6.8).
- Four of the 10 industry subsectors with the highest total case rates were in the manufacturing industry sector.

Additional statistics about the characteristics of the injured workers, the characteristics of their injuries and the amount of time away from work are available for cases with days away from work.

- The percentage of injured workers age 55 and older increased from 9 percent in 2000 to 15 percent in 2006.
- Sprains and strains accounted for 39 percent of the cases with days away from work. The second highest category was soreness and pain, with 10 percent of the cases.
- The back and lower extremities were the most commonly injured body parts, accounting for nearly half the cases.
- Overexertion, often while lifting people or objects, falls, and contact with objects and equipment were the most common injury events.
- "Floors and ground surfaces" was the most frequent source-of-injury category, followed by the injured worker's own motion or bodily position.

- The median number of days away from work remained at five days, with 33 percent of the cases involving only one or two days away from work and 21 percent of the cases involving more than 20 days away from work.

Fatal occupational injuries

The CFOI covers all fatal work injuries in the private and public sectors, including federal workers and self-employed workers. However, fatal illnesses (such as asbestosis) are excluded.



- In 2006, 78 Minnesotans were fatally injured on the job. For 2002 through 2006, Minnesota had an average of 80 fatal work injuries a year, consisting of approximately 61 wage-and salary workers and 19 self-employed people.
- Among industry sectors, agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting recorded the highest number of worker fatalities, with 23. Construction had the second highest number of fatalities, with 13 cases.
- The most frequent causes of Minnesota's fatal work injuries for 2006 were: highway transportation accidents (37 percent); and contact with objects and equipment (35 percent).

Minnesota OSHA activities

During federal-fiscal-year 2007 (October 2006 through September 2007), Minnesota OSHA:

- conducted 2,651 compliance inspections, affecting the workplaces of 126,260 workers;
- found violations resulting in the assessment of \$3.9 million in penalties;
- conducted 924 worksite consultations, affecting the workplaces of 92,150 workers and helped employers avoid \$5.4 million in penalties; and
- conducted 693 worksite training visits, plus many other safety and health presentations and seminars.

From the *State Register*

Provider participation list available



Minnesota Statutes §256B.0644 and Minnesota Rules parts 5221.0500, subp. 1, and 9505.5200 to 9505.5240, also known as DHS "Rule 101," require health care providers that provide medical services to an injured worker under the workers' compensation law to participate in the Medical Assistance Program, the General Assistance Medical Care Program and the MinnesotaCare Program.

Notice is hereby given that the Minnesota Health Care Programs provider participation list for April 2008 is now available. The provider participation list is a compilation of health care providers that are in compliance with the Department of Human Services (DHS) Rule 101. If a provider's name is not on the list, the department considers the provider noncompliant.

The list of providers is separated by provider type, each section is in alphabetical order by provider name and there is no additional information on the list other than the provider's name. This list is distributed on a quarterly basis to the Department of Employee Relations, the Department of Labor and Industry, and the Department of Commerce. To obtain the list, call Julie Hervas, DHS Rule 101 specialist, at (651) 431-2704 or toll-free at 1-800-366-5411. You may fax your request to (651) 431-7462 or mail it to the Department of Human Services, P.O. Box 64987, St. Paul, MN 55164-0987.