

Safety Lines

Employee safety, health: Young workers deserve our attention, training

Thousands of teen workers enter the workforce each year. For many, it is their first time working and they are unfamiliar with their rights and responsibilities under existing labor laws and Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (MNOSHA) standards.

All workers – no matter their age or experience – have a right to a workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause serious injury or harm.

Employers should promote safety, health

Employers must provide the information, orientation, and necessary tools and equipment to guide workers in making appropriate choices when performing their work. Employers can help promote worker safety and health by:

- providing adequate job orientation and training, which sets expectations early about how work will be performed;
- maintaining a clean, organized work area;
- providing and maintaining necessary machine safeguards and personal protective equipment; and
- providing adequate supervision.

Actively preventing occupational injuries and illnesses adds value for the business and sets a good example for young workers who may not otherwise think about workplace safety and health. Supporting efforts to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses among young workers can guide them to a lifetime of successful and rewarding work experiences.

More susceptible to workplace accidents

Some of the reasons why young workers are more susceptible to workplace accidents include:

- unfamiliarity with the work and lack of adequate job-orientation and training;
- inadequate supervision;
- pressure to accept the job assignment – doing what is asked of them, working fast, just getting the job done;
- hazardous equipment and work environments; and
- being assigned work that is not age or skill-level appropriate.



Resources

From the Department of Labor and Industry

- How do teen workers get injured? – dli.mn.gov/business/workers-compensation/claim-characteristics
- Labor laws that affect Minnesota’s teen workers – dli.mn.gov/business/employment-practices/teen-workers
- MNOSHA Compliance: Grain-handling information, fatalities, inspections – dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-grain-handling-information-fatalities
- MNOSHA safety and health standards – dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-standards-and-regulations
- MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation: Free, on-site consultative services – dli.mn.gov/about-department/our-areas-service/minnesota-osh-workplace-safety-consultation

From other organizations

- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH): Young worker safety and health – cdc.gov/niosh/young-workers/about
- Agricultural Safety and Health: Protecting young workers in agriculture: A training for supervisors, parents and teachers (webinar) – agsafetyhealth.training-source.org/training/courses
- Federal OSHA: Young workers, you have rights! – osha.gov/youngworkers



Tap into free services from MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation

Did you know Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Workplace Safety Consultation (WSC) works with employers and employees to solve safety and health problems before they occur? MNOSHA WSC offers free on-site consultation services, upon request, to help employers improve their safety and health record and lower accident costs.

About MNOSHA WSC

MNOSHA WSC consultants help employers recognize hazards, make recommendations for solving problems and suggest other sources of help that are available. A visit by a consultant is scheduled for a mutually agreeable time and can encompass the entire worksite, a piece of machinery or a specific work operation or process.

Employers that request this service must commit to correcting serious job safety and health hazards in a timely manner.

Benefits of a consultation visit

Consultation visits consist of an opening conference, a walk-through of the worksite and a closing conference. Following the completion of the visit, the employer will receive a written report explaining the consultant's findings and an outline of abatement periods and potential abatement methods.

Employers benefit in many ways from this free service. Operations can run more efficiently when hazards are identified and corrected. Lost work-time due to injuries and illnesses may decrease, saving money and human resources. Workers' compensation premiums may also decrease due to fewer claims and lower experience modification rates.

Grants, other services available

In addition, WSC administers the Safety Grant Program, which awards funds up to \$10,000 to qualifying employers for projects designed to reduce the risk of injury and illness to their workers.

WSC also offers services covering:

- ergonomics;
- labor-management safety committees;
- the Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) for general industry and MNSHARP Construction for the construction industry;
- the Minnesota STAR (MNSTAR) Program; and
- workplace violence prevention and on-site assistance.

Contact MNOSHA WSC

To learn more about any of the services or request a free consultation, contact MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation at osha.consultation@state.mn.us, 651-284-5060 or 800-657-3776, or visit online at dli.mn.gov/about-department/our-areas-service/minnesota-osha-workplace-safety-consultation.



Save the dates: Spring 2026 safety, health observations

National Stand-down to Prevent Struck-by Incidents – April 20 through 24

The National Stand-down to Prevent Struck-by Incidents is a voluntary event for employers to talk directly to employees, focusing on struck-by hazards and reinforcing the importance of training and prevention. Struck-by incidents are the second leading cause of death among construction workers and the leading cause of nonfatal injuries in the construction industry.

Learn more: cpwr.com/research/research-to-practice-r2p/r2p-library/other-resources-for-stakeholders/struck-by-hazards

National Safety Stand-down to Prevent Falls in Construction – May 4 through 8

The National Safety Stand-down to Prevent Falls in Construction raises fall hazard-awareness across the country in an effort to stop fall fatalities and injuries. Fatalities caused by falls from elevation continue to be a leading cause of death for construction employees, accounting for 389 of the 1,034 construction fatalities nationally recorded in 2024 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. During this week, construction employers are asked to pause their work, standing-down with employees to discuss fall safety and prevention.

Learn more: osha.gov/stop-falls-stand-down

Minnesota Safety and Health Conference – May 5 and 6

Sharpen your safety skills and expand your network with a variety of sessions, plus see what's new in workplace safety, at the 2026 Minnesota Safety and Health Conference at Mystic Lake Center, May 5 and 6, in Prior Lake, Minnesota. At 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 5, be sure to catch the Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) update, presented by James Krueger, Ron Anderson and Matt Lucas, MNOSHA Compliance, plus Ryan Nosan, MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation.

Learn more: minnesotasafetycouncil.org/MNSC/MNSC/Conference/2026-Safety-Health-Conference.aspx



SOII sauce: Forklift-related injuries increase in Minnesota

Interesting findings from the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses

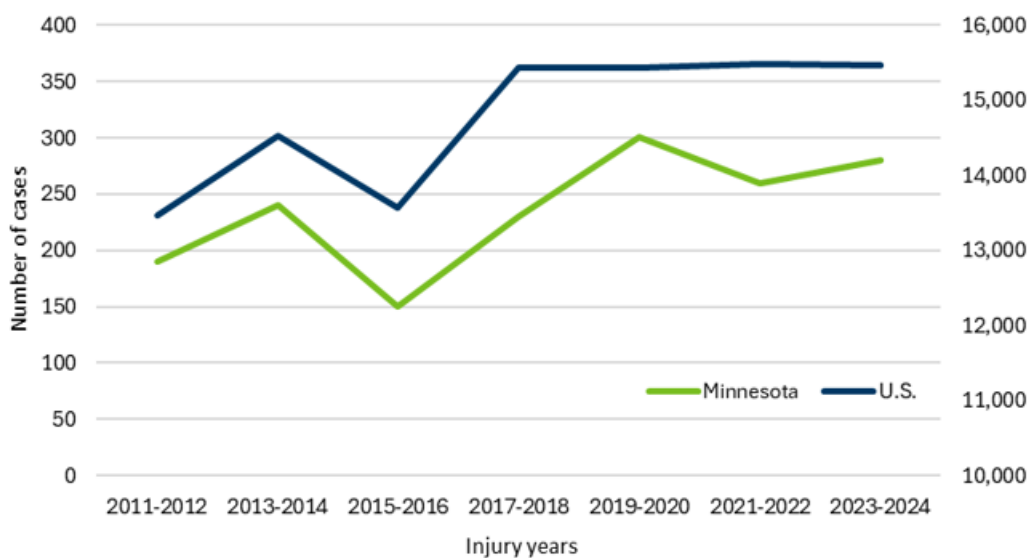
Each year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) conducts the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) which collects, analyzes and publishes data from OSHA logs on workplace injuries and illnesses across industries. SOII also provides counts and incidence rates, as well as details about injury sources and worker characteristics.

Forklifts are widely used in manufacturing, transportation, warehousing and trade industries to transport heavy materials in primarily non-roadway environments. Due to their operational risks, forklift-related incidents remain a significant source of workplace injuries. This report analyzes forklift injuries involving at least one day away from work in Minnesota and the United States private industry from 2011 to 2024, with additional detail about case and demographic characteristics for the 2023 through 2024 biennium.



From 2011 through 2024, Minnesota had an average of 236 forklift incidents a year. Reported cases increased from 190 incidents in 2011 through 2012 to 280 in 2023 through 2024, representing a 47% increase during the period. Similarly, the U.S. averaged 14,766 incidents annually, rising from 13,460 in 2011 through 2012 to 15,460 in 2023 through 2024, a 15% increase. While both Minnesota and the U.S. show upward trends, the increase in Minnesota has been more pronounced, suggesting potential changes in industry activity, reporting practices or workplace safety conditions. Figure 1 below shows the estimated number of forklift incidents with at least one day away from work for Minnesota and the U.S. private industry from 2011 through 2024.

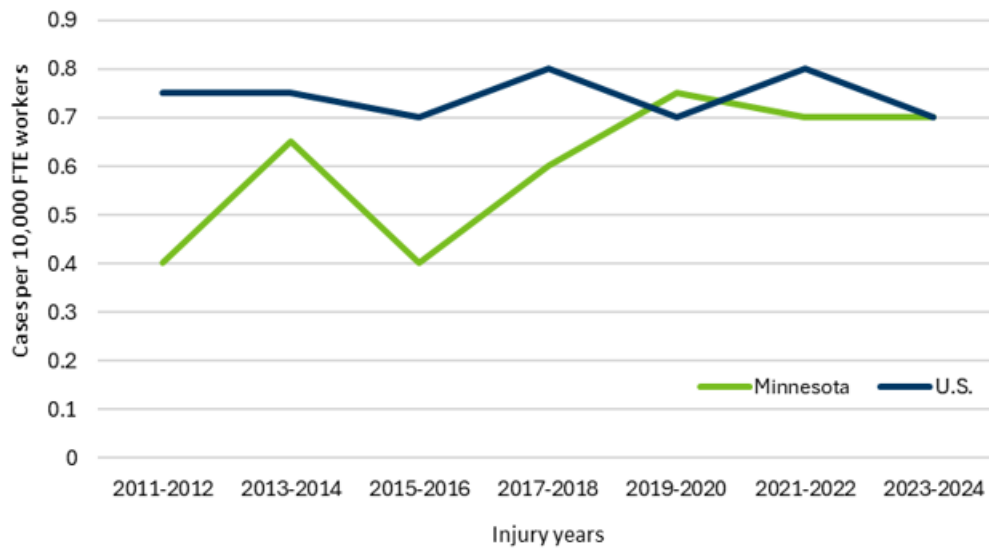
Figure 1: Estimated number of forklift incidents with at least one day away from work, Minnesota and U.S., private industry, 2011-2024



During the same period, the rate of forklift incidents resulting in one or more days away from work for private industry workers averaged 0.6 cases per 10,000 full-time-equivalent (FTE) workers in Minnesota and 0.75 cases in the U.S.

Although Minnesota consistently reported lower incidence rates than the national average, the rate increased by 75% over this period, from 0.4 cases per 10,000 FTE workers in 2011-2012 to 0.7 cases in 2023-2024. Notably, Minnesota briefly exceeded the U.S. rate in 2019-2020. Figure 2 shows the rates of forklift incidents in Minnesota and U.S. private industry from 2011 to 2024.

Figure 2: Incidence rates of forklift incidents, Minnesota and U.S., private industry, 2011-2024



Forklift incidents in Minnesota by selected worker and case characteristics, 2023-2024

Gender

Workers injured in forklift-related incidents in Minnesota remain predominantly male. In 2023 through 2024, male workers accounted for 75% of forklift injury cases, compared to 92% in 2021 through 2022. This shift may indicate changes in job roles involving forklift operation.

Event type

In 2023 through 2024, leading causes of forklift injuries were transportation incidents (57%), contact incidents (29%), and falls, slips and trips (14%). Transportation-related events represent the primary risk category, highlighting the importance of safe operation and forklift traffic management practices.

Nature of injury

In 2023 through 2024, the most common injuries resulting from forklift incidents were strains, sprains and tears (36%), bruises and contusions (36%) and fractures (7%). These findings suggest most forklift incidents result in soft tissue injuries, though a smaller proportion involve more severe trauma.

Conclusion

Overall, forklift-related incidents have increased in both Minnesota and the U.S. during the past decade, with Minnesota experiencing a sharper rise. While incidence rates remain lower in Minnesota, the upward trend in both counts and rates indicate a growing need for targeted safety interventions. The concentration of incidents in transportation-related events and soft tissue injuries suggest operator training, traffic controls and ergonomic practices could play a critical role in reducing workplace risk.

Two recent news releases update injury and illness rate, fatal-injury rate

Minnesota workplace injury, illness rate in 2024 holds steady at all-time low

Minnesota's estimated workplace injury and illness rate for 2024 was unchanged from that of 2023. According to the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, Minnesota had an estimated 2.9 OSHA-recordable nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time-equivalent (FTE) workers in 2024; the estimated rate for 2023 was the same. This is the lowest rate recorded since the measurement started in 1973.

The survey estimated Minnesota had 66,000 workers with OSHA-recordable nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses in 2024, compared to 65,100 estimated cases for 2023. Injuries accounted for 62,600 (95%) total recordable cases in 2024; illnesses were an additional 3,400 cases. In 2023, there were 5,200 illnesses.

In 2024, Minnesota's employment covered by the survey was approximately 2.89 million workers. In 2023, employment covered by the survey was 2.85 million workers.

"Daily attention to workplace safety and health directly improves the safety and health outcomes for workers, reduces preventable work-related injuries and illnesses, and ensures more workers go home safe and healthy at the end of each work shift," said Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) Commissioner Nicole Blissenbach.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates a national total of 3.1 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses in private- and public-sector workplaces for 2024, resulting in a rate of 2.6 cases per 100 FTE workers.

[Read the complete news release and access links to Minnesota and national data tables on the DLI website.](#)

Worksites urged to focus on safety as state's fatal work-injuries rise

Minnesota's recent fatal-injury rate rises, but remains below national average

A total of 84 fatal work-injuries were recorded in Minnesota in 2024 during the annual Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), up 14 from the 70 fatal work-injuries in 2023. This is the highest number of fatalities since 2017 when there were 101 fatalities. Minnesota's 2024 fatal-injury rate is 2.9 fatalities per 100,000 full-time-equivalent workers, which increased from the 2023 rate of 2.5. These and other workplace fatality statistics come from the CFOI, conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

Nationally, there were 5,070 fatally injured workers in 2024, down 4.0% from the 2023 count of 5,283 workers. The fatal work-injury rate was 3.3 fatalities per 100,000 full-time-equivalent workers, down from 3.5 in 2023.

The CFOI also provided the following statistics for Minnesota's workplace fatalities during 2024.

Industries and sectors

- The private agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting industry sector recorded the highest number of worker fatalities, with 19 cases in 2024. This is an increase from 16 fatalities in 2023. Within this industry sector, fatalities include seven in corn farming, three in dairy cattle and milk production, and one in hog and pig farming.
- The private construction industry sector had the second-highest number of worker fatalities, with 18 cases, up from 13 fatalities in 2023. Fatalities in this sector included eight in roofing contractors and one in residential site preparation contractors.
- Private leisure and hospitality had the third-highest number of worker fatalities, with 10. This includes one in amusement parks and arcades, two in golf courses and country clubs, and six in accommodation and food services.
- Also of note are 12 fatalities to workers employed by public-sector entities. This encompasses all public-sector entities, regardless of industry, and includes one in federal government and seven in local government. There were three worker fatalities in public-sector entities in 2023.

[Read the complete news release and access links to further information on the DLI website.](#)

MNOSHA Compliance's next free seminars for health care, construction

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance has introduced a new free seminar series, the Health Care Seminars, and is continuing its free Construction Seminars program.

Health Care Seminar: Requirements for committees in health care – April 29, begins at noon

MNOSHA Compliance has introduced another free seminar series, with four dates in 2026, the [Health Care Seminars](#). This online-only series is designed to bring together a diverse group of beyond-safety professionals from health care – including administrators, nursing staff members and support services staff members – to foster collaboration and shared learning. The goal is to create a space where ideas are exchanged, challenges are explored and support to advance workplace safety and health is shared across all facets of health care delivery.

The next Health Care Seminar is offered online at noon, Wednesday, April 29, and will focus on requirements for committees in health care. [Subscribe to the email list](#) to receive notifications about the Health Care Seminar series.



Safety and health committee requirements in health care vary by standard. Multiple standards require a safety and health committee and/or committee involvement in this environment. During this free seminar, attendees will hear from MNOSHA Compliance about which standards require safety and health committees and the responsibilities of each committee. They will also hear from one of Minnesota's health care systems, with multiple hospitals, about how it navigates these requirements.

- [Learn more, register to attend online and see other 2026 seminar dates.](#)

Construction Seminar: Proposed standard for lead in construction – May 19, begins at 7 a.m.

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance offers free [Construction Seminars](#) every other month – September through May – that feature a presentation about a specific construction safety or health topic, with time for questions, answers and input. MNOSHA Compliance also provides a general update regarding investigations.

The next Construction Seminar, Tuesday, May 19, is “Let’s talk about the proposed, draft lead in construction standard.” The discussion will cover trigger tasks, what is required at each level and the elements, including training and the written compliance program.

[Subscribe to the email list](#) to receive notifications about the Construction Seminar series.

The Construction Seminars are set up for interaction with the audience, leading to better understanding of the topic and more practical learning, and providing a safe environment for participants to ask real worksite questions and get real worksite safety and health solutions.

- [Learn more and register to attend online.](#)



Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance Director James Krueger (center, in blue shirt) addresses attendees in person and online during the March 17 Construction Seminar focused on MNOSHA Compliance fatality investigations.

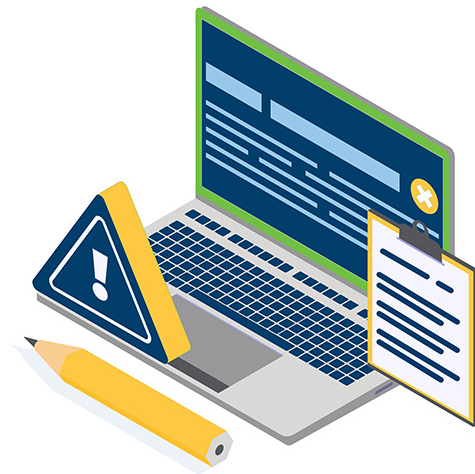
MNOSHA fatality, serious-injury investigations summaries online

Each month, Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance publishes current, updated summaries of its fatality investigations and serious-injury investigations.

For the federal-fiscal-year that began Oct. 1, 2025, MNOSHA Compliance has investigated 15 fatalities as of March 25.

The information provided about each investigation is: the inspection number, date of incident and worksite city; the type of business and number of employees; a description of the event; and the outcome of the MNOSHA Compliance investigation.

The summaries, plus other helpful workplace safety and health information from MNOSHA, are available on the [MNOSHA Compliance: Resources for all industries webpage](#).



Translated materials, webpages, Language Line available via DLI website

The Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) posts its available translated materials online at dli.mn.gov/translations. It has documents available in Chinese, Hmong, Karen, Somali and Spanish. A few other documents throughout the website are available in additional languages.



Also, the DLI website now provides Google Translate near the upper left corner of all webpages on its site, allowing visitors to choose the language for the website text.

In addition, DLI has access to Language Line, a free language translation phone service for limited-English speakers. If DLI help is needed, view the contact information at dli.mn.gov/about-department/about-dli/contact-us, call and a DLI employees will get in touch with an interpreter in the needed language.

Training: OSHA recordkeeping basics offered online May 1

The Department of Labor and Industry is offering a free, online introductory-level training seminar about OSHA recordkeeping requirements on May 1, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Maintaining an accurate OSHA log of recordable work-related injuries and illnesses is an important skill that benefits employers, workers, safety professionals and government agencies.

Topics

- Recordability of injuries and illnesses
- Privacy cases
- Creating a log summary
- Differences between OSHA cases and workers' compensation claims
- Classifying cases
- How many logs to keep
- Reporting log data to OSHA
- Counting time
- Maintaining logs
- Recording COVID-19 cases

More information

Learn more about the free session and how to register to attend (required) on the [MNOSHA Compliance: Recordkeeping standard webpage](#).

MNOSHA Compliance signs safety, health partnerships

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Compliance recently signed two Level 3 Cooperative Compliance Partnerships. Level 3 is the peak level of the compliance partnerships, with applicants striving to be an industry leader with very comprehensive safety and health programs.

The partnership with **J.E. Dunn Construction**, for its BCA Southern Minnesota Regional Office and Lab project, in Mankato, Minnesota, was signed under the Construction Health and Safety Excellence (CHASE) Minnesota initiative between MNOSHA Compliance and the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Minnesota. The project completion date is March 2027.

The partnership with **Yellow Tree Construction Services**, for its Peltier Reserve project, in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, was signed under the safety initiative between MNOSHA Compliance and the Minnesota Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors (MN ABC). The project completion date is Oct. 2, 2026.

The partnerships acknowledge the importance of providing a safe, healthful work environment in construction and seek a working relationship that creates mutual trust and respect among all parties – including project owners and construction workers – involved in the construction process. Participants may achieve three award levels in the partnership programs: basic, intermediate and peak.

View complete information on the [MNOSHA Compliance: Partnership programs webpage](#).



J.E. Dunn Construction • BCA Southern Minnesota Regional Office and Lab • Mankato, Minnesota



Yellow Tree Construction Services • Peltier Reserve • Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota

Minnesota OSHA's calendar of events*

April 2026

April 29 **Health Care Seminar: Requirements for committees in health care**
dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-health-care-seminars

May 2026

May 1 **Training: OSHA recordkeeping basics**
dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-recordkeeping-standard

May 19 **Construction Seminar: Let's talk about the proposed, draft lead in construction standard**
dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-construction-seminars

June 2026

June 5 **Occupational Safety and Health Review Board**
dli.mn.gov/about-department/boards-and-councils/occupational-safety-and-health-review-board

June 24 **Health Care Seminar (topic to be determined)**
dli.mn.gov/business/workplace-safety-and-health/mnosha-compliance-health-care-seminars

J.E. Dunn worksite achieves MNSHARP Construction status

Minnesota OSHA (MNOSHA) Workplace Safety Consultation recently recognized **J.E. Dunn Construction** for its Minnesota State Office Building project, in St. Paul, Minnesota, as a Minnesota Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (MNSHARP) Construction worksite.



J.E. Dunn Construction • Minnesota State Office Building • St. Paul, Minnesota

MNSHARP Construction recognizes major-construction companies where managers and employees work together to develop safety and health programs that go beyond basic compliance with all applicable OSHA standards and result in immediate and long-term prevention of job-related injuries and illnesses. Only construction projects at least 18 months in duration are eligible for participation in MNSHARP Construction.

- [Learn more about MNSHARP Construction online.](#)