

Fatal workplace injuries decline, improvement still needed

Workplace injuries and fatalities occur every year in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States. Each year, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports on how many workplace accidents occur and recommend what safety efforts should take place to reduce accidents and injuries at work.

In 2011, 4,609 workplace fatalities were reported, slightly down from the 4,690 workplace deaths in 2010, according to the National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. The U.S. fatal work injury rate for 2011 was reported as 3.5 per 100,000 full-time workers.

The 2011 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries found that several industries saw a decrease in fatal accidents and injuries last year. Some of the industries that saw a decline in fatal accidents include:

- Fatal work injuries in the private construction industry declined by seven percent, which marks the fifth consecutive year of declining workplace fatalities in the construction industry.
- Fatal work injuries in the private mining industry declined by 10 percent despite a 74 percent increase during the previous year.

While the overall decline in workplace fatalities is good news, the U.S. Secretary of Labor said more work still needs to be done to increase workplace safety. Safety hazards are still present at many industries and workplaces, which are represented by the fact that that 13 workers die on the job every day.

Several workplace hazards need improvement in the U.S. The most common fatal workplace injuries listed in the 2011 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries report include:

- Workplace violence and injuries caused by workers or animals accounted for 17 percent of fatal workplace injuries.
- Falls, slips or trips accounted for 14 percent of fatal workplace injuries.
- Fatal work injuries increased to 14 percent in the private truck transportation industry.
- 472 workers were fatally injured by objects or equipment, which includes falling objects and workers struck by powered vehicles or mobile equipment.

Source: HazardEx, "[US occupational injury census sees small drop in workplace fatalities for 2011](#)," Oct. 2, 2012