

Construction workers not reporting workplace injuries

Construction workers may face significant barriers after suffering a workplace injury. Workers who report their injuries may face consequences while other workers may be commended for pointing out a safety hazard. However, not many workers even feel comfortable reporting their injuries.

A new study found that only 58 percent of construction workers reported either a safety incentive or consequence for reporting work-related injuries. Workers who were disciplined after reporting an accident or injury were 50 percent less likely to report an injury in the future. What's worse, over 30 percent of workers said they never reported their construction accident or injury at work.

Workplace safety advocates say that it is very important for workers to feel comfortable enough to report their work injury. The findings of the study show that despite the OSHA regulations that promote workers to report workplace accidents and injuries, many construction workers underreport injuries out of fear of being disciplined or terminated.

Researchers said that while workers know they have the right to report injuries, they often face pressure at work that discourages reporting an injury. The construction industry may only make this issue more prevalent.

The study found that after a construction worker reports an injury or files a worker's compensation claim, they are usually not hired again for new projects. The study did not say if this was only a belief held by many construction workers or if it happens in a majority of cases. However, even if workers only believe they will not be hired again after reporting an injury, it still affects their ability to report

their injury and other safety hazards.

Workplace safety advocates said that the construction industry needs to focus on safety incentive programs that reward workers for reporting safety hazards and injuries so they can make efforts to reduce injury rates and address potential safety issues before accidents happen.

Source: EHS Today, "[Union Carpenter: 'You're Pretty Much Screwed if You Get Hurt At Work,'](#)" Sandy Smith, Dec. 7, 2012