



Weekly Safety Tip

National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2021



SAFETY & HEALTH SHARE

Dave Varwig
for SCNWO

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) issued its annual summary of **Fatal Occupational Injuries** for 2021, in a news release on December 16th, 2022.

In its "**NATIONAL CENSUS OF FATAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES IN 2021**," BLS calculated that there were **5,190 fatal work injuries in 2021**, an **8.9% increase** (from 4,764 in 2020).

The **fatal work injury rate was 3.6 fatalities** per 100,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers, **up from 3.4** per 100,000 FTE in 2020 and up from the **2019 pre-pandemic rate of 3.5**.

Data are from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). I have summarized *Key Findings*, *Items of Note*, *Occupational Specifics*, and *Technical Notes* to provide a factual overview, which is further supported by visuals of the data in 6 charts (to promote easier understanding and internalizing the data and results), that follow.

Negative results are highlighted in RED, while some, actual positive results that are highlighted in GREEN font. My intent is that you could simply read out loud the highlighted text in a group setting for brevity or recite in a recap, because that may keep the audience more attentive and help them better retain key points, while possibly providing them with a personal hard copy of this document as a handout or reference.

5 Key Findings

1. The 3.6 fatal occupational injury rate in 2021 represents the highest annual rate since 2016.
2. **A worker died every 101 minutes from a work-related injury in 2021.**
3. **Suicides continued to trend down**, decreasing to 236 from 259 in 2020, an 8.9% decrease.
4. Workers in **transportation and material moving occupations** experienced a series high of 1,523 fatal work injuries in 2021 and represent the occupational group with the **highest number of fatalities**, increasing by 18.8% over 2020.
5. **Transportation incidents** remained the **most frequent type of fatal event** in 2021 with 1,982 fatal injuries, increasing 11.5% over 2020, while accounting for 38.2% of all work-related fatalities.

5 Items of Note

Note-1: **Women** made up 8.6 percent of all workplace fatalities but represented 14.5 percent of intentional injuries by a person in 2021.

Note-2: Workers between the **ages of 45 - 54** suffered 1,087 workplace fatalities, a 13.9% increase from 2020. This age group accounted for over one-fifth of total fatalities for the year (20.9%).

Note-3: Despite experiencing an increase over 2020, **transportation incidents were down 6.6%** from 2019 when there were 2,122 fatalities.

Note-4: **Exposure to harmful substances or environments** led to 798 worker fatalities in 2021, the highest figure since the series began in 2011. This major event category **experienced the largest increase in fatalities in 2021**, increasing 18.8% over 2020.

Note-5: Work related fatalities due to **falls, slips, and trips increased 5.6 percent** in 2021, from 805 fatalities in 2020 to 850 in 2021. Falls, slips, and trips in **construction and extraction occupations** accounted for 370 fatalities, increasing 7.2% from 2020's 345 fatalities. **Despite the increase this is still down 9.3% from 2019** when it experienced 408 fatalities due to this type of event.

Weekly Safety Share

Preventing Falls from Equipment



Preventing Falls from Equipment



There are six things that we need to pay attention to when we are climbing on & off equipment and vehicles, to keep ourselves from experience a slip, mis-step, or over-step that could easily result in a fall with injury.

Take a moment to review this in a work group tailgate and post it in a gathering area as a visible reminder.

PREVENTING FALLS FROM EQUIPMENT

During 2011-2016, 74 workers died falling from equipment

WHEN CLIMBING ON/OFF EQUIPMENT

- ✓ Set the parking brake to prevent the equipment from moving
- ✓ Use hand and step holds - keep one foot and two hands, or both feet and one hand, in contact with equipment at all times
- ✓ Wear shoes that provide support and traction
- ✓ Avoid carrying materials and tools when climbing on or off
- ✓ Keep step and hand holds clear of mud, snow, grease and other fluids
- ✓ Do not jump off

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Three simple steps to preventing falls.

Join the Campaign to Stop Construction Falls!
www.stopconstructionfalls.com

Logos: PLAN. PROVIDE. TRAIN., CDC/NIOSH, CPWR (THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION RESEARCH AND TRAINING)

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