



Worker Safety

Top Insights and Industry Facts on Industrial Hazards

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This fact sheet provides a summary of top insights and industry facts on industrial hazards.

Slips, Trips & Falls

Slips, trips and falls account for 24%¹ of all workplace injury costs, with businesses paying over \$2.1B² per year in direct worker compensation. The good news is that the majority of falls are avoidable. In fact, falling ranks #2 on the Top 10 Preventable Workplace Incidents list by the National Safety Council.

Facts:

- Slips, trips and falls are the 3rd leading cause of occupational injury resulting in days away from work.³
- Slips, trips and falls account for 16% of all occupational deaths in the United States – second only to automobile accidents.⁴
- Falls account for over 1 million emergency room visits each year, or 12% of total visits.⁵
- 22% of slip/fall incidents resulted in more than 31 days away from work.⁶
- 55% of fall accidents are caused by poor walking/working surfaces due to slippery conditions.⁷

“Safety applies with equal force to the individual, to the family, to the employer, to the state, the nation and to international affairs. Safety, in its widest sense, concerns the happiness, contentment and freedom of mankind.”

William M. Jeffers

Former President of Union Pacific Railroad Co.

Chemical Exposure = Occupational Skin Disorders

The skin is the largest organ of the human body and accounts for more than 10% of the body’s mass. It represents a potentially significant exposure pathway for many chemicals because of the large surface

area available for contact to any one of the potentially toxic substances in the workplace.

Facts:

- In the U.S., 13 million⁸ workers are potentially exposed to chemicals that can be absorbed through their skin.
- Reportable skin diseases are reported 1.7 times⁹ more than respiratory illness, yet when dealing with particulates, respiratory protection is top of mind.
- Workplace skin diseases account for 15%-20%¹⁰ of all reported occupational disease in the U.S., costing employers up to \$1 billion.
- 75% of patients with occupational contact dermatitis developed chronic skin disease.¹¹
- Nearly 30% of COPD (Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) and adult asthma may be attributable to occupational exposure.¹²
- Asthma currently affects more than 10 million individuals in the U.S. and is increasing in prevalence.
- Recent evidence suggests that as many as 28% of adult asthma cases may be attributable to work settings.
- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) estimates that there are almost 10 million workers potentially exposed to organic solvents in the workplace.¹³

Airborne Particulates and Flying Debris

Flying debris is the primary cause of eye injuries in America. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 2,000 eye injuries occur every day in the workplace. Of these, 70% are caused by flying debris particles which include gritty dust, wood shavings, glass pieces, etc.

Facts:

- Injuries to eyes accounts for 62%¹⁴ of all face injuries involving days away from work.
- 45%¹⁵ of all eye injury cases occurred in manufacturing and construction.
- The median number of days away from work for eye injury cases is two days.¹⁶
- Allergic and irritant dermatitis accounts for 15%-20%¹⁷ of all reported occupational diseases.

¹ National Safety Council, Injury Facts 2015 Edition, Occupational Injuries & Illnesses with days away from work, United States (page 59)

² National Safety Council, Injury Facts 2015 Edition, Occupational Injuries & Illnesses with days away from work, United States (page 65)

³ National Safety Council, Injury Facts 2015 Edition, Occupational Injuries & Illnesses with days away from work, United States (page 84)

⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Fatal occupational injuries for selected events or exposures, 2011 – 2015, (page 8)

⁵ National Floor Safety Institute, Slip & Fall Quick Facts

⁶ National Floor Safety Institute, Slip & Fall Quick Facts

⁷ Business & Industry Connection, Business cost of slips, trips and falls, by Ed Reel, President & CEO PetroVAC LLC

⁸ NIOSH, Skin Exposures & Effects, April 2012

⁹ OSHA, Dermal Exposure Facts, 2017

¹⁰ NIOSH, DHHS Publication Number 96-115, April 1996

¹¹ NIOSH, DHHS Publication Number 96-115, April 1996

¹² NIOSH, DHHS Publication Number 96-115, April 1996

¹³ NIOSH (1987). Current Intelligence Bulletin 48 - Organic Solvent Neurotoxicity. (Publication No. 87-104).

¹⁴ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Workplace Injuries Involving the eye, February 2011

¹⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Workplace Injuries Involving the eye, February 2011

¹⁶ Bureau of Labor Statistics, Workplace Injuries Involving the eye, February 2011

¹⁷ NIOSH, DHHS Publication Number 96-115, April 1996

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