

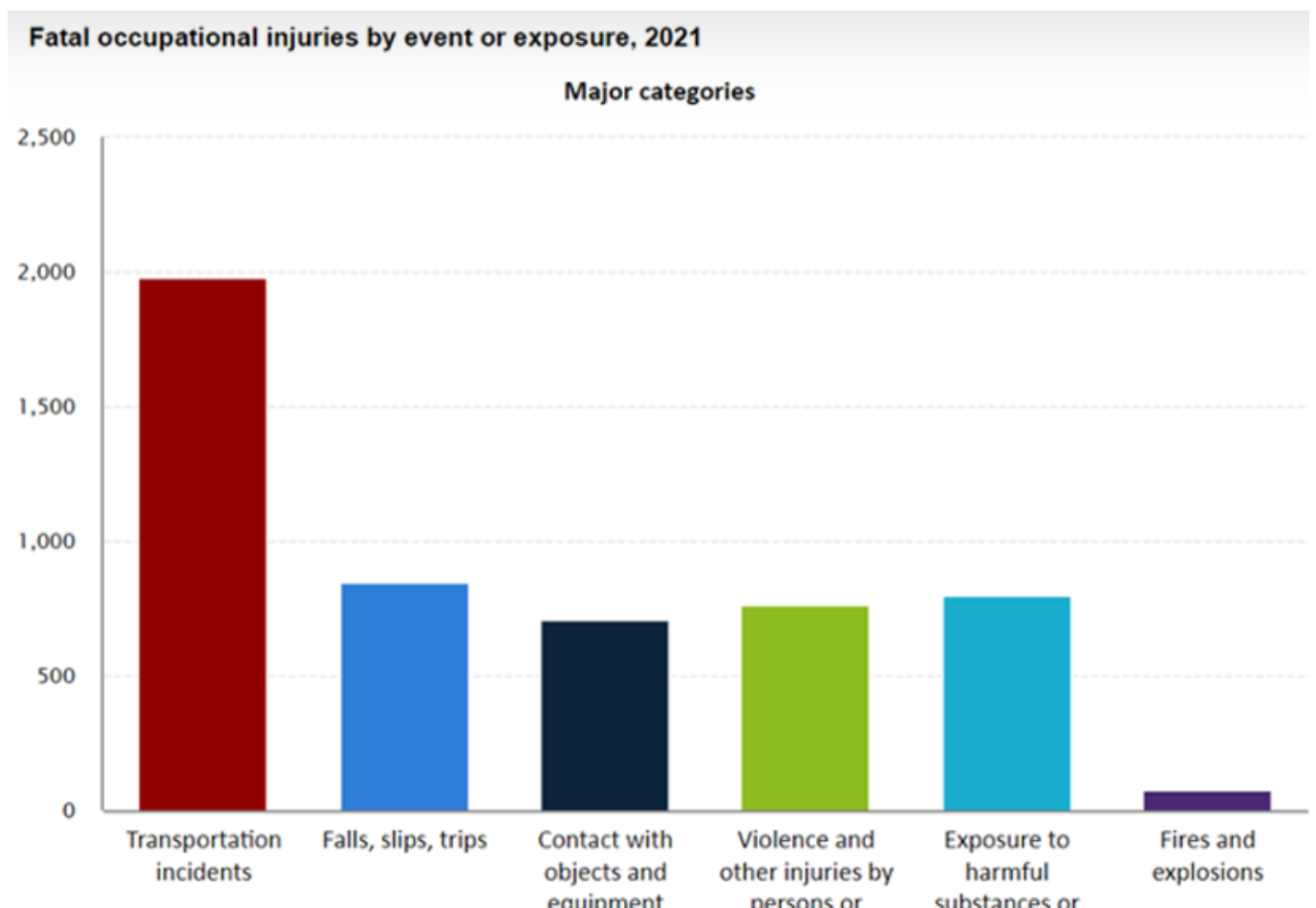


Worker Safety

## The Top 25 Most Fatal and Dangerous Jobs in America

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Compared to working conditions before the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) was established in 1970, today's U.S. work environment is, for the most part, safer than ever. With that said, some jobs will always involve dangerous conditions with the potential for fatalities. A police officer will always face the possibility of being shot on the job. A truck driver will always face the potential of being involved in an automobile accident. Specific occupations are inherently dangerous, some more so than others.



This chart highlights the top 6 events that lead to workplace fatalities.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported 5,190 fatal work injuries in 2021, an 8.9% increase from the reported 4,764 injuries in 2020. More key findings from the ***BLS 2021 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries Summary*** include the following:

- A worker died every 101 minutes from a work-related injury in 2021.
- 798 on-the-job fatalities resulted from exposure to harmful substances, the highest total for this type of injury since 2011.
- Falls, slips, and trips resulted in 850 total fatalities in 2021.

Any company that reports any fatalities needs to evaluate the safety of their working conditions and safety plans and consider the specific risks for those who work there. By knowing which occupations are most at-risk in advance, individuals and companies can ensure they're doing everything possible to limit workplace hazards and keep their employees safe. This article will provide a comprehensive understanding of the top 25 most dangerous occupations, all backed up by BLS data. It will also highlight what OSHA reports as everyday events that cause fatalities for each occupation and the kinds of injury events that all employees should be concerned about at work.

## **Top 25 Most Dangerous Occupations**

The following list of the 25 most dangerous jobs in America is ranked by the fatal workplace injuries reported in 2021 by the BLS. Below is a breakdown of each occupation and some fatal events OSHA shows for each.

Rank	Occupation	2021 Fatalities
#1	Transportation and material moving: heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers	1523
#2	Protective services	302
#3	Construction laborers	255
#4	Landscaping and groundskeeping	142
#5	Agricultural workers	133
#6	Material moving workers (by hand)	124
#7	Roofers	115
#8	Maintenance and repair workers, general	95
#9	Tree trimmers and pruners	78
#10	Building cleaning workers	69
#11	Carpenters	68
#12	Security guards	67
#13	Automotive service technicians and mechanics	63
#14	Electricians	61
#15	Farmworkers and ranchers	59
#16	Painters	58
#17	Extraction workers: oil and gas/mining	54
#18	Welders	43
#19	Heating and air conditioning (HVAC)	42
#20	Pipelayers and plumbers	36
#21	Forestry and logging: fallers	33
#22	Heavy vehicle and mobile equipment mechanics	31
#23	Electrical powerline installers	30
#24	Bus and truck mechanics	28
#25	Recyclable material collectors	23

## Transportation and Material Moving: Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers



Truck drivers deliver goods using a tractor-trailer combination or a heavy truck. The job often involves long hours on the road, and sleep deprivation creates hazards that can cause accidents.

Below are some of the fatal dangers that those working in transportation and truck driving occupations face on the job:

- Being crushed or struck by objects when loading or unloading freight
- Exposure to harmful chemicals and/or substances
- Vehicular accidents

**Protective Services: Jailers/Firefighters/ Police Officers**



Protective services occupations are charged with maintaining order and protecting life and property by enforcing laws and ordinances. In firefighters' cases, these workers face active fire situations, fire, and explosive threats and assist citizens in need. Transportation incidents and vehicle crashes are uncommon as they race to a scene. Below are some of the fatal dangers protective occupations face on the job:

- Dangers associated with responding to *emergency incidents*
- Engaging with armed suspects;
- Responding to fires.

## Construction Laborers





Construction laborers perform tasks involving physical labor at construction sites. Below are some of the fatal dangers construction laborer occupations face on the job:

- Falls, trips, and slips, *mostly from ladders*, scaffolding, and roofs
- Injury from unsafe contact with objects and equipment
- Electrocution
- Injury from falling objects on a construction site

## Landscaping and Groundskeeping



Landscapers maintain property grounds, which may involve digging, fertilizing, and mowing. Below are some of the dangers workers in the landscaping and groundskeeping occupations face on the job:

- Overturned mowers
- Broken or poorly maintained equipment
- Being struck by a motorist
- ***Drowning*** near pools and ponds
- Heatstroke

## **Agricultural Workers**



Agricultural workers plant, grow and harvest vegetables, fruits, and other crops. Below are some of the fatal dangers workers in agricultural occupations face on the job:

- Being caught by rotating parts on tractors and equipment
- Being crushed and pinned by tractors, agricultural trucks, and harvesters
- **Hot weather**, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke

*Continue to read this blog in its entirety to see the rest of the Top 25 most dangerous occupations and the causes of fatal work accidents.*

*Previously Featured on MCR Safety's blog.*

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