



Workplace Safety

OSHA DART Safety Rate Explained and How to Calculate It

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What You Need to Know

A general incident rate calculates the number of recordable incidents per hour worked.

The DART rate offers more detail than a general incidence rate by focusing only on severe injuries and illnesses.

Information from OSHA Form 300, the Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, is used to calculate the DART rate.

OSHA requires companies to report injuries and illnesses using a variety of forms, including Form 300, Form 301 and Form 300A.

If you manage a manufacturing facility, you probably have a risk management program designed to reduce accidents, injuries and illnesses. But how do you measure safety performance?

Safety professionals do their best to reduce accidents in the workplace, but how do they know if they're managing risks well, or if they need to do more?

They could simply count the number of job-related incidents in their facilities, or the number of days employees miss work because of them, but is that enough detail?

Developed by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), DART is defined as "Days Away, Restricted or Transferred" and is a measure designed to give businesses a better way to determine the effectiveness of their safety management programs and the overall impact of employee-related workplace injuries.

It measures not just the days of work employees missed, but also the days they were unable to do their regular jobs and were either restricted on activities or transferred to different jobs.

How to Calculate Incident Rates

According to the *Rochester Institute of Technology*, OSHA has established several calculations to help companies report incident rates, lost time rates and severity rates.

“OSHA uses the recordable incident rates to determine where different classifications of companies (manufacturing, food processing, textiles, machine shops, etc.) compare to each other with regard to past safety performance,” the RIT says. “Although OSHA could potentially use this data for enforcement action, unless incident rates are consistently high for a small company over a number of years, they will not normally target particular industries or companies.”

An incident rate calculates the number of recordable incidents per hour worked.

It is calculated by multiplying the number of recordable OSHA cases by 200,000 (the number of hours worked by 100 full-time employees for a year), then dividing the total by the number of employee labor hours worked.

- A recordable injury is one that is work-related and results in death, loss of consciousness, days away from work, restricted work activity or job transfer, or medical treatment beyond first aid.
- A recordable incident may also result in injuries such as hearing loss and illnesses like tuberculosis.

When it comes to COVID-19, OSHA has indicated that virus infections are recordable injuries if they are work-related. OSHA notes that if the employer cannot determine, after a reasonable and good faith inquiry, that exposure in the workplace played a causal role with respect to a particular case of COVID-19, the employer does not need to record that illness.

Recording requirements apply only to employers with more than 10 workers who are not in an exempt, low-risk industry.

“Smaller companies that experience recordable incidents will most likely have high incident rates, or the incident rates will fluctuate significantly from year to year,” the RIT says. “This is because of the small number of employees (and hence the lower number of labor hours worked) at the company. Calculations are more meaningful at larger companies that have a higher labor hour count.

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How DART Rates Are Different

DART differs from an incidence rate by adding in more detail to the measure.

An incidence rate measures the frequency of events but doesn’t tell you how many of the injuries were severe. The DART rate is also a frequency measure, but it only measures the number of severe cases.

However, both measures can be used to improve safety performance. This is done by examining your incident rate from one year to the next. Any growth or decline in the number of incidents shows the effectiveness of your risk management program.

According to EHS Insight, the DART rate is similar to the Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR). The key difference is that the TRIR calculates the total number of recordable incidents in a facility, so it will include incidents that did not result in missed time or reassignments and therefore will be higher than the DART rate.

Read more: Check Out Our TCR and DART Rate Calculator

Form 300 and Calculating the DART Rate

OSHA Form 300, the Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, helps facilities record information about incidents and use that information to calculate the DART rate.

A recordable injury is one that results in a loss of consciousness, the need for treatment beyond basic first aid, restricted work duties, time away from work or transfer to another job. A manager who completes the OSHA 300 form includes the same information about the event.

Once the Form 300s have been completed, a facility calculates the DART rate by multiplying the number of injuries that led to days away from work, restricted or transferred by 200,000. The total of that equation is then divided by the total number of hours worked by all employees at the facility.

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Reporting to OSHA

OSHA's recordkeeping rule (**29 CFR 1904**) requires employers to prepare and maintain records of serious work-related injuries and illnesses using Form 300.

There are exemptions for workplaces with fewer than 10 employees and workplaces in low-hazard industries, such as software publishers and florists.

In addition to Form 300, all workplaces are required to submit Form 300A, Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, annually, even if there are no recordable work-related injuries or illnesses to report.

More information about OSHA's injury and illness recordkeeping and reporting requirements, and information about recent amendments and COVID-19 pandemic recordkeeping requirements, can be found ***online***.

OSHA's Form 301 (Injury and Illness Incident Report) must be filled out within seven days of a recordable work-related injury or illness. It records details about when and how the incident occurred and must be kept on file for five years following the year in which the incident took place.

OSHA requires "serious events" to be reported more quickly. Fatalities must be reported within eight hours, while injuries or illnesses resulting in inpatient hospitalization, amputation or loss of an eye have to be reported within 24 hours.

Facilities can call OSHA's 24-hour hotline or use the serious event ***online reporting form***.

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How do you know if you are managing safety risks well or if you need to do more? Share your thoughts in the comments below.