

Fewer Women Than Men Die of Work-Related Injuries, Data Show

BY ANDREW KNESTAUT

Of the Nation's employed workers, 46 percent are women, yet they accounted for just 8 percent of the Nation's job-related fatalities in 1992-94. Women are less likely to be killed at work because they hold far fewer jobs in the most dangerous occupational groups. Nearly two-thirds of work-related fatalities occur in occupations broadly classified under the headings farm workers, production and craft workers, and machine operators and laborers, occupations in which only about a tenth of employed women hold jobs.¹

During 1992-94, more than 1,400 women lost their lives due to work-related injuries. The number of women fatally injured at work increased by 10 percent between 1992 and

1993, and by 7 percent between 1993 and 1994. Among men, the increase was markedly lower 1 and 4 percent, respectively, although total fatalities among men far outdistanced those of women. (See table 1.)

Table 1. Job-related fatalities by year and sex, 1992-94

Year	Number of fatalities		
	Total	Women	Men
Total	19,136	1,453	17,683
1992	6,217	443	5,774
1993	6,331	489	5,842
1994	6,588	521	6,067

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Table 2. Occupations with the most job-related fatalities among women, and homicides and highway incidents, 1992-94

Occupation ¹	Number of fatalities		
	Total	Homicides	Highway incidents
Total	1,453	556	371
Supervisors and proprietors, sales occupations ..	91	66	12
Cashiers	79	71	-
Truckdrivers	61	-	50
Managers, food serving and lodging establishments	51	40	4
Registered nurses	42	3	19
Secretaries	41	22	7
Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants	35	8	13
Waitresses	29	22	-
Farm workers ²	26	-	-
Sales counters clerks	23	20	-

¹ Based on the Census Bureau's 1990 occupation classification system.

² Nonhighway transportation incidents, such as tractor rollovers, were the leading fatal events for farm workers (9 fatalities).

NOTE: Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication standards.

Table 3. Job-related fatalities and homicides by selected characteristics, 1992-94

Characteristic	Fatalities		Number of homicides
	Number	Percent	
Total	1,453	100	556
Employee status			
Wage and salary workers ..	1,256	86	461
Self-employed	197	14	95
Age¹			
Under 25 years	184	13	87
25 to 44 years	752	52	307
45 years and over	514	35	162
Race			
White	1,151	79	416
Black	174	12	78
Asian or Pacific Islander	64	4	41
Other or unknown	64	4	21
Hispanic origin			
Hispanic	84	6	44

¹ There were 3 work-related fatalities for which the age of the victim was not reported.

² Persons identified as Hispanic may be of any race.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

Occupations with the highest fatalities

Three occupations proved most dangerous for women—sales supervisors and proprietors, cashiers, and truckdrivers. In these occupations the fatalities among women were most often homicides or highway traffic incidents. Table 2 shows the 10 most dangerous jobs for women.

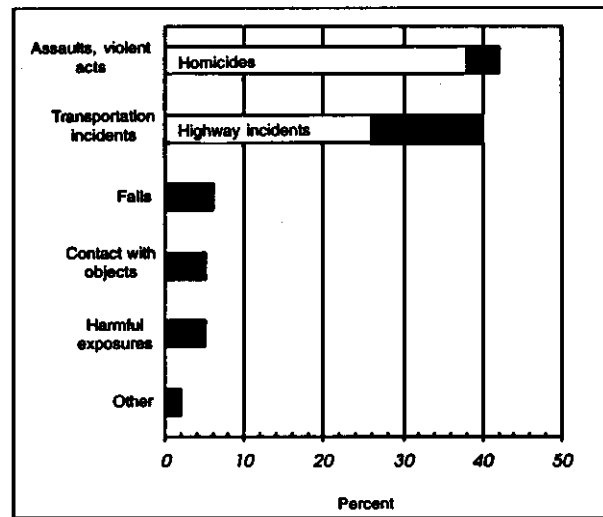
Homicide was the leading fatal event for women at work, claiming the lives of 556 women workers, or 38 percent of those fatally injured on the job in 1992-94. In contrast, only 15 percent of men's fatal workplace injuries were the result of homicide.

Forty-seven percent of the murdered women held sales or food preparation and service jobs, such as cashiers and waitress. Three-fourths of murdered women were shot. Seventeen percent of the women's alleged attackers were current or former husbands and boyfriends; for black women that figure was 28 percent.

Women of color were particularly affected by workplace violence. About two-thirds of the fatally injured Asian women workers and more than half of the Hispanic women workers were homicide victims. Homicide also accounted for just under half of the work fatalities of women who were self-employed, under 25, or black. See table 3.

Highway traffic incidents claimed the lives of 371 women. Collisions were the primary fatal highway events, accounting for 229 of the deaths. And, more than a third of them occurred head-on or at intersections. Chart 1 shows the leading fatal injury producing events for women.

Chart 1. Job-related fatalities among women by event or exposure



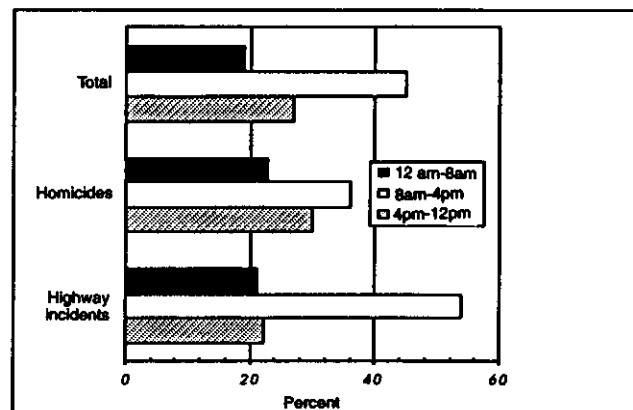
¹ Assaults and violent acts are primarily homicides, but also include self-inflicted injuries and assaults by animals.

² Transportation incidents are primarily highway fatalities, but also include nonhighway, railway, water vehicle, and aircraft incidents and workers struck by vehicles.

Fatality rates

In 1994, the fatality rate for women workers as a group was 1 fatality per 100,000 employed, while the rate for men workers was 9 fatalities per 100,000 employed. This means that men as a group had a fatal work injury rate nine times that of women in 1994. The difference was due largely to the relatively few women working in such hazardous occupations as fishers or timber cutters, which had rates of 131 and 130 fatalities per 100,000 employed, respectively, in 1994.

Chart 2. Women worker fatalities, including homicides and highway incidents, by time of incident, 1992-94



NOTE: A time of incident was not reported for 9 percent of total women worker fatalities, 12 percent of homicides, and 3 percent of highway incidents. These percentages are not reflected in the chart.

Table 4. Occupations with the highest fatality rates for women,¹ 1994

Occupation ²	Number of fatalities	Employed ³ (in thousands)	Fatalities per 100,000 employed ⁴
Total	521	56,610	1
Taxicab drivers and chauffeurs	6	25	24
Construction laborers	6	27	19
Truckdrivers	20	126	16
Messengers	5	38	13
News vendors	7	51	10
Farm workers	12	124	9
Electrical and electronic technicians	3	48	6
Public transportation attendants	5	84	6
Welfare service aides	4	69	6
Police and detectives, public service	4	70	6

¹ The occupations listed had minimum employment levels of 25,000 in 1994. The rates are experimental measures using Current Population Survey employment data.

² Based on the Census Bureau's 1990 occupation classification system.

³ The employment figures are annual average estimates of employed civilians 16 years of age and older, from the Current Population Survey (CPS), 1994.

⁴ The rate represents the number of fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 employed workers and was calculated as follows:
 $(N/W) \times 100,000$, where

N = the number of work injury fatalities,
W = the number of employed workers, and
100,000 is an absolute term which provides the basis for comparisons.

NOTE: Fatally injured workers under the age of 16 years were not included in the rate calculations to maintain consistency with Current Population Survey employment data.

Not surprisingly, about half of women's workplace fatalities occurred during typical work day hours from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Less expected, however, more women were murdered during the day than during either the evening or early morning hours. In contrast, male workers were more frequently murdered during the evening hours. (See chart 2.)

The three jobs with the highest fatal work injury rates for women in 1994 were taxicab drivers and chauffeurs, construction laborers, each with a fatality rate of 6 per 100,000 employed, and truckdrivers with a rate of 20 per 100,000. (Fatality rates for men in these three occupations were 50, 34, and 28 fatalities per 100,000, respectively, in 1994.) Table 4 shows the 10 jobs with the highest fatality rates for women workers.

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¹ Data in this article are from the Bureau's Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 1992-94.