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WEST VIRGINIA WORKPLACE FATALITIES, 2006

Fatal work injuries totaled 79 in 2006 for West Virginia, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Sheila Watkins noted that the increase was largely the result of an uptick in the number of occupational fatalities from explosions and fires, which pushed the 2006 count to its highest level since the fatality census was first conducted in 1992. A low of 40 fatalities, about half the number of deaths that occurred in 2006, had been reached only four years earlier in 2002. (See chart A.) The most frequent types of workplace fatalities in 2006 were highway crashes (16), explosions (13), and fires—unintended or uncontrolled (9); these 3 types of events accounted for almost one-half of all work-related deaths in the State.

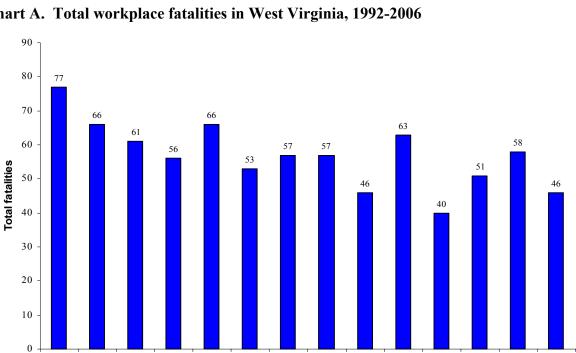


Chart A. Total workplace fatalities in West Virginia, 1992-2006

1996

1997

1992

1993

1994

1995

Highway crashes led all events as the most frequent type of on-the-job fatalities for both the nation and the State. The number of fatal work injuries from highway crashes in West Virginia changed little over the year, from 15 in 2005 to 16 in 2006. (See table A.) Work-related deaths from highway crashes accounted for 20 percent of West Virginia's and 23 percent of the United States' total in 2006.

1999

2000

2001

2002

2003

2004

1998

¹ Fatal events are categorized into several major groupings including transportation incidents, assaults and violent acts, and falls. These major groups are further broken down into more detailed groups. For example, transportation incidents includes highway incidents, commonly referred to as highway crashes, and aircraft incidents; assaults and violent acts includes homicides and suicides; and falls includes falls to a lower level (as from a roof or ladder) and falls on the same level (as due to grease on a floor or ice on a sidewalk).

Nearly all of the 13 work-related fatalities due to explosions in West Virginia were the result of the Sago Mine disaster. Explosions accounted for 16 percent of all workplace deaths in West Virginia, but just 2 percent of the Unites States' total in 2006. It should be noted, however, that Sago accounted for about only one-half of the 23 fatalities that occurred in the mining industry in the State in 2006.

The nine fatalities resulting from fires—unintended or uncontrolled—accounted for 11 percent of West Virginia's workplace deaths. Nationally, this event accounted for 2 percent of the total.

Other frequent events of workplace fatalities in West Virginia in 2006 were being struck by objects (7), falls to a lower level (7), and nonhighway incidents (7). All together, these three events were responsible for 27 percent of the fatal work injuries in the State. (See table 1.)

Year Total Highway crashes				Falls to lo	ower level	Struck by object		
i cai	fatalities	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
			United	States				
1992	6,217	1,158	19	507	8	557	9	
1993	6,331	1,242	20	534	8	565	9	
1994	6,632	1,343	20	580	9	591	9	
1995	6,275	1,346	21	578	9	547	9	
1996	6,202	1,346	22	610	10	582	g	
1997	6,238	1,393	22	653	10	579	ç	
1998	6,055	1,442	24	625	10	520	ç	
1999	6,054	1,496	25	634	10	585	10	
2000	5,920	1,365	23	659	11	571	10	
2001 ¹	5,915	1,409	24	700	12	553	g	
2002	5,534	1,373	25	638	12	505	ç	
2003	5,575	1,353	24	604	11	531	10	
2004	5,764	1,398	24	738	13	602	10	
2005 ²	5,734	1,437	25	664	12	607	11	
2006	5,703	1,329	23	728	13	583	10	
			West V	'irginia				
1992	77	16	21	6	8	20	26	
1993	66	14	21	6	9	11	17	
1994	61	12	20	6	10	7	11	
1995	56	17	30			12	21	
1996	66	21	32	5	8	10	15	
1997	53	10	19	3	6	16	30	
1998	57	13	23	6	11	14	25	
1999	57	13	23	4	7	13	23	
2000	46	12	26			4	ç	
2001	63	20	32	8	13	6	10	
2002	40	12	30	3	8	5	13	
2003	51	17	33	6	12	5	10	
2004	58	16	28			10	17	
2005	46	15	33	3	7	5	11	
2006	79	16	20	7	9	7	ç	

 Table A. Fatal occupational injuries in the United States and West Virginia by selected event groups, 1992-2006

⁺Totals for 2001 exclude fatalities from the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

² The BLS national news release issued August 10, 2006, reported a total of 5,702 fatal work injuries for calendar year 2005. Since then, an additional 32 job-related fatalities were identified, bringing the total job-related fatality count for 2005 to 5,734.

Nationwide, a total of 5,703 fatal work injuries were reported in 2006, down slightly from the revised total of 5,734 fatal work injuries recorded in 2005. The count for 2006 was the third lowest annual total recorded by the fatality census, which has been conducted yearly since 1992. (See table A.) The 2006 count of 1,329 fatal highway crashes was the lowest annual total since 1993. Highway crashes in 2006 accounted for nearly one out of every four fatal work injuries and continued to lead all other events in the frequency of on-the-job fatalities. Fatal work injuries involving falls to a lower level increased 10 percent in 2006 after a sharp decrease in 2005. The 2006 total of 728 fatal falls to a lower level was the second highest since the fatality census began. The number of workers who were fatally injured from being struck by objects was lower in 2006, after increasing for the last three years. The 583 fatalities resulting from being struck by objects in 2006 represented a 4-percent decline from the 2005 total.

Workplace homicides decreased 9 percent to 516 in 2006, the lowest annual total ever reported by the fatality census. Overall, workplace homicides have decreased more than 50 percent from the series high in 1994.

Key characteristics of workplace fatalities in West Virginia in 2006:

- Men accounted for 95 percent (75) of the work-related fatalities in the State. Transportation incidents, which include highway, nonhighway, pedestrian, air, water, and rail fatalities, accounted for 32 percent of these deaths and fires and explosions made up 29 percent. Four women were fatally injured on the job. (See table 2.)
- Ninety-four percent of those who died from a workplace injury in West Virginia were white, non-Hispanic (74) and 4 percent were black, non-Hispanic (3). The most frequent causes of death for white, non-Hispanics were transportation incidents (23) and fires and explosions (22). (See table 2.)
- Workers 25-54 years old—the prime working age group—made up 72 percent of the State's work-related fatalities in 2006 with 57 deaths; this was higher than the proportion of worker deaths for this age group at the national level, 64 percent. (See table 2.)
- Ninety-one percent of workers killed on the job worked for wages and salaries, the rest were self-employed. The leading causes of death for wage and salary workers were transportation incidents (22) and fires and explosions (21). Transportation incidents accounted for more than half of the deaths among self-employed workers. (See table 2.)
- Three industry sectors made up 63 percent of the workplace fatalities in West Virginia—mining recorded 23 deaths, construction, 15, and transportation and warehousing, 12. Fires and explosions accounted for the largest number of fatal occupational injuries in both mining and construction, while in the transportation and warehousing sector, transportation incidents were the most frequent event. (See table 3.)
- The Sago mining disaster coupled with other fatal mine incidents in West Virginia pushed work-related fatalities in coal mining up from 5 in 2005 to 23 in 2006, more than a four-fold increase.
- Workers in construction and extraction occupations had the highest number of fatalities at 35, followed by those in transportation and material moving occupations with 19; combined, these two occupational groups accounted for 68 percent of all fatal work injuries in the State. Fires and explosions were the most frequent type of fatal injury in the construction and extraction occupations while in the transportation and material moving occupations, transportation incidents were the most frequent event. (See table 4.)

Additional Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries data are available on the BLS Internet site at <u>http://www.bls.gov/iif/</u>. Data can be accessed in two ways, through Create Customized Tables, which allows quick access to particular items, or via the special request FTP service, which allows access to an extensive collection of flat text files. For personal assistance or further information on the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Mid-Atlantic Information Office at 215-597-3282 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET. Information on the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and other programs and surveys are available on our Web site at <u>http://www.bls.gov/ro3/</u>.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Background of the program

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, part of the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program, compiles a count of all fatal work injuries occurring in the U.S. in each calendar year. The program uses diverse State and Federal data sources to identify, verify, and describe fatal work injuries. Information about each workplace fatality (industry, occupation, and other worker characteristics; equipment being used; and circumstances of the event) is obtained by cross-referencing source documents, such as death certificates, workers' compensation records, news accounts, and reports to Federal and State agencies. This method assures counts are as complete and accurate as possible.

Definitions

For a fatality to be included in the census, the decedent must have been employed (that is working for pay, compensation, or profit) at the time of the event, engaged in a legal work activity, or present at the site of the incident as a requirement of his or her job. Fatalities to volunteer and unpaid family workers who perform the same duties and functions as paid workers are also included in the counts. These criteria are generally broader than those used by Federal and State agencies administering specific laws and regulations. (Fatalities that occur during a person's normal commute to or from work are excluded from the census counts.)

Data presented in this release include deaths occurring in 2006 that resulted from traumatic occupational injuries. An injury is defined as any wound or damage to the body resulting from acute exposure to energy, such as heat, electricity, or impact from a crash or fall, or from the absence of such essentials as heat or oxygen caused by a specific event or incident within a single workday or shift. Included are open wounds, intracranial and internal injuries, heatstroke, hypothermia, asphyxiation, acute poisonings resulting from short-term exposures limited to the worker's shift, suicides and homicides, and work injuries listed as underlying or contributory causes of death.

Information on work-related fatal illnesses is not reported in the BLS census and is excluded from the attached tables because the latency period of many occupational illnesses and the difficulty of linking illnesses to work exposures make identification of a universe problematic.

Measurement techniques and limitations

Data for the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries are compiled from various Federal, State, and local administrative sources—including death certificates, workers' compensation reports and claims, reports to various regulatory agencies, medical examiner reports, and police reports—as well as news and other non-governmental reports. Diverse sources are used because studies have shown that no single source captures all job-related fatalities. Source documents are matched so that each fatality is counted only once. To ensure that a fatality occurred while the decedent was at work, information is verified from two or more independent source documents or from a source document and a follow-up questionnaire. Approximately 30 data elements are collected, coded, and tabulated, including information about the worker, the fatal incident, and the machinery or equipment involved.

Federal/State agency coverage

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries includes data for all fatal work injuries, whether the decedent was working in a job covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or other Federal or State agencies or was outside the scope of regulatory coverage. Thus, any comparison between the BLS fatality census counts and those released by other agencies should take into account the different coverage requirements and definitions being used by each agency. Several Federal and State agencies have jurisdiction over workplace safety and health. OSHA and affiliated agencies in States with approved safety programs cover the largest portion of the nation's workers. However, injuries and illnesses occurring in certain industries or activities, such as coal, metal, and nonmetal mining and highway, water, rail, and air transportation, are excluded from OSHA coverage because they are covered by other Federal agencies, such as the Mine Safety and Health Administration and various agencies within the Department of Transportation.

Fatalities occurring among several other groups of workers are generally not covered by any Federal or State agencies. These groups include self-employed and unpaid family workers, which accounted for about 18 percent of the fatalities; laborers on small farms, accounting for about 1 percent of the fatalities; and State and local government employees in States without OSHA-approved safety programs, which accounted for about 4 percent. (Approximately one-half of the States have approved OSHA safety programs, which cover State and local government employees.)

Acknowledgments

BLS thanks the West Virginia Department of Labor for their efforts in collecting accurate, comprehensive, and useful data on fatal work injuries. BLS also appreciates the efforts of all Federal, State, local, and private sector agencies that submitted source documents used to identify fatal work injuries. Among these agencies are the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; the National Transportation Safety Board; the U.S. Coast Guard; the Mine Safety and Health Administration; the Employment Standards Administration (Federal Employees' Compensation and Longshore and Harbor Workers' divisions); the Department of Energy; State vital statistics registrars, coroners, and medical examiners; State departments of health, labor and industries, and workers' compensation agencies; State and local police departments; and State farm bureaus.

Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries by event or exposure and major private industry ¹ sector, West Virginia, 2006

		Goods producing				Service providing							
Event or exposure ²	Total fatalities (number)	Total goods producing	Natural resources and mining ³	Construc- tion	Manufac- turing	Total service providing	Trade, transpor- tation, and utilities	Informa- tion	Financial activities	Profes- sional and business services	Education and health services	and	Other services
Total	79	48	28	15	5	28	20				3	3	
Contact with objects and equipment	. 14	10	7			4							
Struck by object		3				4							
Struck by falling object		3				3							
Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects		4											
Caught in running equipment or machinery		3											
Caught in or crushed in collapsing materials		3	3										
Other cave-in		3	3										
Falls	-	3		3		3							
Fall to lower level		3		3		3							
Fall from roof													
Exposure to harmful substances or environments		5		3									
Contact with electric current		4		3									
Transportation accidents		9	6			16	13						
Highway accident	-					14	12						
Collision between vehicles, mobile equipment	6					5	3						
Collision between vehicles, mobile	Ű					Ű	Ű						
equipment, unspecified	3					3	3						
Vehicle struck stationary object, equipment	Ŭ					0	5						
on side of road	4					3	3						
Noncollision accident						5	5						
Jack-knifed or overturnedno collision						5	3						
Nonhighway accident, except rail, air, water		6	5			4	+						
Noncollision accident.		0	3										
Overturned		4 1	2										
Fires and explosions		4 21	1/	6									
Fireunintended or uncontrolled		21	14	6									
Fire in residence, building, or other structure		9		5									
Explosion		10	10	5									
Explosion, n.e.c.	-	12	12										
Assaults and violent acts	12	12	12										

¹Classified according to the North American Industry Classification System, 2002.

² Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Manual.

³ Includes fatalities at all establishments categorized as Mining (Sector 21) in the North American Industry Classification System, 2002, including establishments not governed by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) rules and reporting, such as those in Oil and Gas Extraction. NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria. n.e.c. means "not elsewhere classified." Data for 2006 are preliminary.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by worker characteristics and event or exposure, West Virginia, 2006

Worker characteristics	Total fatalities (number)	Transportation incidents ²	Assaults and violent acts ³	Contact with objects and equipment	Falls	Exposure to harmful sub- stances or environ- ments	Fires and explosions
Total	. 79	26	3	14	7	7	22
Employee Status							
Wage and Salary Workers ⁴ Self-employed ⁵		22 4	3 	14 	6 	6 	21
Gender							
Men Women	75 . 4	24	3	12 	7	7 	22
Age							
Under 16 years	 15 13 29 14 5 	 4 8 5 6 3 3 		 8 13 		 3 6 	 4 4 10 22
Asian. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander							

¹ Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification

Manual. ² Includes highway, nonhighway, air, water, rail fatalities, and fatalities

³ Includes violence by persons, self-inflicted injury, and attacks by animals.

⁴ May include volunteers and workers receiving other types of compensation. ⁵ Includes self-employed workers, owners of unincorporated businesses and farms, paid and unpaid family workers, and may include some owners of ⁶ Persons identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. The race

categories shown exclude data for Hispanics and Latinos.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria. Data for 2006 are preliminary.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

			Event or exposure ²						
Industry ¹	NAICS code ¹	Total fatalities (number)	Transpor- tation incidents ³	Assaults and violent acts ⁴	Contact with objects and equipment	Falls	Exposure to harmful sub- stances or environments	Fires and explosions	
Total		79	26	3	14	7	7	22	
Private Industry		76	25		14	6	7	22	
Goods Producing		48	9		10	3	5	21	
Natural Resources and Mining		28	6		7			14	
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	. 11	5	3						
Forestry and Logging	. 113 . 1133	4							
Logging	. 11331	4							
Mining ⁸	. 21	23	3		5			14	
Mining (except Oil and Gas) Coal Mining.	212 2121	23 23	3		5 5			14 14	
Coal Ming Bituminous Coal Underground Mining	21211 212112	23 18	3		5			14 12	
Construction		15			-	3	3	6	
Construction	23	15				3	3	6	
Construction of buildings	236	6							
Residential Building Construction Residential Building Construction	2361 23611	5 5							
Specialty Trade Contractors	238	4							
Manufacturing		5							
Manufacturing	. 31-33	5							
Service providing		28	16		4	3			
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities		20	13						
Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	12	8						
Truck Transportation	. 484 4841	11 8	8 5						
General Freight Trucking General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance	4841	8	5		-				
Utilities	. 22	6	4						
Utilities	221	6	4						
Electric Power Generation, Transmission and Distribution	. 2211	5	3						
Electric Power Generation	. 22111	3							
Education and Health Services		3							
Health Care and Social Assistance	. 62	3							
Leisure and Hospitality		3							
Government ⁵		3							
				•					

Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries by industry and event or exposure, West Virginia, 2006

¹ Classified according to the North American Industry Classification System, 2002.
 ² Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Manual.
 ³ Includes highway, nonhighway, air, water, rail fatalities, and fatalities resulting from being struck by a vehicle.

⁴ Includes violence by persons, self-inflicted injury, and attacks by animals.

Includes violence by persons, sentiminated input, and addres by animas. Includes fatalities at all establishments categorized as Mining (Sector 21) in the North American Industry Classification System, 2002, including establishments not governed by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) rules and reporting, such as those in Oil and Gas Extraction.

 $^{\rm 6}$ Includes fatalities to workers employed by governmental organizations regardless of industry.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria. Data for 2006 are preliminary.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries.

Table 4. Fatal occupational injuries by occupation and event or exposure, West Virginia, 2006

		Event or exposure ²								
Occupation ¹	Total fatalities (number)	Transportation incidents ³	Assaults and violent acts ⁴	Contact with objects and equipment	Falls	Exposure to harmful sub- stances or environments	Fires and explosions			
Total	79	26	3	14	7	7	22			
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	5	3								
Forest, conservation, and logging workers										
Logging workers										
Fallers										
Construction and extraction occupations	35	7		5	3	4	16			
Supervisors, construction and extraction workers	5									
First-line supervisors/managers of construction trades and										
extraction workers	5									
First-line supervisors/managers of construction trades and										
extraction workers	5									
Construction trades workers		3			3	4	5			
Carpenters										
Carpenters										
Construction laborers										
Construction laborers										
Electricians						3				
Electricians						3				
Extraction workers				3			8			
Mining machine operators										
Mining machine operators, all other										
Roof bolters, mining	6						5			
Roof bolters, mining							5			
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations										
Other installation, maintenance, and repair occupations										
Production occupations	6			3						
Metal workers and plastic workers										
Transportation and material moving occupations		10								
Motor vehicle operators										
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers										
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer	11	7								
Material moving workers										

¹ Based on the 2000 Standard Occupational Classification System.

² Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Manual.

³ Includes highway, nonhighway, air, water, rail fatalities, and fatalities resulting from being struck by a vehicle.

⁴ Includes violence by persons, self-inflicted injury, and attacks by animals.

NOTE: Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria. Data for 2006 are preliminary.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, in cooperation with State and Federal agencies, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries