



Bureau of Labor Statistics

Boston, MA 02203

Internet address: <http://www.bls.gov/ro1/home.htm> USDL-07-330

For Information: (617) 565-2327

For Release: Wednesday, November 7, 2007

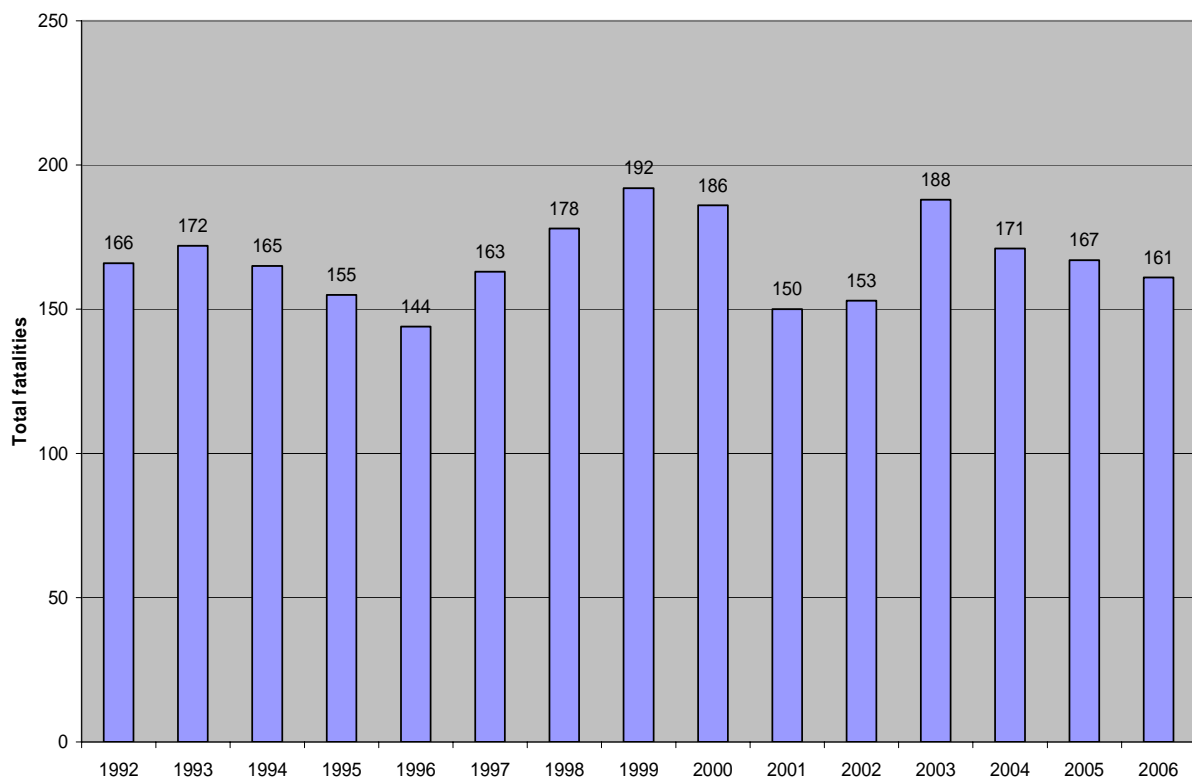
Media Contact:

Walter Marshall (617) 565-2324

Fatal Work Injuries in New England in 2006

A total of 161 fatal work injuries were reported in New England in 2006, 6 short of the 167 deaths recorded in 2005, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Denis M. McSweeney noted that even though the number of work-related deaths was not much changed over the year edging down 4 percent, the count in New England has nevertheless decreased for the third consecutive year. (See chart A.)

Chart A. Total workplace fatalities in New England, 1992 - 2006



In 2006, fatal occupational injuries in New England accounted for about 3 percent of the 5,703 fatalities occurring nationwide. Nationally, workplace fatalities decreased slightly from the revised total of 5,734 fatalities reported for 2005.

Among the New England states, on-the-job fatalities were highest in Massachusetts (66) and Connecticut (38), the two states with the largest workforces. Together, Massachusetts and Connecticut accounted for over 60 percent of the fatal injuries occurring in New England. (See table A.) Among the other four states, Maine had 20 fatalities representing 12 percent of the New England fatality count. Vermont and New Hampshire had 14 and 13 fatalities, respectively. Rhode Island ended the year with 10 work-related deaths.

Fatality counts increased in three of the six New England states in 2006 and decreased in the remaining three. Vermont's count increased by seven deaths over the year, the largest gain in New England. The other states posting increases were Maine (5) and Rhode Island (4). In contrast, fatality 2006 counts fell in three states—Massachusetts (-9), Connecticut (-8), and New Hampshire (-5). (See table A.)

Table A. Fatal occupational injuries for the United States, New England, and the New England states, 1992-2006

| State and area | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|----------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | United States | 6,217 | 6,331 | 6,632 | 6,275 | 6,202 | 6,238 | 6,055 | 6,054 | 5,920 | 5,915 | 5,534 | 5,575 | 5,764 | 5,734 |
| New England | 166 | 172 | 165 | 155 | 144 | 163 | 178 | 192 | 186 | 150 | 153 | 188 | 171 | 167 | 161 |
| Connecticut | 42 | 31 | 35 | 32 | 35 | 32 | 57 | 38 | 55 | 41 | 39 | 36 | 54 | 46 | 38 |
| Maine | 19 | 20 | 22 | 18 | 23 | 19 | 26 | 32 | 26 | 23 | 30 | 23 | 16 | 15 | 20 |
| Massachusetts | 67 | 85 | 74 | 66 | 62 | 69 | 44 | 83 | 70 | 54 | 46 | 78 | 72 | 75 | 66 |
| New Hampshire | 10 | 13 | 14 | 12 | 11 | 23 | 23 | 14 | 13 | 9 | 19 | 19 | 15 | 18 | 13 |
| Rhode Island | 17 | 16 | 12 | 11 | 6 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 7 | 17 | 8 | 18 | 7 | 6 | 10 |
| Vermont | 11 | 7 | 8 | 16 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 14 | 15 | 6 | 11 | 14 | 7 | 7 | 14 |

Characteristics of fatal work injuries in the New England states

Connecticut. There were 38 workplace fatalities in Connecticut in 2006, a 17-percent decline from the 46 recorded in 2005. The most frequent fatal workplace events in 2006 were transportation accidents (15 fatalities), assaults and violent acts (10), and contact with objects and equipment with (6).

Among industries, workplace fatalities were most common in trade, transportation, and utilities (15) which accounted for 39 percent of the State's work-related fatal injuries. (See table 2.) Construction and professional and business services industries followed, both with six fatalities; each of these industries accounted for 16 percent of the State's fatality count.

Among occupations, transportation and material moving (13) accounted for 34 percent of total fatalities in the State in 2006, the largest occupational share of any major group. (See table 3.) Building, grounds cleaning and maintenance (8) and construction and extraction (5) occupations had the next highest counts. Combined, these three occupations accounted for over two-thirds of the State's fatality count.

Seventy-three percent (28) of the workplace fatalities in Connecticut were in the prime working age group, 25-54 years old, and 24 percent (9) were among workers 55 and older. White, non-Hispanics accounted for 66 percent (25) of the fatally injured in 2006.

Maine. Maine had 20 on-the-job fatalities in 2006, up from 15 in the previous year, which was the lowest count since the program began in 1992. (See table A.) All of the workplace deaths in the State were among white, non-Hispanics, and 30 percent of them were age 65 years and over.

Twelve of the on-the-job fatalities in Maine were transportation-related accidents accounting for 60 percent of total. Together, natural resources and mining (6) and manufacturing (3) industries accounted for 45 percent of the fatalities recorded in the State.

Occupationally, workers in farming, fishing, and forestry had the highest number of work-related fatalities with five; this occupation accounted for 25 percent of the State's total fatality count. Those working in management; installation, maintenance and repair; and transportation and material moving jobs had three fatalities each.

Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, the fatality count dropped by 9 in 2006 to 66. The most frequent fatal events were transportation accidents and falls which accounted for 16 fatalities each, or nearly one-half of the Commonwealth's total count. Another frequent event was exposure to harmful substances or environment with 13 deaths, which accounted for 20 percent of Massachusetts' workplace fatalities.

The majority of fatal incidents occurred in two industries—construction (18) and trade, transportation, and utilities (16). These industries represented 27 and 24 percent of Massachusetts' total fatality count. Among occupational groups, construction and extraction workers had the highest number of fatalities (20), followed by those in transportation and material moving (15); these two occupational groups accounted for 30 and 23 percent, respectively, of the State's fatally injured on the job.

About 90 percent of the fatally injured in the Commonwealth were white, non-Hispanics in 2006. Women accounted for only 6 percent (4) of the work-related fatalities. Seventy-one percent (47) of the fatally injured belonged to the prime working age group, 25-54 years old.

New Hampshire. In 2006, New Hampshire had 13 workforce fatalities, down from 18 in the previous year. Transportation accidents accounted for four deaths, or about one-third of the total. Assaults and other violent acts and contact with objects and equipment resulted in three fatalities each. All of those fatally injured in the State were white, non-Hispanics.

Among industry sectors, natural resources and mining, with four work-related deaths, accounted for 31 percent of the State's fatality count. Construction; and trade, transportation, and utilities had three fatalities each, together accounting for 46 percent of the total in 2006. Occupationally, there were four deaths among workers with farming, fishing, and forestry jobs, and three among those in construction and extraction. Together, the two occupational groups comprised 54 percent of New Hampshire's workplace fatalities.

Rhode Island. The total workplace fatality count in Rhode Island was 10 in 2006; this compares to 6 recorded in 2005. Six of the 10 fatalities in 2006 were either transportation accidents (3) or falls to a lower level (3). Five of the State's workplace deaths occurred in the trade, transportation, and utilities industry. Four deaths occurred among workers with transportation and material moving jobs. All 10 fatally injured in 2006 were males, 9 of them white, non-Hispanics.

Vermont. There were 14 on-the-job fatalities in Vermont in 2006, up from 7 in the previous year. The most frequent event was transportation accidents with six fatalities, followed by contact with objects and equipment with three. Among industries, natural resources and mining accounted for four fatalities, or 29 percent of the State's count. Construction; and trade, transportation, and utilities had three fatalities each, accounting for 42 percent of the total. Occupationally, four workers were fatally injured on the job in farming, fishing, and forestry and three died from injuries received while working in transportation and material moving jobs. All fatalities in the State were white, non-Hispanics. Nine fatalities, or 65 percent, were age 55 years and over.

TECHNICAL NOTES

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 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.

Identification and verification of work-related fatalities

In 2006, there were 81 cases included at the national level for which work relationship could not be verified with a second document; however, the information on the initiating source document for these cases was sufficient to determine that the incident was likely to be job related. Data for these fatalities are included in the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries counts. An additional 46 fatalities submitted nationwide by States were not included because the source documents had insufficient information to determine work relationship and could not be verified by either an independent source document or a follow-up questionnaire.

States may identify additional fatal work injuries after data collection closeout for a reference year. In addition, other fatalities excluded from the published count because of insufficient information to

determine work relationship may subsequently be verified as work related. States have up to seven months to update their initial published State counts. This procedure ensures that fatality data are disseminated as quickly as possible and that legitimate cases are not excluded from the counts. Thus, each year's report should be considered preliminary until final data are issued. Over the last 5 years, increases in the nationally published counts based on additional information have averaged fewer than 27 fatalities per year, or less than 0.5 percent of the revised total. The BLS news release issued August 10, 2006, reported a total of 5,702 fatal work injuries for 2005. Since then, a net addition of 32 fatal work injuries were identified, bringing the total for 2005 to 5,734. Revised counts for 2006 will be available in April 2008.

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.)

Acknowledgements

BLS thanks the participating States, New York City, and the District of Columbia 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 Federal Railroad Administration; 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 detailed event or exposure in the United States and the New England States, 2006

| Event or Exposure ¹ | United States | | Connecticut | | Maine | | Massachusetts | | New Hampshire | | Rhode Island | | Vermont | |
|---|---------------|---------|-------------|---------|--------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Total | 5,703 | 100 | 38 | 100 | 20 | 100 | 66 | 100 | 13 | 100 | 10 | 100 | 14 | 100 |
| Transportation accidents | 2,413 | 42 | 15 | 39 | 12 | 60 | 16 | 24 | 4 | 31 | 3 | 30 | 6 | 43 |
| Highway | 1,329 | 23 | 7 | 18 | 3 | 15 | 6 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 4 | 29 |
| Nonhighway (farm, industrial premises) | 342 | 6 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Water vehicle | 89 | 2 | -- | -- | 3 | 15 | -- | -- | 3 | 23 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Worker struck by a vehicle | 372 | 7 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Assaults and violent acts | 754 | 13 | 10 | 26 | -- | -- | 10 | 15 | 3 | 23 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Homicides | 516 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Self-inflicted injuries | 199 | 3 | 5 | 13 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Contact with objects and equipment | 983 | 17 | 6 | 16 | 3 | 15 | 10 | 15 | 3 | 23 | -- | -- | 3 | 21 |
| Struck by object | 583 | 10 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 7 | 11 | 3 | 23 | -- | -- | 3 | 21 |
| Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects | 281 | 5 | 3 | 8 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Falls | 809 | 14 | 4 | 11 | -- | -- | 16 | 24 | -- | -- | 3 | 30 | -- | -- |
| Fall to lower level | 728 | 13 | 4 | 11 | -- | -- | 13 | 20 | -- | -- | 3 | 30 | -- | -- |
| Exposure to harmful substances or environment | 525 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 13 | 20 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Contact with electrical current | 247 | 4 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 5 | 8 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Fires and explosions | 201 | 4 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

¹ Based on the 1992 BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification Manual. Includes other events and exposures, such as bodily reaction, in addition to those shown separately.

Note: Totals for 2006 are preliminary. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.

Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by selected industries in the United States and the New England States, 2006

| Industry ¹ | United States | | Connecticut | | Maine | | Massachusetts | | New Hampshire | | Rhode Island | | Vermont | |
|---|---------------|---------|-------------|---------|--------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Total | 5,703 | 100 | 38 | 100 | 20 | 100 | 66 | 100 | 13 | 100 | 10 | 100 | 14 | 100 |
| Private industry | 5,202 | 91 | 35 | 92 | 18 | 90 | 61 | 92 | 12 | 92 | 10 | 100 | 13 | 93 |
| Goods Producing | 2,509 | 44 | 7 | 18 | 11 | 55 | 25 | 38 | 8 | 62 | -- | -- | 7 | 50 |
| Natural resources and mining | 836 | 15 | -- | -- | 6 | 30 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 31 | -- | -- | 4 | 29 |
| Construction | 1,226 | 21 | 6 | 16 | -- | -- | 18 | 27 | 3 | 23 | -- | -- | 3 | 21 |
| Manufacturing | 447 | 8 | -- | -- | 3 | 15 | 3 | 5 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Service Providing | 2,693 | 47 | 28 | 74 | 7 | 35 | 36 | 55 | 4 | 31 | 8 | 80 | 6 | 43 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 1,452 | 25 | 15 | 39 | 4 | 20 | 16 | 24 | 3 | 23 | 5 | 50 | 3 | 21 |
| Professional and business services | 449 | 8 | 6 | 16 | -- | -- | 6 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Leisure and hospitality | 252 | 4 | 4 | 11 | -- | -- | 8 | 12 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Other services except public administration | 175 | 3 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Government ² | 501 | 9 | 3 | 8 | -- | -- | 5 | 8 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

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

Note: Totals for 2006 are preliminary. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.

Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries by selected occupational group and demographic characteristics in the United States and the New England States, 2006

| Characteristic | United States | | Connecticut | | Maine | | Massachusetts | | New Hampshire | | Rhode Island | | Vermont | |
|---|---------------|---------|-------------|---------|--------|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Total | 5,703 | 100 | 38 | 100 | 20 | 100 | 66 | 100 | 13 | 100 | 10 | 100 | 14 | 100 |
| Occupational group¹ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Management Occupations | 543 | 10 | -- | -- | 3 | 15 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations | 277 | 5 | 8 | 21 | -- | -- | 6 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Sales and related occupations | 308 | 5 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations | 289 | 5 | -- | -- | 5 | 25 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 31 | -- | -- | 4 | 29 |
| Construction and extraction occupations | 1,258 | 22 | 5 | 13 | -- | -- | 20 | 30 | 3 | 23 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations | 415 | 7 | -- | -- | 3 | 15 | 8 | 12 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Production occupations | 282 | 5 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Transportation and material moving occupations | 1,463 | 26 | 13 | 34 | 3 | 15 | 15 | 23 | -- | -- | 4 | 40 | 3 | 21 |
| Sex | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 5,275 | 92 | 32 | 84 | 18 | 90 | 62 | 94 | 12 | 92 | 10 | 100 | 12 | 86 |
| Female | 428 | 8 | 6 | 16 | -- | -- | 4 | 6 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Age | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 20-24 | 382 | 7 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| 25-34 | 1,016 | 18 | 10 | 26 | -- | -- | 11 | 17 | 3 | 23 | 3 | 30 | -- | -- |
| 35-44 | 1,266 | 22 | 5 | 13 | -- | -- | 22 | 33 | 4 | 31 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| 45-54 | 1,378 | 24 | 13 | 34 | 5 | 25 | 14 | 21 | 4 | 31 | 3 | 30 | 3 | 21 |
| 55-64 | 941 | 17 | 9 | 24 | 4 | 20 | 9 | 14 | -- | -- | 4 | 40 | 5 | 36 |
| 65 and over | 577 | 10 | -- | -- | 6 | 30 | 6 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | 4 | 29 |
| Race or ethnic origin² | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| White, non-Hispanic | 3,945 | 69 | 25 | 66 | 20 | 100 | 57 | 86 | 13 | 100 | 9 | 90 | 14 | 100 |
| Black, non Hispanic | 552 | 10 | 4 | 11 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Asian | 142 | 2 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Hispanic or Latino | 937 | 16 | 7 | 18 | -- | -- | 7 | 11 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |

¹ Based on the 2000 Standard Occupational Classification system.

² Persons identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. The race categories shown exclude Hispanic and Latino workers.

Note: Totals for 2006 are preliminary. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.

Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.