



Bureau of Labor Statistics

Boston, MA 02203

Internet address: www.bls.gov/ro1/

USDL-08-337

For information: (617) 565-2327

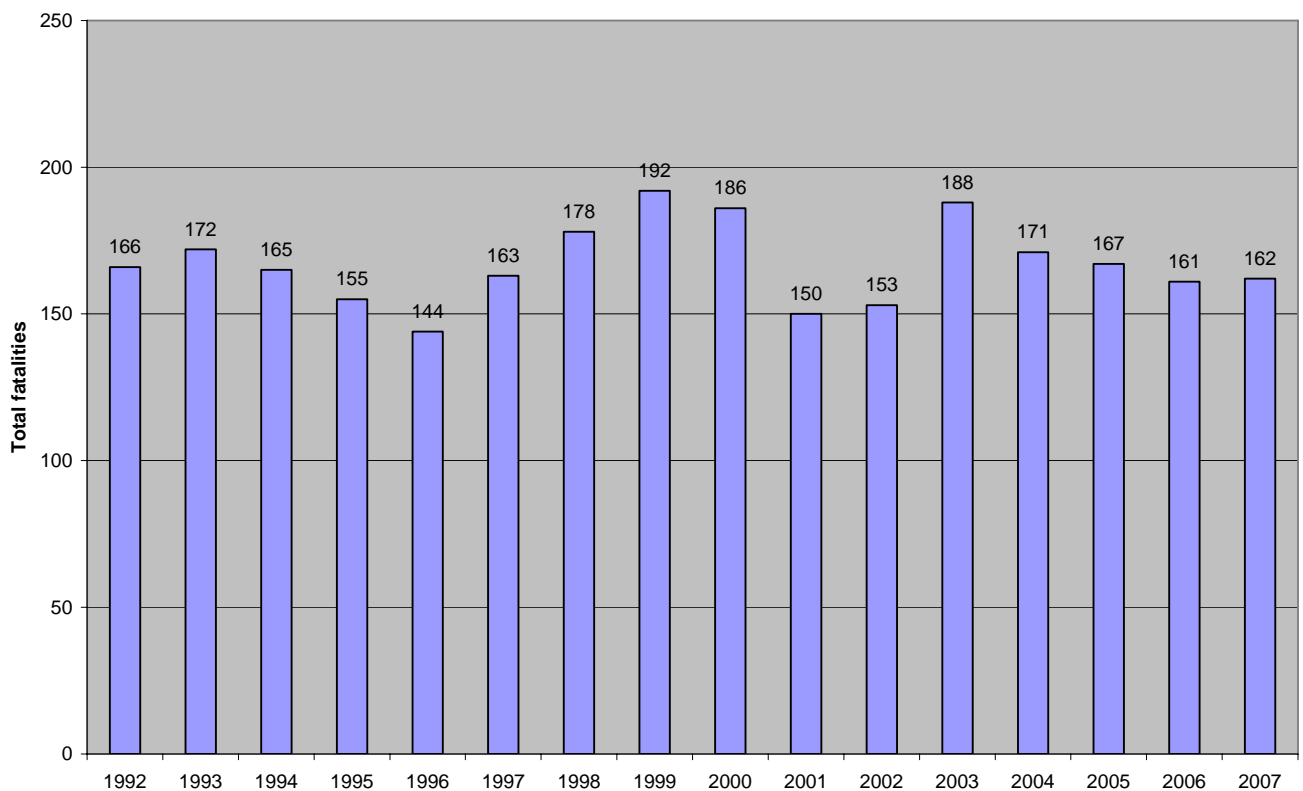
For release: Friday, November 14, 2008

Media contact: Denis McSweeney (617) 565-2331

Fatal Work Injuries in New England in 2007

A total of 162 fatal work injuries were reported in New England in 2007, similar to the level recorded in 2006, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Denis M. McSweeney noted that the number of fatalities in 2007 represented the sixth lowest level recorded since the series began in 1992. Please note that the 2007 figures are preliminary; final results will be released in April 2009. (See chart A.)

Chart A. Total workplace fatalities in New England, 1992 - 2007



In 2007, fatal occupational injuries in New England accounted for about 3 percent of the 5,488 fatalities occurring nationwide. Nationally, workplace fatalities decreased 6 percent from the revised total of 5,840 fatalities reported for 2006. While these results are considered preliminary, the total for 2007 represents the smallest annual preliminary count for the U.S. recorded by the fatality census since its inception in 1992.

Among the New England states, on-the-job fatalities were highest in Massachusetts (74) and Connecticut (38), the two states with the largest workforces. Together, Massachusetts and Connecticut accounted for over two-thirds of the fatal injuries occurring in New England. (See table A.) Among the other four states, Maine (21 fatalities) and New Hampshire (14) represented 13 and 9 percent of the New England fatality count, respectively. Vermont ended the year with 10 work-related fatalities and Rhode Island, 5.

In 2007, three New England states recorded increases in their on-the-job fatality counts, two showed decreases, and one indicated no change. Massachusetts increased by 8 deaths over the year, the largest increase in New England while Maine (1) and New Hampshire (1) increased only slightly. In contrast, 2007 fatality counts decreased in Rhode Island (-5) and Vermont (-4). Connecticut's fatality count did not change in 2007. (See table A.)

Table A. Fatal occupational injuries for the United States, New England, and the New England states, 1992-2007

State and area	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	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	5,840
New England	166	172	165	155	144	163	178	192	186	150	153	188	171	167	161	162
Connecticut	42	31	35	32	35	32	57	38	55	41	39	36	54	46	38	38
Maine	19	20	22	18	23	19	26	32	26	23	30	23	16	15	20	21
Massachusetts	67	85	74	66	62	69	44	83	70	54	46	78	72	75	66	74
New Hampshire	10	13	14	12	11	23	23	14	13	9	19	19	15	18	13	14
Rhode Island	17	16	12	11	6	11	12	11	7	17	8	18	7	6	10	5
Vermont	11	7	8	16	7	9	16	14	15	6	11	14	7	7	14	10

Characteristics of fatal work injuries in the New England states

Connecticut. There were 38 workplace fatalities in Connecticut in 2007, the same total recorded in 2006. For 2007, the most frequent fatal workplace events were falls (10), assaults and violent acts (9), and transportation incidents (8). These three events accounted for the largest share of total work-related fatal injuries in Connecticut.

Workplace fatalities were most common in the trade, transportation, and utilities (15), construction (8), and professional and business services industry sectors (7), together accounting for the majority of Connecticut's fatal work injuries. Among occupational groups, transportation and material moving occupations accounted for 9 deaths or about one quarter of the State's fatality count.

Fifteen workplace fatalities in Connecticut were in the working age group, 45-54 years old, and almost a quarter (9) was among workers 25-34 years old. White, non-Hispanics (31) accounted for most of the fatal injuries in 2007.

Maine. Maine had 21 on-the-job fatalities in 2007, similar to the previous year (20); fatalities in both years were above the series low recorded in 2005. Transportation incidents (11) represented the highest share of fatalities in the State in 2007 accounting for about half of all fatalities; of those, highway events comprised 5 incidents. Among age categories, fatalities were concentrated among those 55- 64 years old (8) and 45-54 age workers (6). All of the workplace fatalities were male and nearly all were white, non-Hispanics (20).

Across industries, natural resources and mining (6) and government (5) accounted for over one-half of the State's fatality count. Occupationally, workers in transportation and material moving jobs had the highest fatality count (8).

Massachusetts. In Massachusetts, the total fatality count increased by 8 to 74 in 2007, one of the highest totals in the Commonwealth since the series began in 1992. The most frequent fatal event was transportation incidents (27) which accounted for 36 percent of the Commonwealth's total count. Other frequent events included falls (18) and assaults and violent acts (11). These three events accounted for three-quarters of Massachusetts' workplace fatalities.

The majority of fatal incidents occurred in two industries—construction (24) and trade, transportation, and utility (19). These industries represented 32 and 26 percent, respectively, of Massachusetts' total on-the-job fatalities. Among occupational groups, construction and extraction workers had the highest number of workplace fatalities (21), followed by transportation and material moving occupations (13); these two occupations together accounted for nearly half of on-the-job fatalities in the State.

The majority of fatally injured in the Commonwealth were white, non-Hispanics (60) in 2007. Women workers accounted for 6 work-related deaths, or 8 percent of work-related fatalities. Most workplace fatalities (54) occurred in the working age group 35-64 years, comprising 73 percent of all workplace deaths. Nationally, the majority of fatal injuries occurred in the prime working age group (25-54 years old), representing 64 percent of all fatalities.

New Hampshire. In 2007, New Hampshire had 14 workforce fatalities; this was similar to the 13 total reported the previous year and close to the average number of workplace fatalities (15) since the series' inception. These work fatalities occurred among transportation incidents (4), contact with objects and equipment (4), and assaults and violent acts (3). All fatally injured in the State were white, non-Hispanics.

Among industries, manufacturing (4) and trade, transportation, and utilities (4), accounted for about three-fifths of those fatally injured in the State. Occupationally, transportation and material moving (5) were the most frequent workplace fatalities.

Rhode Island. Rhode Island recorded 5 workplace deaths in 2007, falling by 5 from last year, recording the lowest count in the State since the series began. Three of the 5 fatalities were assaults and violent acts and among occupations, 3 occurred within transportation and material moving. Four of the deaths in 2007 were white, non-Hispanic. All of the 2007 workplace fatalities in the State were male workers.

Vermont. Vermont recorded 10 workplace fatalities in 2007, a decline of 4 from the previous year, and was similar to the average since the series began. These fatal events occurred among transportation incidents (4) and contact with object and equipment (3). By industry, on-the-job fatalities were concentrated mainly in the goods producing sector (8). All workplace deaths in the State were white, non-Hispanic males. Three workplace deaths were workers aged 45 to 54 years.

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. 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 2007 that resulted from traumatic occupational injuries. An injury is defined as any intentional or unintentional wound or damage to the body resulting from acute exposure to energy, such as heat, electricity, or kinetic energy from a crash, or from the absence of such essentials as heat or oxygen caused by a specific event, incident, or series of events 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 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 2007, there were 40 cases included at the national level for which work relationship could not be independently verified; 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, which primarily affected self-employed workers, are included in the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries counts. An additional 31 fatalities submitted nationwide by states were not included because the initiating 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 no legitimate case is 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 approximately 50 fatalities per year, or less than 0.9 percent of the revised total. The BLS news release issued August 9, 2007, reported a total of 5,703 fatal work injuries for 2006. Since then, an additional 137 fatal work injuries were identified, bringing the total for 2006 to 5,840. Revised counts for 2007 will be available in April 2009.

Federal/State agency coverage

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries includes data for all fatal work injuries, whether they are covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or other federal or State agencies or are 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.

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.

Acknowledgements

BLS thanks the participating States, New York City, and the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico 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.

This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (617) 565-2072, Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries by detailed event or exposure in the United States and the New England States, 2007

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	5,488	100	38	100	21	100	74	100	14	100	5	100	10	100
Transportation incidents	2,234	42	8	21	11	52	27	36	4	29	--	--	4	40
Highway	1,311	23	6	16	5	24	6	8	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nonhighway (farm, industrial premises)	292	6	--	--	--	--	3	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
Water vehicle accident	69	2	--	--	--	--	5	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
Worker struck by a vehicle	342	7	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Assaults and violent acts	788	13	9	24	--	--	11	15	3	21	3	60	--	--
Homicides	540	9	6	16	--	--	6	8	--	--	--	--	--	--
Self-inflicted injuries	208	3	3	8	--	--	5	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
Contact with objects and equipment	993	17	--	--	3	14	5	7	4	29	--	--	3	30
Struck by object	589	10	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	21	--	--	3	30
Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects	283	5	--	--	--	--	3	4	--	--	--	--	--	--
Falls	827	14	10	26	5	24	18	24	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fall to lower level	738	13	9	24	4	19	15	20	--	--	--	--	--	--
Exposure to harmful substances or environment	547	9	6	16	--	--	7	9	--	--	--	--	--	--
Contact with electrical current	250	4	3	8	--	--	4	5	--	--	--	--	--	--
Fires and explosions	202	4	--	--	--	--	6	8	--	--	--	--	--	--

¹ Based on the 2007 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 2007 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, 2007

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	5,488	100	38	100	21	100	74	100	14	100	5	100	10	100
Private industry	4,956	90	35	92	16	76	68	92	13	93	--	--	9	90
Goods Producing	2,324	42	10	26	10	48	30	41	7	50	--	--	8	80
Natural resources and mining	754	14	--	--	6	29	5	7	--	--	--	--	3	30
Construction	1,178	21	8	21	4	19	24	32	--	--	--	--	--	--
Manufacturing	392	7	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	29	--	--	--	--
Service Providing	2,632	48	25	66	6	29	38	51	6	43	3	60	--	--
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,402	26	15	39	--	--	19	26	4	29	--	--	--	--
Professional and business services	465	8	7	18	4	19	4	5	--	--	--	--	--	--
Leisure and hospitality	251	5	--	--	--	--	6	8	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other services except public administration	170	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Government ²	532	10	3	8	5	24	6	8	--	--	--	--	--	--

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

Note: Totals for 2007 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, 2007

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	5,488	100	38	100	21	100	74	100	14	100	5	100	10	100
Occupational group¹														
Management Occupations	511	9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	250	5	4	11	3	14	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sales and related occupations	311	6	7	18	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	256	5	--	--	4	19	5	7	--	--	--	--	--	--
Construction and extraction occupations	1,152	21	8	21	--	--	21	28	--	--	--	--	--	--
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	373	7	--	--	--	--	12	16	--	--	--	--	--	--
Production occupations	264	5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Transportation and material moving occupations	1,423	26	9	24	8	38	13	18	5	36	3	60	--	--
Sex														
Male	5,071	92	37	97	21	100	68	92	13	93	5	100	10	100
Female	417	8	--	--	--	--	6	8	--	--	--	--	--	--
Age														
20-24	410	7	--	--	--	--	8	11	--	--	--	--	--	--
25-34	967	18	9	24	--	--	8	11	4	29	--	--	--	--
35-44	1,132	21	6	16	--	--	12	16	--	--	--	--	--	--
45-54	1,382	25	15	39	6	29	25	34	3	21	--	--	3	30
55-64	901	16	5	13	8	38	17	23	3	21	--	--	--	--
65 and over	558	10	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Race or ethnic origin²														
White, non-Hispanic	3,758	68	31	82	20	95	60	81	14	100	4	80	10	100
Black, non Hispanic	591	11	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Asian	154	3	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hispanic or Latino	908	17	4	11	--	--	11	15	--	--	--	--	--	--

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 2007 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.