

Preface

The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in conjunction with the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and New York City, compiles detailed information on all work-related fatal injuries occurring in the United States. The program is based upon recommendations made in 1987 by the National Academy of Sciences and the Keystone Dialogue Group that emphasized the need for a reliable measure of occupational fatalities. In response to these recommendations, the CFOI program was developed to produce accurate, comprehensive, descriptive, timely, and accessible counts of fatal workplace injuries that occur during a given year.

In an effort to compile counts that are as complete as possible, the fatality census uses diverse sources to identify, verify, and profile fatal work injuries. Source documents such as death certificates, news accounts, workers' compensation reports, and Federal and State agency administrative records are cross-referenced to gather key information about each workplace fatality. Detailed coding of each event captures information such as the particular occupation in which the fatality occurred, worker demographics, equipment or machinery involved, and circumstances of the event. Two or more independent source documents are used to verify the work relationship of each fatal work injury. Appendix G in this report explains the CFOI work relationship criteria.

Data compiled by the CFOI program are issued for the previous calendar year in an annual news release. Revised data are placed on the BLS Web site each spring following the initial release. Final data for 2004 are used in this publication.

These data are used by safety and health professionals, policy analysts, and researchers to prevent fatal work injuries in the following ways:

- Informing workers of life-threatening hazards associated with various jobs;
- Promoting safer work practices through enhanced job safety training;
- Developing new safety equipment;
- Assessing and improving workplace safety standards; and
- Identifying new areas for safety research.

Beginning with the 2003 reference year, the CFOI program began using the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) for industries and the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system for occupations. Prior to 2003, the program used the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system and the U.S. Census Bureau's occupational classification system. Because of the substantial differences between the current and previous classification systems, the results by industry and occupation in 2003 constitute a break in series, and users are advised against making comparisons between the 2003, 2004, and 2005 industry and occupation data and the industry and occupation data for previous years.

This report reprints, with permission, one article using CFOI data that was published previously in an external publication, three articles in BLS publications, and one taken from a conference presentation. The external journal cited is the *Journal of Environmental Health*. Three more articles are reprinted from the *Monthly Labor Review*, a BLS publication. This report also includes appendixes that present a variety of data tables and information relevant to the CFOI program.

This report was prepared in the Office of Compensation and Working Conditions under the administration of Associate Commissioner William Wiatrowski and the Chief for the Division of Safety and Health Program Analysis and Control, Katharine Newman. Scott Richardson, CFOI Program Manager, supervised the preparation of this report by staff members Dino Drudi, Gregory Fayard, Samuel Meyer, Joyce Northwood, Stephen Pegula, and Peggy Suarez. Margaret Jones of the Office of Publications and Special Studies provided typesetting and layout services.

For additional information on fatal work injuries, call (202) 691-6170, e-mail the staff members in the Office of Safety, Health, and Working Conditions at iffstaff@bls.gov, or access the CFOI Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm>. With the exception of the articles reprinted from outside sources, material in this publication is in the public domain and may, with appropriate credit, be reproduced without permission. For attribution information on the external articles, see the acknowledgments page following the table of contents.

The information in this publication is available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice telephone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Acknowledgments

The presentation “Is the Fatal Occupational Injury Experience in the United States Really Improving?” is taken from a presentation given at the NORA (National Occupational Research Agenda) Symposium 2006 held in Washington, DC during April 18-20, 2006. The included version was approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

The article, “Struck-by-Lightning Deaths in the United States,” by Nelson Adekoya and Kurt B. Nolte, is reprinted with permission from the *Journal of Environmental Health*, May 2005, pp. 45-50.

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