

News

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New York Office

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WORK FATALITIES IN NEW YORK CITY IN 2007

A total of 81 fatal work injuries were reported in New York City in 2007, down from 99 in 2006, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Regional Commissioner Michael L. Dolfman reported that in 2007, the City had the lowest number of work-related deaths in 16 years, since the BLS fatality census began in 1992. The 18-percent decrease in City work fatalities contrasted with a 13-percent increase in 2006. Nationwide, a total of 5,488 fatal work injuries were reported in 2007, a decrease of 6 percent from 2006. While these numbers are considered preliminary, this year's count was the lowest annual total since the series began in 1992. (See table A.)

Table A. Fatal occupational injuries in the United States and New York City, by event or exposure, 2006 and 2007

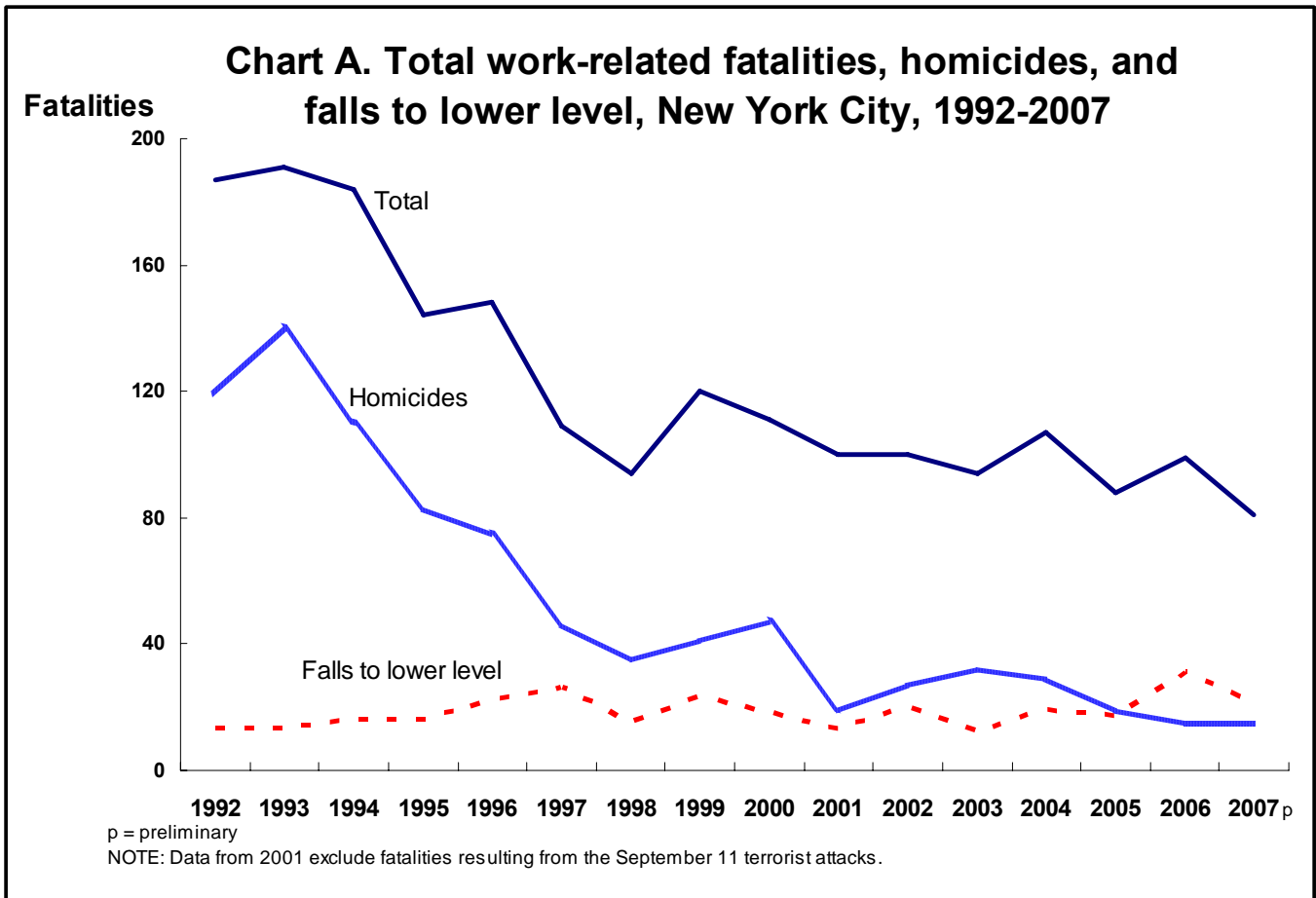
Event or exposure	United States		New York City	
	2006	2007	2006	2007
Total.....	5,840	5,488	99	81
Highway.....	1,356	1,311	11	5
Homicides.....	540	610	15	15
Self-inflicted injuries.....	208	189	6	12
Struck by object.....	589	504	8	6
Fall to lower level.....	738	733	31	21
Exposure to caustic, noxious or... allergenic substances.....	165	156	7	4

NOTE: Totals for 2007 are preliminary. Final figures will be released in April 2009.

Falls to a lower level were the most frequent type of workplace fatality in New York City in 2007, accounting for 21 deaths. Homicides followed with 15 deaths, matching the series low in 2006. (See chart A.) Workplace suicides resulted in 12 deaths. (See table 1.)



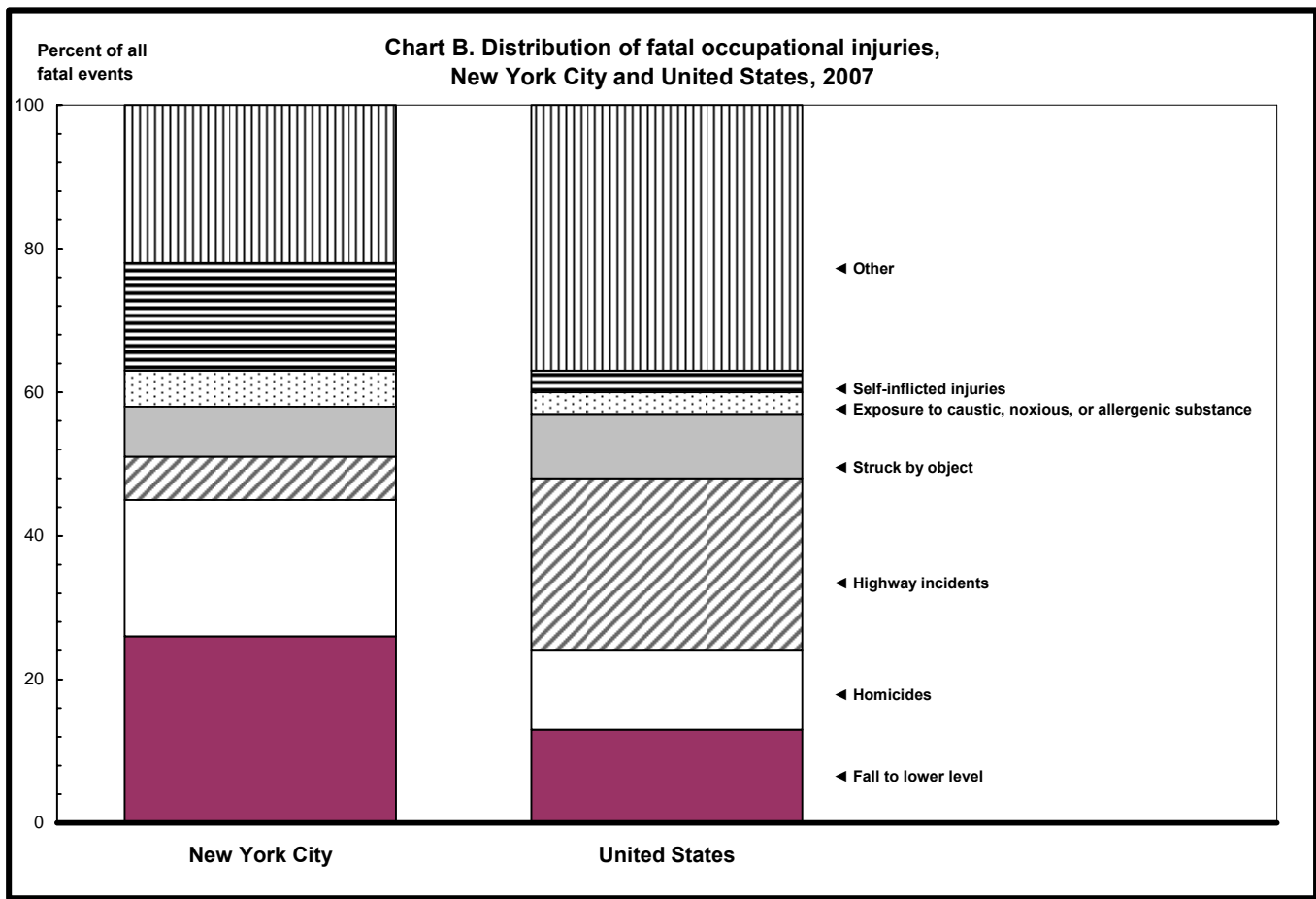
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The number of fatal falls to lower levels declined from 31 in 2006 to 21 in 2007, which accounted for more than half of the decline in the City’s work injury deaths. Fewer fatalities occurred in most other categories, including highway incidents, fatal exposures to caustic, noxious, or allergenic substances, and workers being struck by objects. In contrast, suicides doubled, going from 6 in 2006 to 12 in 2007.

Highway incidents continued to be the most frequent fatal workplace event in the United States, accounting for 24 percent of fatal work injuries. (In New York City, 6 percent of all fatalities were attributed to this event.) Falls to a lower level was the second most frequent type of fatality accounting for 13 percent of the national total, followed by homicides (11 percent), being struck by an object (9 percent), and being struck by a vehicle or mobile equipment (6 percent). As these figures suggest, the distribution of fatalities in New York City differed from the national distribution. (See chart B.) In particular, the share of highway fatalities was much lower in the City than for the nation as a whole, while the share of falls to a lower level was higher.

At the national level, fatal work injuries decreased 6 percent from the revised total of 5,840 fatalities recorded in 2006. Workers fatally struck by objects declined 14 percent in 2007 to a series low of 504. Fatal highway incidents dropped 3 percent to 1,311, the lowest number recorded since 1993, and falls to a lower level declined by 1 percent. On the other hand, homicides rose 13 percent in 2007, after falling to a series low in 2006.



Profile of fatal work injuries by industry, occupation, and demographic characteristics in New York City

Industry. Most fatalities in New York City continued to occur in the construction sector, with 24 worker deaths in 2007, down from the series high of 43 deaths recorded in 2006. (See table 2.) In construction, falls to a lower level were the most common event, accounting for 58 percent of the sector's fatalities. The New York City construction sector accounted for 30 percent of all fatalities; nationally, construction accounted for 21 percent of workplace deaths, leading the other sectors with 1,178 fatal injuries.

Retail trade and government operations (of all industry types) each had 10 worker deaths, the next highest count among industry sectors in New York City. Half of the fatalities in retail trade involved homicides. Transportation and warehousing, with seven work fatalities, was the only other sector to experience more than six work deaths in 2007.

Occupation. Three major occupational groups accounted for almost 60 percent of all the workplace fatalities in the City. Construction and extraction workers suffered 24 fatalities, 15 of which involved construction laborers. (See table 3.) Falls to lower level were the most frequent type of fatality among construction and extraction workers, accounting for 15 incidents.

Transportation and material moving occupations had 14 deaths, 8 of which involved motor vehicle operators. Highway incidents and being struck by a vehicle, mobile equipment were the most frequent events in transportation and material moving workplace injury fatalities.

Protective service occupations had nine deaths, three of which involved security guards. Homicides accounted for the most frequent occurrence in this occupation, numbering five deaths. No other major occupational group suffered more than six deaths.

Demographics. Thirty-eight percent of those fatally injured on-the-job in New York City were White, non-Hispanics. Hispanic or Latino workers accounted for 30 percent, non-Hispanic Black or African-Americans, 20 percent, and Asians, 12 percent. Worker fatalities among Hispanics decreased by 19 and among Black, non-Hispanics by 5. In contrast, work injury deaths increased among White, non-Hispanic and Asian employees by three incidents each. Nationally, fatalities among White, non-Hispanic workers decreased by 6 percent, while deaths to Asians increased by 4 percent.

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 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 2007 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 2007, there were 40 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 31 fatalities submitted by states were not included because the initiating source document 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. Revised counts for 2007 will be available in April 2009.

Over the last 5 years, increases in the 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. With the April 2008 release of final data, an additional 137 net fatal work injures were added, bringing the total for 2006 to 5,840.

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.

Acknowledgements

BLS thanks the participating states, New York City, 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.

Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries in New York City by event or exposure, 2006 and 2007

Event or exposure(1)	2006	2007	
	Number	Number	Percent
Total.....	99	81	100
Transportation incidents.....	14	12	15
Highway incidents.....	11	5	6
Collision between vehicles, mobile equipment..	6	-	-
Vehicle struck stationary object, equipment			
on side of road.....	3	-	-
Pedestrian, nonpassenger struck by vehicle,			
mobile equipment.....	-	6	7
Assaults and violent acts.....	21	27	33
Homicides.....	15	15	19
Shooting.....	10	12	15
Stabbing.....	3	-	-
Self-inflicted injury.....	6	12	15
Suicide, attempted suicide.....	6	12	15
Contact with objects and equipment.....	14	12	15
Struck by object.....	8	6	7
Struck by falling object.....	7	5	6
Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects.	-	4	5
Caught in or crushed in collapsing materials....	5	-	-
Falls.....	34	23	28
Fall to lower level.....	31	21	26
Fall from floor, dock, or ground level.....	4	3	4
Fall from ladder.....	8	4	5
Fall from roof.....	6	4	5
Fall from scaffold, staging.....	8	4	5
Exposure to harmful substances or environments....	10	5	6
Exposure to caustic, noxious, or allergenic			
substances.....	7	4	5
Ingestion of substance.....	6	-	-
Fires and explosions.....	6	-	-

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

(See note at end of tables.)

Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries in New York City by industry, 2006 and 2007

Industry(1)	NAICS code (1)	2006	2007	
		Number	Number	Percent
Total.....		99	81	100
Private industry.....		93	71	88
Goods producing.....		46	28	35
Construction.....	23	43	24	30
Construction of buildings.....	236	9	5	6
Residential building construction.	2361	5	-	-
Nonresidential building				
construction.....	2362	4	3	4
Specialty trade contractors.....	238	33	17	21
Foundation, structure, and				
building exterior contractors....	2381	18	8	10
Building equipment contractors....	2382	3	-	-
Building finishing contractors....	2383	5	5	6
Other specialty trade contractors.	2389	5	3	4
Manufacturing.....	31-33	3	4	5
Service providing.....		47	43	53
Trade, transportation, and utilities....		24	20	25
Wholesale trade.....	42	7	3	4
Merchant wholesalers, durable goods.	423	6	-	-
Retail trade.....	44-45	10	10	12
Building material and garden supply				
stores.....	444	3	-	-
Food and beverage stores.....	445	3	3	4
Clothing and clothing accessories				
stores.....	448	-	3	4
Transportation and warehousing.....	48-49	7	7	9
Truck transportation.....	484	3	3	4
Transit and ground passenger				
transportation.....	485	3	3	4
Financial activities.....		8	3	4
Real estate and rental and leasing....	53	8	3	4
Real estate.....	531	8	3	4

(See note at end of tables.)

**Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries in New York City by industry, 2006 and 2007--
continued**

Industry(1)	NAICS code (1)	2006	2007	
		Number	Number	Percent
Professional and business services.....		4	9	11
Professional and technical services...	54	-	3	4
Administrative and waste services.....	56	3	6	7
Education and health services.....		4	4	5
Health care and social assistance.....	62	3	3	4
Leisure and hospitality.....		5	5	6
Accommodation and food services.....	72	3	5	6
Food services and drinking places...	722	3	5	6
Other services, except public administration.....	81	-	-	
Government (2).....		6	10	12

1/ Based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System.

2/ Includes fatalities to workers employed by governmental organizations
regardless of industry.

(See note at end of tables.)

Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries in New York City by occupation, 2006 and 2007

Occupation(1)	2006	2007	
	Number	Number	Percent
Total.....	99	81	100
Management occupations.....	3	-	-
Protective service occupations.....	4	9	11
Security guards and gaming surveillance officers.....	-	3	4
Security guards.....	-	3	4
Building and grounds and maintenance occupations.....	6	3	4
Building cleaning workers.....	5	3	4
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners.....	5	-	-
Sales and related occupations.....	9	6	7
Supervisors, sales workers.....	3	3	4
Retail sales workers.....	4	3	4
Construction and extraction occupations.....	44	24	30
Supervisors, construction and extraction workers	5	3	4
Construction trades workers.....	37	21	26
Construction laborers.....	26	15	19
Electricians.....	3	-	-
Carpenters.....	-	3	4
Production occupations.....	4	4	5
Transportation and material moving occupations....	17	14	17
Motor vehicle operators.....	11	8	10
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers.....	7	5	6
Truck drivers, heavy and tractor trailer....	4	-	-
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs.....	3	3	4
Taxi drivers.....	-	3	4
Material moving workers.....	4	5	6
Laborers and material movers, hand.....	-	3	4

1/ Based on the 2000 Standard Occupational Classification system.
(See note at end of tables.)

Table 4. Fatal occupational injuries in New York City by selected demographic characteristics, 2006 and 2007

Characteristic	2006	2007	
	Number	Number	Percent
Total.....	99	81	100
Employee status			
Wage and salary(1).....	86	74	91
Self-employed(2).....	13	7	9
Sex			
Male.....	95	76	94
Female.....	4	5	6
Age (3)			
20 - 24 years.....	6	5	6
25 - 34 years.....	25	21	26
35 - 44 years.....	25	16	20
45 - 54 years.....	24	19	23
55 - 64 years.....	11	13	16
65 years and over.....	6	4	5
Race or ethnic origin(4)			
White.....	28	31	38
Black or African-American.....	21	16	20
Asian.....	7	10	12
Hispanic or Latino.....	43	24	30

1/ May include volunteers and workers receiving other types of compensation.

2/ Includes self-employed workers, owners of unincorporated businesses and farms, paid and unpaid family workers, members of partnerships, and may include owners of incorporated businesses.

3/ Because there may have been no incidents reported for some ages or because the data do not meet publication criteria, information is not available for all age groups. In addition, some fatalities may have had insufficient information with which to determine the age of the decedents.

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

NOTE: Data 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 do not meet publication criteria.