



# 2020 | Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries

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## Executive Summary

The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) releases this report each year to help employers, safety professionals, and policymakers identify occupational safety and health issues. The data in this report are the latest available from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). CFOI fatality counts exclude illness-related deaths unless caused by an injury event. COVID-19-related deaths are not included in the findings below.

### Key Findings

In 2020, there were 469 fatal occupational injuries in Texas, 139 less than 2019 (608) — a 23% decrease. The incident rate of fatalities in Texas was 3.9 per 100,000 full-time employees in 2020.

Private sector employees represented 92% of total fatalities with 431 incidents in 2020 — a decrease of 142 from 2019 (573). The other 38 incidents involved public/governmental sector employees — an increase of three from 2019 (35).

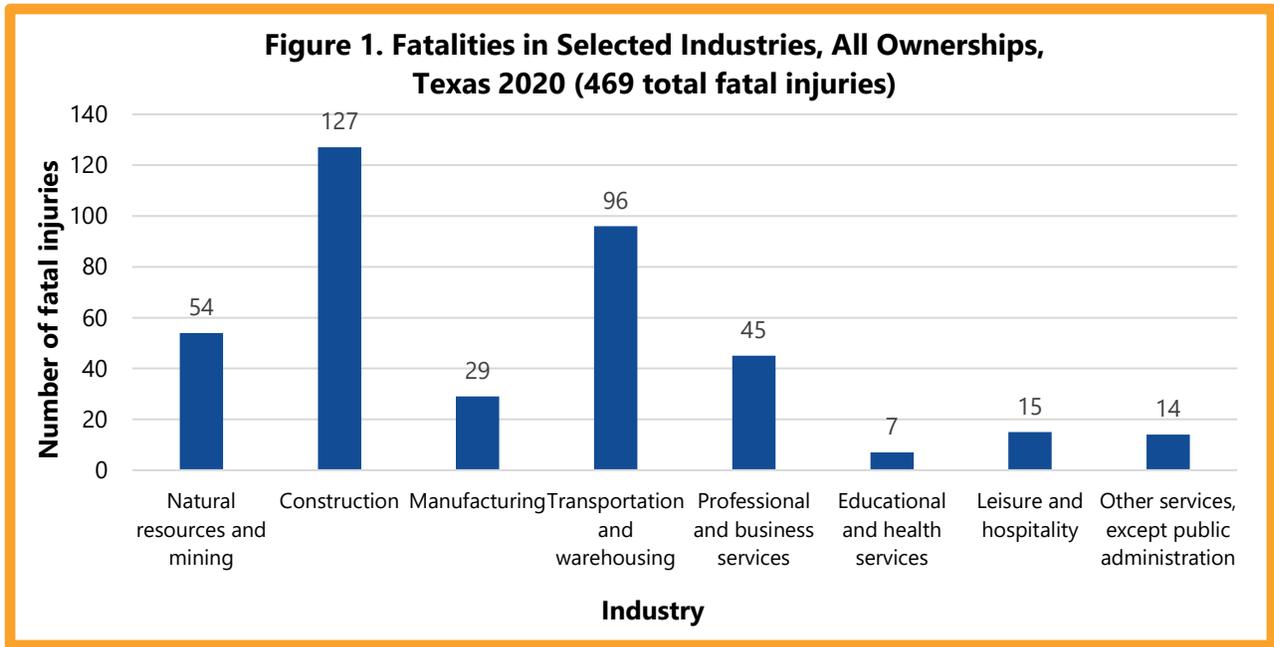
Nationally, there were 4,764 fatal occupational injuries — an incident rate of 3.4.

### Workplace Characteristics

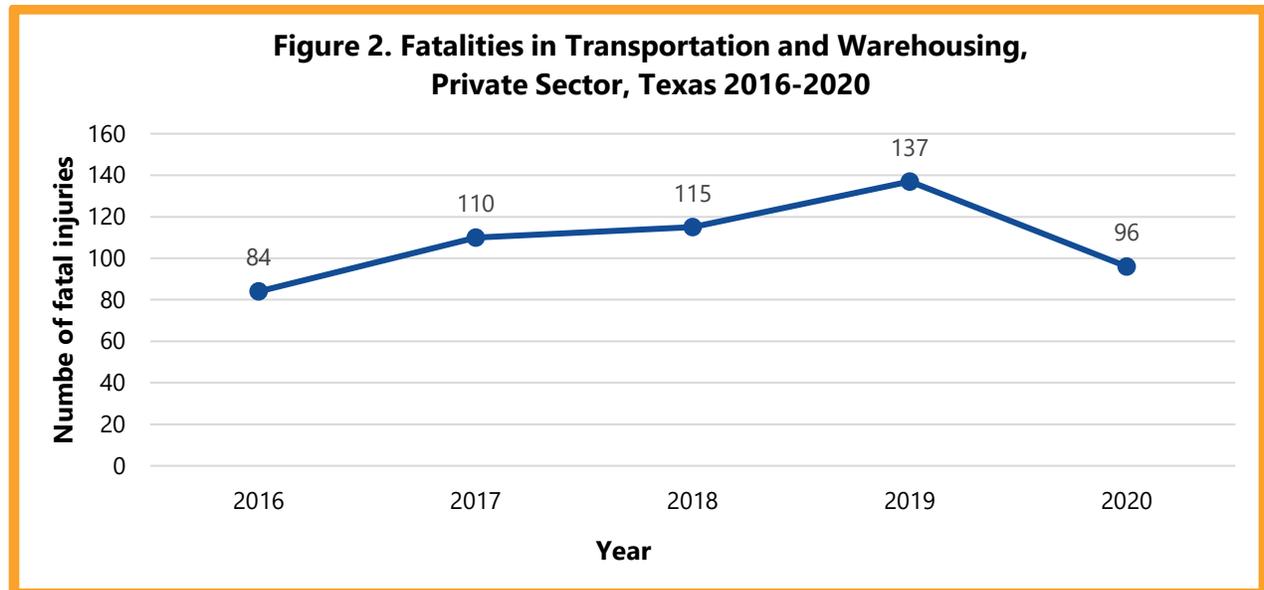
This report has information about the industries and occupations of fatally-injured employees. Industry information refers to the type of business where an employee worked. Occupation information refers to the type of work an employee did. For example, a transportation company employs managers and salespeople, as well as truck drivers. Transportation and material moving occupations are found in both goods-producing industries and service-providing industries. This report shows both industry and occupation information to give a more complete picture of the workplace characteristics of fatally-injured employees. Reported categories may change from year to year to limit the disclosure of information about individual employees.

### Industries

Between the public and private sectors, the construction industry had the highest number of fatalities with 127 incidents. This is 27% of all fatalities in Texas (see Figure 1) — an increase of four incidents and up from 20% of all fatalities in 2019. As shown in Figure 2, fatalities in the transportation and warehousing industry decreased to 96 (20% of all incidents in 2020), down from 137 incidents (23% of the total) in 2019. This reverses a long-term trend of year-to-year increases.



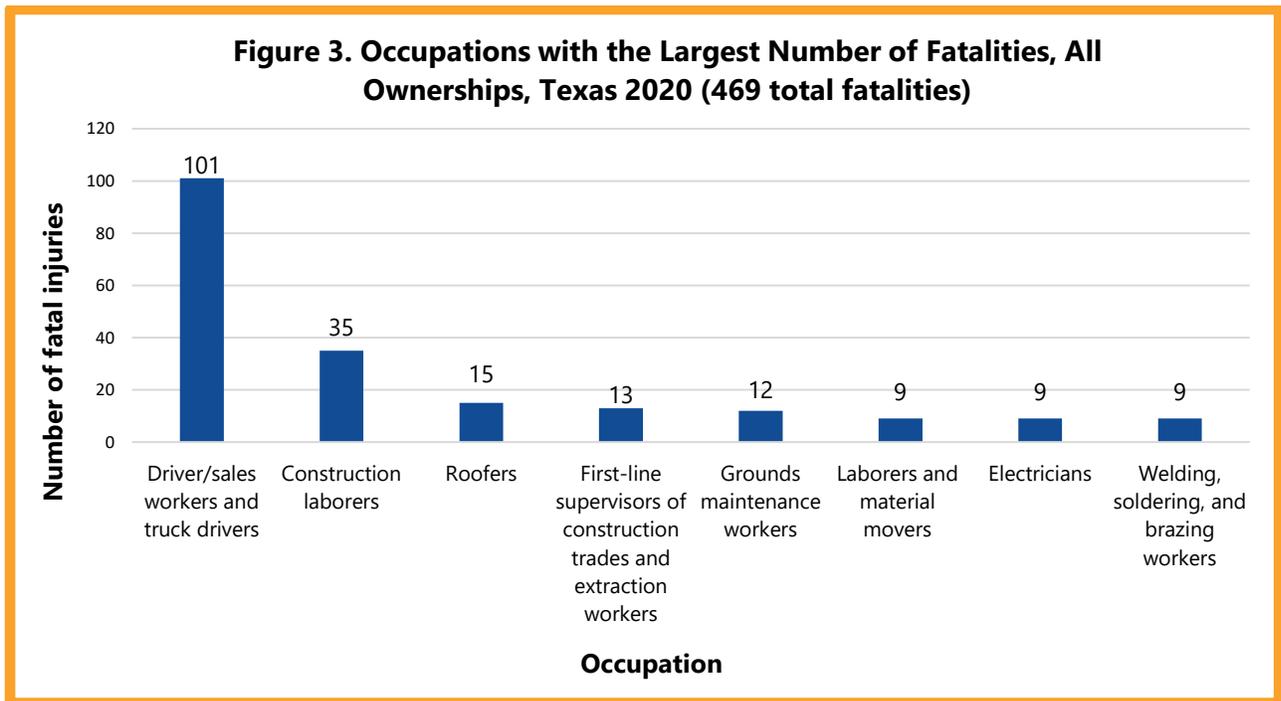
Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021



Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

### Occupations

Figure 3 shows that the occupation with the highest number of fatalities was driver/sales workers and truck drivers with 101 incidents, representing 22% of all fatal work injuries. This was a decrease in total number of incidents from 2019 (142).



Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

## Industries

### Goods-producing industries

Among the goods-producing industries in the private sector, the construction industry continues to have the highest number of fatalities with 127 in 2020 (see Table 1). In 2020, there were 54 natural resources and mining fatalities —18 less than 2019 (72).

### Service-providing industries

Among the service-providing industries in the private sector, transportation and warehousing had the highest number of incidents at 96. Within transportation and warehousing, truck transportation accounted for 16% of all fatalities with 73 fatalities (see Figure 2).

### Government

Of the 38 fatalities that involved governmental employees, 30 were employees in local government. Fourteen of those in local government were in police protection up from 11 in 2019.

**Table 1. Number of Fatalities by Industry,<sup>1</sup>  
Texas 2019-2020**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Private industry</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>431</b>
<b>Goods-producing</b>	--	--
<b>Natural resources and mining</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>54</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	23	30
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction <sup>2</sup>	49	24
Oil and gas extraction	5	4
Support activities for mining	42	17
<b>Construction</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>127</b>
Heavy and civil engineering construction	21	40
<b>Manufacturing</b>	--	<b>29</b>
<b>Service-providing</b>	--	--
<b>Trade, transportation, and utilities</b>	<b>195</b>	--
Wholesale trade	29	14
Retail trade	24	20
Transportation and warehousing	137	96
Truck transportation	91	73
Real estate and rental leasing	10	5
<b>Professional and business services</b>	--	<b>45</b>
Professional, scientific, and technical services	13	4
<b>Education and health services</b>	--	<b>7</b>
<b>Leisure and hospitality</b>	--	<b>15</b>
Accommodation and food services	14	12
Food services and drinking places	11	--
<b>Other services, except public administration</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>
Repair and maintenance	12	11
<b>Government<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>35</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Federal government</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>State government</b>	--	<b>5</b>
<b>Local government</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>
Educational services	3	6
Executive, legislative, and other government support	3	--
Police protection	11	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>469</b>

Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

<sup>1</sup> CFOI has used several versions of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) since 2003 to define industry. For complete information on the version of NAICS used this year, see the definitions page at [www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm](http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm). Cases where ownership is unknown are included in private industry counts. Cases classified as foreign government and other government are included in all government counts, but not displayed separately. Cases where industry is unknown are included in the service sector counts.

<sup>2</sup> Includes fatal injuries at all establishments categorized as Mining (Sector 21) in NAICS, including establishments not governed by the Mine Safety and Health Administration rules and reporting, such as those in Oil and Gas Extraction.

<sup>3</sup> Includes fatal injuries to workers employed by federal, state, local, and foreign governmental organizations regardless of industry.

## Occupations

Incidents among construction laborers increased from 29 in 2019 to 35 in 2020, representing 7% of all incidents. Roofer fatalities increased from 14 in 2019 to 15 in 2020. Laborers and material movers saw a decrease in incidents from 15 in 2019 to 9 in 2020. The number of cases may not add up to 469, because of rounding and data from non-selected characteristics.

**Table 2. Number of Fatalities by Major Occupational Group,<sup>4</sup>  
Texas 2019-2020**

Major Occupational Group	2019	2020
<b>Transportation and material moving</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>141</b>
<b>Motor vehicle operators</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>106</b>
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	142	101
<b>Material moving workers</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>
Laborers and material movers	15	9
<b>Construction and extraction</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Construction trades workers</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>
Construction laborers	29	35
Electricians	10	9
Roofers	14	15
<b>Installation, maintenance, and repair</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Protective service</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Grounds maintenance workers</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Production</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Welding, soldering, and brazing workers</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Sales and related</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Military specific occupations<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Management</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Farming, fishing, and forestry</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Office and administrative support</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Food preparation and serving</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Personal care and service</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>469</b>

Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

<sup>4</sup> CFOI has used several versions of the Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) system since 2003 to define occupation. For more information on the version of SOC used this year, see the definitions page at [www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm](http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm).

<sup>5</sup> Includes fatal injuries to people identified as resident armed forces regardless of individual occupation listed.

## Case Characteristics

Case characteristics give details of the fatal injuries. Each injury is broken out into multiple characteristics including Nature of Injury, Illness; Part of Body Affected; Event or Exposure; and Source of Injury, Illness; Location where injury was sustained, etc. Two of those characteristics — Event or Exposure and Location — are discussed below. The number of cases may not add up to 469, because of rounding and data from non-selected characteristics.

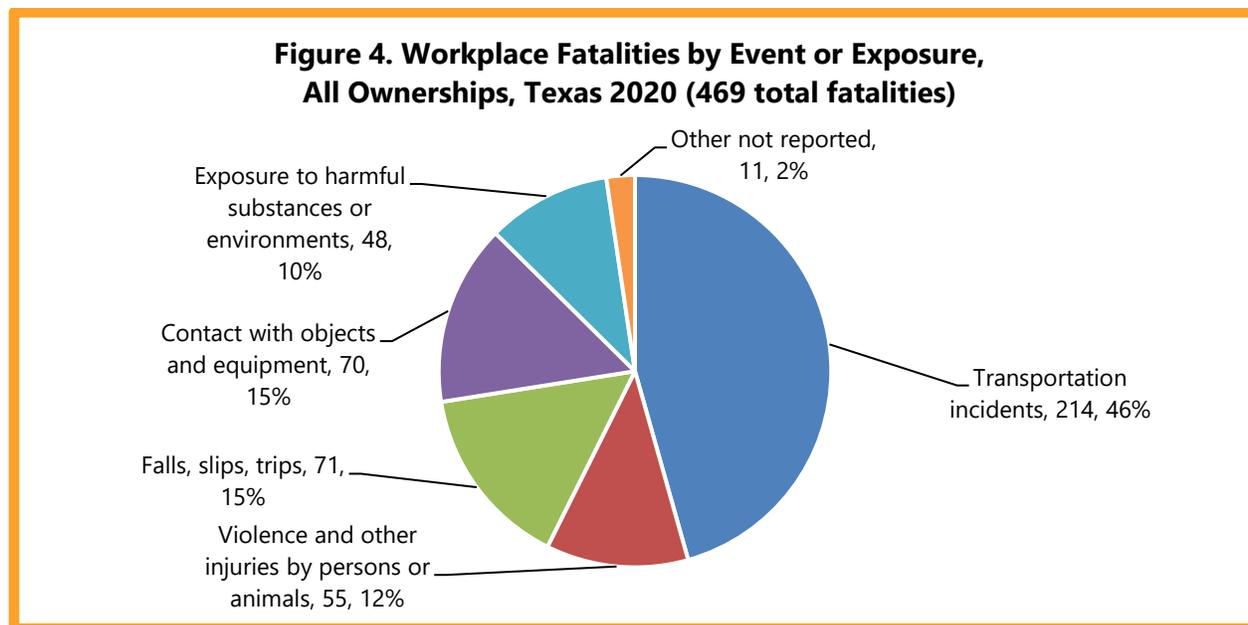
### Event or exposure

Contact with objects and equipment is the only major event category that increased from 2019 (63) to 2020 (70). Other not reported also increased, from 2019 (2) to 2020 (11).

The event or exposure with the highest number of fatalities was transportation incidents with 214, representing 46% of all incidents (see Figure 3). This was a decrease in total number of incidents from 2020 (283). Most categories within transportation incidents decreased from 2019 to 2020. Roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle decreased from 181 to 146, but still accounted for 54% of all fatalities. Aircraft incidents decreased from 21 to 9.

There were 55 incidents of violence and other injuries by persons or animals, which accounted for 12% of all incidents. Intentional injury by person accounted for 46 incidents, down from 2019 (78). Homicides decreased from 56 in 2019 to 38 in 2020. There were 8 suicides — down from 22 in 2019.

Falls, slips, and trips decreased to 71 from 2019 (96) and accounted for 15% of all incidents.



Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

**Table 3. Number of Fatalities by Event or Exposure,<sup>6</sup>  
Texas 2019-2020**

<b>Event or Exposure</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
<b>Violence and other injuries by persons or animals</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>55</b>
Intentional injury by person	78	46
Homicides	56	38
Shooting by other person – intentional	49	31
Stabbing, cutting, slashing, piercing	4	--
Suicides	22	8
Animal and insect-related incidents	6	--
<b>Transportation incidents</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>214</b>
Aircraft incidents	21	9
Rail vehicle incidents	7	--
Pedestrian vehicular incident	45	35
Pedestrian struck by vehicle in work zone	7	7
Pedestrian struck by vehicle in roadway	11	12
Pedestrian struck by vehicle on side of road	7	9
Pedestrian struck by vehicle in nonroadway area	19	7
Roadway incident involving motorized land vehicle	181	146
Roadway collision with other vehicle	123	92
Roadway collision with object other than vehicle	31	35
Roadway noncollision incident	27	19
Nonroadway incident involving motorized land vehicle	27	12
<b>Fire or explosion</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>--</b>
Explosion	9	--
<b>Falls, slips, trips</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>71</b>
Fall on same level	15	13
Fall to lower level	79	58
Other fall to lower level (from ladders, roofs, scaffolds, structural steel, trees, nonmoving vehicles, stairs)	66	48
Other fall to lower level less than 6 feet	11	6
Other fall to lower level 6 to 10 feet	11	9
Other fall to lower level 11 to 15 feet	13	9
Other fall to lower level 16 to 20 feet	7	6
Other fall to lower level 21 to 25 feet	4	8
Other fall to lower level 26 to 30 feet	4	5
Other fall to lower level more than 30 feet	6	--
<b>Exposure to harmful substances or environments</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>48</b>
Exposure to electricity	29	19
Exposure to temperature extremes	6	--
Exposure to other harmful substances	21	22

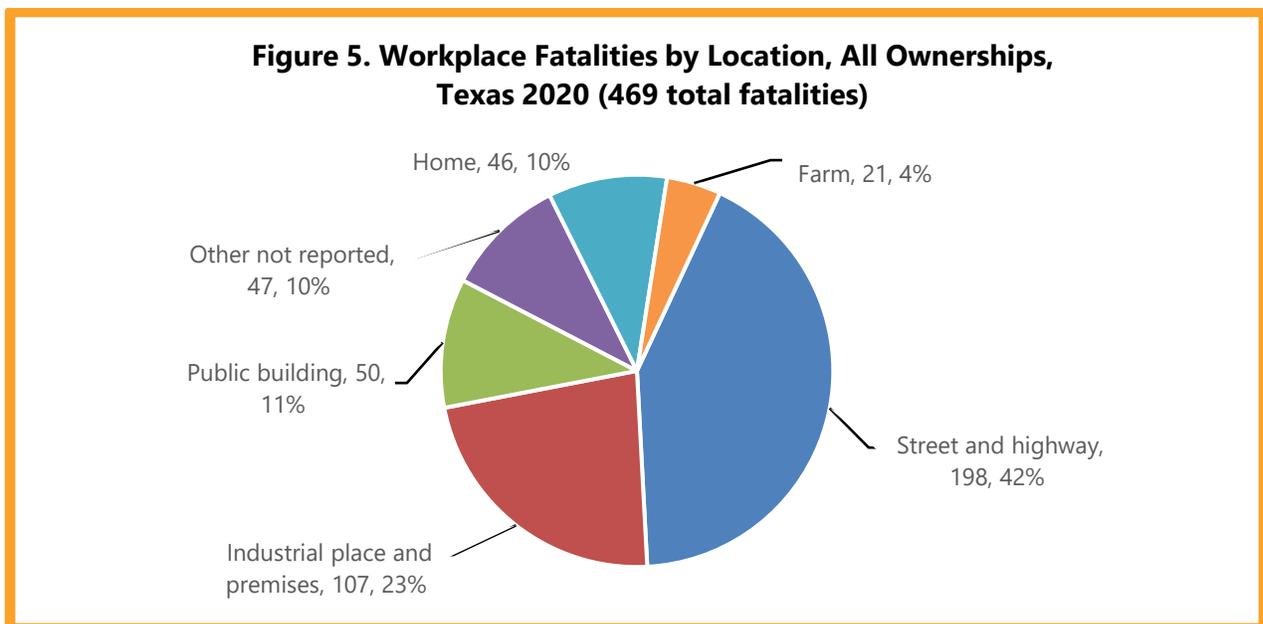
<sup>6</sup> Based on the BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System 2.01 implemented for 2011 data forward.

Event or Exposure	2019	2020
Nonmedical use of drugs or alcohol unintentional overdose	12	13
Inhalation of harmful substance	9	9
<b>Contact with objects and equipment</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>70</b>
Struck by object or equipment	49	50
Struck by powered vehicle nontransport	21	22
Struck by falling object or equipment	22	22
Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects	11	12
Caught in running equipment or machinery	7	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>608</b>	<b>469</b>

Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

## Location

The most common location for a fatal injury is on streets or highways with a total of 198 incidents, accounting for 42% of all fatal injuries. Industrial place and premises includes maritime dockyards, industrial yards, loading platforms, railyards, warehouses, constructions, factories, plants, and repair shops. These locations represent 23% of all fatalities with 107 incidents.



Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, December 2021

## Demographics

Most demographics had decreases in incidents in-line with the decrease in total incidents and did not change statistically from 2019 to 2020. Men still accounted for 93% of total fatalities (438 incidents) and employees over the age of 55 still accounted for 33% (155 incidents).

From 2011 to 2019, White (non-Hispanic) employees have consistently had the highest number of incidents. But in 2020, they were only involved in 38% (179) of all fatalities — down from 45%

(273) in 2019, while Hispanic or Latino employees had the highest number of fatal injuries with 221 incidents — 47% of all fatalities.

Twelve percent were Black or African American (non-Hispanic) (56), and 2% were Asian (non-Hispanic) (10). Eighty-six percent of the fatalities involved wage and salary employees (404) and the rest were self-employed (65).

The CFOI data tables are on the [TDI website](#). For more information about fatal occupational injuries, contact DWC at 512-804-4640 or [cfoi@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:cfoi@tdi.texas.gov).

## Endnotes

In accordance with [BLS policies](#), individually identifiable data collected by the CFOI program is used exclusively for statistical purposes and is protected under the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002 (CIPSEA). Data is collected under a pledge of confidentiality and requires BLS to prevent disclosure of identifying information of decedents. Disclosure of confidential information is a serious issue, a violation of CIPSEA, and a matter that BLS has addressed with new disclosure protections beginning with the 2019 CFOI release. These disclosure protections have significant impacts on the data that is publishable for 2019 to present and have resulted in the suppression of some private sector numbers to protect the confidentiality of all employees in the private and public sectors.

CFOI fatal injury counts exclude illness-related deaths unless caused by an injury event.

Data for all years is revised and final.

See data definitions at [www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm](http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm).

Beginning with survey year 2011, the classification system used to code case characteristics and occupations was revised, which created a break in series. Case characteristics (nature, body part, source, and event) and many occupations for years after 2011 are not comparable to data for years before 2011.

A dash in place of a number in a table or chart means data does not meet publication guidelines.

Source: BLS, U.S. Department of Labor, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, in cooperation with participating state agencies, December 2021.

## DWC Resources

DWC provides various safety and health services to help reduce injuries and illnesses in the workplace, including:

- free safety and health consultations on Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations;
- regional and onsite safety training;
- free safety and health publications;
- free safety training streaming videos; and
- the Safety Violations Hotline.

For more information on these services, visit [www.txsafetyatwork.com](http://www.txsafetyatwork.com) or call 800-252-7031, option 2. Employers that carry workers' compensation insurance in Texas can get accident prevention services from their insurance companies at no additional charge.



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