



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

Division of Workers' Compensation

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2015 Fatal Occupational Injuries in Texas

In 2015, there were 527 fatal occupational injuries in Texas, a 1 percent decrease from 531 in 2014, according to data from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). Nationally, there were 4,836 fatal occupational injuries. The rate of fatal occupational injuries in Texas was 4.5 per 100,000 full-time employees in 2015.

Incidence rates for non-fatal injuries and illnesses by industry for 2015 were released in October 2016. In 2015, the Texas private sector incidence rate for nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses was 2.3 per 100 full-time employees, while the national rate was 3.0 per 100 full-time employees.

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) compiles detailed information on all occupational fatalities occurring in Texas for the CFOI, a program jointly administered with the BLS. DWC annually releases total fatal injury counts and descriptive data to provide information to help employers, safety professionals, and policymakers identify occupational safety and health issues in the state.

DWC provides various safety and health services to help employers provide safe and healthy workplaces, including guidance and resources for developing occupational driving safety programs on its *Driving Safety* website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/drivesafe.html>. Resources by industry and occupation can be found on the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/targetareas.html>. Other services include free safety and health consultations on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations; regional and onsite safety training; free safety training DVD loans; the Safety Violations Hotline; and free safety and health publications. For more information on these services, visit the TDI website at <http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/index.html> or call (800) 372-7713, option 2. In addition, employers that carry workers' compensation insurance in Texas can obtain accident prevention services from their insurance companies.

Key Findings

- Transportation incidents continued as the leading cause of fatal occupational injuries, accounting for 45 percent (238 incidents). While other types of transportation incident categories increased, roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle decreased from 191 to 179 incidents.
- Almost half of the employees involved in roadway incidents were not motor vehicle operators by occupation. Forty-eight percent of the highway motor vehicles involved were pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles.
- Roadway transportation incidents involving the support activities for mining industry decreased from 35 incidents in 2014 to 14. In the truck transportation industry, these incidents increased from 48 to 57 incidents.
- Pedestrian vehicular incidents increased from 21 incidents in 2014 to 28. Pedestrians struck by a vehicle in a non-roadway area increased from 7 to 11 incidents.
- Fatal injuries resulting from falls followed transportation incidents, increasing 28 percent (from 67 to 86 incidents). The third-leading cause of fatal occupational injuries was violence and other incidents with 76 incidents, an increase of 15 percent from 2014. Of these, 61 percent involved homicides.
- The industry subsectors in Texas experiencing the highest number of fatal occupational injuries were specialty trade contractors (85 incidents), truck transportation (75 incidents), administrative

and support services (42 incidents), support activities for mining (33 incidents), and heavy and civil engineering construction (26 incidents).

- Fatal injuries in government increased from 38 incidents in 2014 to 46. State government increased from three to nine incidents.
- In Texas in 2015, the major occupation group with the highest number of fatalities was transportation and material moving occupations, with 166 incidents. This was down from 178 incidents in 2014. Of these, 98 incidents involved heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers. This decreased 117 incidents in 2014.
- The construction and extraction occupation group had the second-highest number of fatalities, with 119 incidents. Of these, 84 involved construction trades workers, an increase from 72 incidents in 2014. Fatalities involving extraction workers decreased from 34 in 2014 to 13.

Causes of Fatalities

Transportation Incidents

Transportation incidents continued as the leading cause of fatal occupational injuries in Texas. Of the transportation incidents, 179 were roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle, 28 were pedestrian vehicular accidents, 14 were non-roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle, 10 were aircraft incidents, and five were rail vehicle incidents (Table 1). The months with the highest number of roadway incidents were September and October (20 incidents each). The month with the lowest was August (six incidents).

Of the roadway incidents, 121 occurred on a state or U.S. highway. Seventy-four of the employees involved were heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers and 16 were construction trades workers. A semi, tractor-trailer, tanker truck was involved in 69 of the roadway incidents and 56 involved a pickup. Roadway collisions moving in same direction increased from 19 to 27, while roadway collisions moving and standing vehicle on side of road decreased from 10 to four.

The service providing industries in the private sector recorded 109 roadway incidents. Of these, 57 occurred in the truck transportation industry. Of the 57 roadway incidents in the private sector goods producing industries, 17 were in the specialty trade construction contractors industry, and 14 were in the support activities for mining industry.

Of the 28 pedestrian vehicular incidents, 16 occurred on a street or highway, five occurred at an employer parking lot, and four occurred at an industrial place or premise such as an industrial yard or construction site. Almost one-third of the pedestrians were struck by a freight hauling and utility truck and another 32 percent were struck by a multi-purpose vehicle such as a pickup truck or sport utility vehicle (SUV). Eleven of the employees involved in pedestrian vehicular incidents were in the transportation and material moving occupations and five were in the construction and extraction occupations.

Falls

The second-leading cause of fatal occupational injuries was falls, slips, or trips with 86 incidents, an increase of 67 incidents in 2014. Seventy-nine of these incidents involved falls to a lower level, up from 55 incidents. Almost half of the falls to a lower level (38 incidents) were from structures and surfaces, such as roofs and scaffolds, and 16 were from tools, instruments, and equipment, such as ladders. Thirty-eight of the falls to a lower level occurred at an industrial place or construction site, while 25 occurred at a private residence or residential construction site.

Private sector goods producing industries accounted for 51 of the falls to a lower level, 41 of which were in the construction industry. This was an increase from 28 in 2014. Thirty of the employees were in the construction trades occupations. Hispanic or Latino employees were involved in 44 incidents, up from 28.

Assaults and violent acts

The third-leading cause of fatal occupational injuries was assaults and violent acts, with 76 incidents. Of the assaults and violent acts, 46 were homicides, 21 were suicides, and five were animal and insect-related incidents.

Of the homicides, 37 involved a shooting, and a pistol, handgun, or revolver was used in 29 of those incidents. In 12 of the homicides, the assailant was a robber, and 10 cases involved a co-worker. Employees were involved in tending a retail establishment in 11 of the homicides and in protective service activities in nine incidents. Twenty-one of the homicides occurred in a public building such as a hotel, motel, or convenience store, and 11 occurred in a parking lot or garage.

Thirty-four of the homicides occurred in the private sector service providing industries. Of these, 13 were employees working in the retail trade industry, such as grocery stores, gasoline stations, and tobacco stores; six were in administrative and support and waste management and remediation services industry, which includes security guards and patrol services; and four were in the accommodation and food services industry, such as restaurants and bars.

Employees in sales and related occupations, such as cashiers, were involved in 13 of the homicides, and nine were in protective service occupations, such as police and security guards. Nineteen of the homicides involved Hispanic or Latino employees, an increase from 13 in 2014, and homicides involving White (non-Hispanic) employees decreased from 18 to 13. More than half of the homicides occurred on Wednesday and Thursday (12 incidents each).

Table 1. Annual Number of Fatal Occupational Injuries in Texas by Event or Exposure, 2014-2015

| Event or Exposure | 2014 | 2015 |
|--|------------|------------|
| Total | 531 | 527 |
| Violence and other injuries by persons or animals | 66 | 76 |
| Intentional injury by person | 61 | 67 |
| Homicides | 39 | 46 |
| Suicides | 22 | 21 |
| Injury by person—unintentional or intent unknown | 1 | 4 |
| Animal and insect related incidents | 4 | 5 |
| Transportation incidents | 243 | 238 |
| Aircraft incidents | 5 | 10 |
| Rail vehicle incidents | 5 | 5 |
| Pedestrian vehicular incident | 21 | 28 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle in work zone | 4 | 3 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle in roadway | 6 | 6 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle on side of road | 4 | 7 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle in nonroadway area | 7 | 11 |
| Water vehicle incident | 7 | -- |
| Roadway incident involving motorized land vehicle | 191 | 179 |
| Roadway collision with other vehicle | 111 | 112 |

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|---|-----------|-----------|
| Roadway collision with object other than vehicle | 38 | 34 |
| Roadway noncollision incident | 42 | 33 |
| Nonroadway incident involving motorized land vehicle | 13 | 14 |
| Nonroadway noncollision incident | 11 | 10 |
| Fire or explosion | 24 | 13 |
| Fire | 7 | 6 |
| Ignition of vapor, gases, or liquids | -- | 5 |
| Explosion | 17 | 7 |
| Explosion of pressure vessel, piping, or tire | 9 | 3 |
| Fall, slip, trip | 67 | 86 |
| Fall on same level | 12 | 7 |
| Fall to lower level | 55 | 79 |
| Other fall to lower level (from ladders, roofs, scaffolds, structural steel, trees, nonmoving vehicles, stairs) | 46 | 65 |
| Other fall to lower level less than 6 feet | 6 | 6 |
| Other fall to lower level 6 to 10 feet | 12 | 14 |
| Other fall to lower level 11 to 15 feet | 5 | 9 |
| Other fall to lower level 16 to 20 feet | -- | 5 |
| Other fall to lower level 21 to 25 feet | 6 | -- |
| Other fall to lower level 26 to 30 feet | 3 | 4 |
| Other fall to lower level more than 30 feet | 9 | 15 |
| Exposure to harmful substances or environments | 53 | 41 |
| Exposure to electricity | 29 | 20 |
| Exposure to temperature extremes | 5 | 7 |
| Exposure to other harmful substances | 17 | 12 |
| Nonmedical use of drugs or alcohol unintentional overdose | 5 | 6 |
| Inhalation of harmful substance | 12 | 6 |
| Contact with objects and equipment | 77 | 72 |
| Struck by object or equipment | 58 | 54 |
| Struck by powered vehicle nontransport | 24 | 28 |
| Struck by falling object or equipment | 23 | 23 |
| Struck by discharged or flying object | 5 | 1 |
| Caught in or compressed by equipment or objects | 13 | 6 |
| Caught in running equipment or machinery | 10 | 6 |
| Struck, caught, or crushed in collapsing structure, equipment, or material | 6 | 12 |

Notes for Table 1

- *Based on the BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) 2.01 implemented for 2011 data forward.*
- *Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately.*
- *Data for all years are revised and final.*
- *Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.*
- *N.e.c. means "not elsewhere classified."*
- *CFOI fatal injury counts exclude illness-related deaths unless precipitated by an injury event.*

Fatalities by Industry

Overall, 481 incidents in Texas involved employees in the private sector in 2015 (Table 2). The service providing industries in the private sector recorded 274 incidents, while 207 incidents occurred in the goods producing industries. The other 46 incidents occurred among several government industries.

Goods Producing Industries

Among the goods producing industries in the private sector, the construction industry had the highest number of fatal injuries, with 124 incidents. This represented an increase of 16 percent from 2014. Forty-one of these fatalities were attributed to falls, slips, or trips and 34 were due to transportation incidents. These causes both increased from 2014 (29 and 30 respectively). Eighty-five of the construction industry fatalities occurred in the specialty trade contractors subsector, an increase from 70 in 2014. Construction trades workers had the highest number of fatalities in this industry, with 72 incidents.

While the mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction industry experienced the second highest number of fatalities (36 incidents), it also had the largest decrease, down from 75 incidents in 2014. Nineteen of those fatalities were due to transportation incidents, which declined from 39 in 2014. Both fires or explosions and contact with objects and equipment caused five incidents each. Extraction workers had the highest number of fatalities in this industry (13 incidents), followed by transportation and material moving occupations with nine incidents.

Service Providing Industries

Among the service providing industries in the private sector, the transportation and warehousing industry experienced the highest number of fatal injuries (100 incidents). Seventy-seven of those fatalities were due to transportation incidents. Of those, 66 were roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle and eight involved pedestrians being struck by a vehicle. Sixty-one the industry incidents involved a semi, tractor-trailer, tanker truck. The occupation with the highest number of fatalities was heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (74 incidents).

The administrative and waste services industry had the second-highest number of fatal injuries, with 51 incidents, an increase from 37 in 2014. Fifteen of those fatalities were due to transportation incidents, followed by 14 falls, slips, or trips. The occupation with the highest number of fatalities in this industry was grounds maintenance workers (20 incidents).

Government Industries

Forty-six fatal incidents in Texas involved employees in the public sector, an increase from 38 in 2014. Of those, 27 were employees in local government. Twenty-seven of all government employees were involved in a transportation incident and 11 were involved in violence and other injuries by a person or animal. Falls, slips, or trips and contact with objects and equipment each accounted for four incidents. Thirty-three percent of the employees involved were in protective service occupations, such as fire fighters and police officers (15 incidents).

Table 2. Annual Number of Fatal Occupational Injuries in Texas by Industry, Private Sector, 2014-2015

| Industry | 2014 | 2015 |
|--|------------|------------|
| Total | 531 | 527 |
| Private industry | 493 | 481 |
| Goods producing | 255 | 207 |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting | 21 | 17 |
| Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | 75 | 36 |
| Oil and gas extraction | 8 | 3 |
| Support activities for mining | 64 | 33 |

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|---|------------|------------|
| Construction | 107 | 124 |
| Construction of buildings | 11 | 13 |
| Heavy and civil engineering construction | 26 | 26 |
| Specialty trade contractors | 70 | 85 |
| Manufacturing | 52 | 30 |
| Service Providing | 238 | 274 |
| Wholesale trade | 20 | 22 |
| Retail trade | 20 | 34 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 94 | 100 |
| Truck transportation | 70 | 75 |
| Support activities for transportation | 7 | 12 |
| Couriers and messengers | 3 | 5 |
| Utilities | 4 | 5 |
| Information | -- | -- |
| Finance and insurance | -- | -- |
| Real estate and rental leasing | 8 | 9 |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 12 | 4 |
| Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services | 37 | 51 |
| Administrative and support services | 31 | 42 |
| Waste management and remediation services | 6 | 9 |
| Education and health services | -- | 3 |
| Health care and social assistance | 6 | 9 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 4 | 8 |
| Accommodation and food services | 12 | 5 |
| Other services, except public administration | 17 | 20 |
| Government | 38 | 46 |
| Federal government | 7 | 10 |
| State government | 3 | 9 |
| Local government | 28 | 27 |
| Police protection | 9 | 9 |
| Fire protection | 3 | -- |

Notes for Table 2

- *Industry data are based on the North American Industry Classification System, 2012.*
- *Includes fatal injuries at all establishments categorized as Mining (Sector 21) in the North American Industry Classification System, including establishments not governed by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) rules and reporting, such as those in Oil and Gas Extraction.*
- *Includes fatal injuries to workers employed by governmental organizations regardless of industry.*
- *Data for all years are revised and final.*
- *Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately.*
- *Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.*

Employee Demographics

Eighty-two percent of the fatal occupational injuries involved wage and salary employees (431 incidents) and the remainder were self-employed.

Women accounted for 4 percent of the total fatalities (22 incidents), a decrease from 2014 (30 incidents). They were involved in eight fatal roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle and were the victims of homicides in four cases. The leading cause of fatalities among men was roadway incidents involving a motorized land vehicle, with 171 incidents, followed by falls to a lower level in 78 incidents. Forty-six percent of the employees were White (non-Hispanic) (244 incidents); 42 percent were Hispanic or Latino (220 incidents), 10 percent were Black or African-American (non-Hispanic) (51 incidents); and, 2 percent were Asian (non-Hispanic) (12 incidents).

The CFOI data tables can be found on the TDI website at www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/sis/fathomepage.html. For more information about fatal occupational injuries, contact DWC at (512) 804-5020 or cfoi@tdi.texas.gov.