



Analysis of Construction-Related Falls Treated in ERs

Non-Fatal Construction Industry Fall-Related Injuries Treated in US Emergency Departments, 1998–2005

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Overview

Researchers described fall-related injuries treated in U.S. emergency departments among workers in the construction industry for a six-year period (1998-2005). These data do not require that the work-related injury be reported to workers' compensation or employer in order to be identified as such.

Key Findings

- The injury rate was twice as high among workers age 24 and younger than it was among those ages 45 and older. However, workers over the age of 50 more often experienced serious injuries and had a higher proportion of falls resulting in fractures.
- Researchers found that injuries in the emergency room admission data did not decline while injuries in the BLS's Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) dropped. (NB: The BLS' data are a national estimate based on employer-provided information collected through OSHA, while the ER data are actual admissions used in a geographically representative sample of hospitals providing emergency services.)

Recommendations:

- Researchers recommend expanded enforcement of existing fall prevention regulations and supported the need to "design out" the hazards of unprotected work at heights through pre-construction planning among architects and engineers.

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See abstract:

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