

Evidence that Injury and Illness Prevention Programs Reduce Occupational Injuries

The Impact of IIPP Policies on Statewide Injury Rates in U.S. Construction

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Overview

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) asserts that companies preparing Injury and Illness Prevention Programs (IIPPs) can dramatically reduce workplace injuries. A 2012 OSHA white paper estimated that employers adopting IIPPs experience a 15 to 35 percent drop in injuries, and that state policies mandating IIPPs would cut workplace injuries by 12 percent. Today dozens of U.S. states require companies to use IIPPs, offer discounted workers' compensation premiums to companies with IIPPs, or both. Researchers compared 1982-2008 reported injury data for states with policies promoting IIPP adoption with those that did not, controlling for multiple potential confounders.

Key Findings

- IIPPs appear to significantly reduce injury rates, but their effect is concentrated in nonunionized construction environments. Low union density states with mandatory IIPPs reduce total construction injury rates by 32 percent and lost workday injuries by 38 percent.
- States that mandated IIPP requirements AND offered incentives for adoption (such as workers' compensation discounts) saw a larger impact than those with either type of program alone or no program at all.
- IIPPs appear most effective in reducing serious injuries, either by preventing them or reducing their severity.
- Union density itself corresponds with a reduction in injury rates. A 1 percentage point increase in state-level construction union membership is associated with a 3 percent decline in the workplace injury rate, and a 3.6 percent decline in days-away-from-work injuries.

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See full report:

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