





# eNews: Volume 19, Number 12 (April 2022)

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Volume 19, Number 12 (April 2022)

## From the Director's Desk

John Howard, M.D. Director, NIOSH

## Preventing Workplace Injuries in a Changing World

Now more than ever, we see how a changing world can impact the workplace. Many of us have adapted how and where we work because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonstandard work schedules and increased demands have heightened work stress, mental health concerns, and fatigue. An aging workforce makes the issue of healthier workers more pressing, while emerging technologies have transformed the work environment. What does all of this mean for how we approach preventing workplace injuries?

To address this question, the upcoming NIOSH National Occupational Injury Research Symposium (NOIRS) will feature discussions on emerging issues in occupational safety along with cutting-edge occupational injury research findings from leading experts.

NOIRS—the only national forum focused on occupational acute traumatic injury research—brings together researchers, academicians, labor union representatives, safety professionals, industry leaders, and students from multiple disciplines and fields to advance the public health mission of keeping workers safe on the job.

Conference topics include occupational safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health, fatigue, sleep, and work hours. Industry-specific topics related to the construction, agriculture, and public safety sectors are also scheduled. Special sessions cover issues such as connecting safety climate and culture to safety management, understanding and visualizing recent construction safety and health trends, and using workers' compensation systems to conduct injury surveillance. Another special session discusses the best practices for worker safety with industrial mobile robots. We highlight these topics and more in a draft agenda on the [NOIRS 2022 website](#).



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To keep up with our changing world, NOIRS is going virtual this year. The three-day event takes place online May 10–12 from 12–4 p.m. (EDT). A poster session is May 11 from 4–5 p.m (EDT).

We hope that by hosting NOIRS 2022 online, we will welcome more attendees who may not have been able to join us in person. [Register](#) for this free event now!

## Research Rounds

### Inside NIOSH: Curve Speed Warning System Improved Firetruck Driving Safety

A curve speed warning system that notifies firetruck drivers to slow down as they approach potentially dangerous curves improved driving safety without sacrificing response time, according to recent research published in the journal [Applied Ergonomics](#).

Firefighting is recognized as one of the most dangerous jobs. While the obvious risks are related to worksite dangers, firefighters also face hazards on the road as they rush to respond to the scene of a fire. In fact, vehicle crashes were the third-leading cause of work-related death among firefighters in 2017, causing the deaths of 10 firefighters, according to the [United States Fire Administration](#). Vehicle rollovers led to four of these deaths, with two of them occurring on a curve in the road.

To address this persistent risk, NIOSH researchers developed a computerized warning system by adapting existing guidelines for general vehicles to the unique design and emergency response driving speeds of firetrucks. Using a driving simulator in the NIOSH Vehicle Safety lab, they then tested the warning system with 24 active firefighters recruited to participate in the 2021 study. All of the participants were male, and their average age was 36 years.

Using the warning system, the firefighters reduced their average driving speed by more than 7 kilometers—about 4 miles—per hour when approaching the most challenging curves. In addition, the warning system reduced the number of severe braking events near the curve entry from 33 to 8. Importantly, the total driving time did not increase while using the warning system, which is critical when every second counts in an emergency response. In general, the firefighters rated the warning system as “assisting, effective, and useful.” While a driving simulator differs from real-world driving, these results indicate that the warning system can help improve firefighters’ safety on the road, without affecting emergency-response time.

More information is available:

- [NIOSH | Firefighter Resources](#)
- [NIOSH | Motor Vehicle Safety at Work](#)

### Outside NIOSH: Healthy Work Collaborative: Linking Health and Labor Sectors to Improve Worker Health

#### Friendly Workplace Programs

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[What's this?](#)

Precarious employment typically refers to nonstandard, contract, low-wage, and insecure work. It is also associated with health risks, including anxiety and depression. Researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Center for Healthy Work aimed to create a health promotion initiative that improved the health of precariously employed workers, their families, and communities. The NIOSH-funded researchers recently published the results of the year-long project in [Health Promotion Practice](#).

The initiative, called the Healthy Work Collaborative, focused on fostering connections between the health and labor sectors. It aimed to close gaps in the health sector's knowledge and improve their ability to address precarious employment using multi-level, cross-sector strategies to affect policy, systems, and environmental change.

The researchers convened eight teams with 21 participants from health and labor sectors in Illinois. Starting in the fall of 2018, the teams attended six interactive sessions over more than 10 weeks to develop specific action plans addressing precarious work using policy, systems, and environmental change strategies. Key activities included sharing workers' lived experiences, participating in structured learning groups with a shared project to apply knowledge over time, and providing technical assistance training to share resources and useful approaches. Goals included increasing participants' knowledge about precarious employment, gaining skills to advance systems-level change, and increasing connections between health and labor sectors.

To evaluate the initiative's effectiveness, researchers used surveys and interviews that showed the initiative met each of the goals. Nearly all—97%—participants said that the information improved their understanding of precarious employment, while 84% said that they used it to identify problems and solutions. Participants also reported a 53% increase in “networking” and a 21% increase in “collaboration/coordination” relationships. The findings suggest the Healthy Work Collaborative may be a model for building knowledge and skills to address precarious employment and other social determinants of health.

More information is available:

- [Healthy Work Collaborative](#)
- [NIOSH Total Worker Health® Program](#)

## Highlights

### *Total Worker Health*® in Action! eNewsletter Available

The [March edition](#) of the NIOSH *Total Worker Health* (TWH) quarterly newsletter is now available. This edition focuses on an essential and increasingly important component of worker well-being: mental health. Learn about TWH strategies that [support workplace mental health](#), and find out how NIOSH [implements TWH approaches](#) within its own workforce.

### Join Us for Safe + Sound Week 2022



Mark your calendars! Join NIOSH, OSHA, and other partners for [Safe + Sound Week](#) 2022. The event will take place from August 15–21. Safe + Sound Week is a nationwide event held each August that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and offers information and ideas on how to keep America’s workers safe. Registration for Safe + Sound Week will open in early July. We look forward to your participation!

## Upcoming Webinars

- **Spanish-language Fall Prevention Webinar** In recognition of the 2022 [National Fall Prevention Campaign](#) and [Stand-Down](#), NIOSH and partners will host a free Spanish-language webinar, *Uso adecuado de los sistemas personales de detención de caídas*, on Thursday, April 7, from 2–3 p.m. (ET). Training will provide tips on harness selection and tie off and how to save a suspended worker who is wearing an activated personal fall protection system. [Register](#) here and submit a question in advance.
- **Initiatives to Prevent Opioid Misuse and Promote Recovery Friendly Workplace Programs** Learn what organizations are doing in the fight to prevent substance use disorder and to implement recovery friendly workplace programs in a free webinar sponsored by NIOSH and partners on Monday, April 11, at 2 p.m. (ET). [Register](#) here.
- **What Is Safety Climate? Definition and Practical Applications** Join the NIOSH *Total Worker Health* (TWH) program on Wednesday, April 20, at 1 p.m. (ET) for a free webinar about safety climate in occupational safety and health. [Register](#) here.

## Webinar Recording Now Available: How Work Can Impact Mental Health and What Leaders Can Do

On February 14, the *Total Worker Health* Program hosted a live [webinar and discussion](#) on work, mental health, and leadership. Featured speakers, Dr. Leslie B. Hammer and Dr. Marie-Anne Rosemberg, presented their research and answered questions from the audience. [Free continuing education](#) is available for the recording.

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## Monthly Features

### New Communication Products & Reports

#### FACE Reports

- [A 16-Year-old Tire Repair Assistant Died When a Vehicle Slipped Off a Hydraulic Jack and Fell on Him While He Was Changing the Oil—California](#)
- [Manufacturing Worker Dies by Suicide—Kentucky](#)

#### Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program Report

- [Captain Killed and Six Firefighters Injured at a Propane Explosion in an Office Building—Maine](#)

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## NIOSH Science Blog

Please see the following new blogs from last month. [Sign up](#) to have notifications about new NIOSH Science Blogs delivered directly to your inbox!

- [100 Million and Counting!](#)
- [Here Comes the Sun! Tips to Adapt to Daylight Saving Time](#)
- [Preventing Struck-by Fatalities Related to Excavator Quick Couplers, Buckets, and Attachments](#)

- [Preventing Struck-by Fatalities Related to Excavator Quick Couplers, Buckets, and Attachments](#)
- [Work Flexibility and Worker Well-being: Evidence From the United States](#)

## Blog translations

- The blog [Researching Risk of Birth Defects Among Pregnant Nail Salon Workers and Hairdressers](#) is now available in
  - Vietnamese (Nghiên cứu Nguy cơ Bị Dị tật Bẩm sinh ở Con của thợ Làm Móng và thợ Làm Tóc Đang Mang thai)
  - Korean (임신한 네일 살롱 직원과 헤어미용사에서 태아의 선천성 결함 위험 조사)
- The blog [Reducing Occupational Chronic Disease: CRC Cross Sector Program](#) is now available in Spanish (Reducción de las enfermedades ocupacionales crónicas: Programa Multisectorial CRC).

For other translated blogs see [Spanish translations](#) and [translations \(other than Spanish\)](#).

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## Federal Register Notice

- **Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (ABRWH), Subcommittee for Dose Reconstruction Reviews (SDRR), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**  
The [notice](#) was posted on March 15. Comments must be received by April 13. The meeting will be held on April 20.
- **Solicitation of Nominations for Appointment to the Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BSC, NIOSH)**  
The [notice](#) was posted on February 14. Nominations must be received by April 15.
- **Board of Scientific Counselors, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (BSC, NIOSH)**  
The [notice](#) was posted on March 18. The meeting will be held on April 20.
- **Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (ABRWH), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)**  
The [notice](#) was posted on March 21. The meeting will be held on April 27–28.

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## NORA

### National Stand-Down to Prevent Struck-by Incidents

The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Construction Sector Council is coordinating the annual [National Stand-Down to Prevent Struck-by Incidents](#) taking place April 11–15. During this event, the Struck-by Work Group will host several webinars on work zone safety, lift zone/heavy equipment safety, and dropped objects to raise awareness on these workplace hazards and what companies can do to prevent struck-by incidents. We encourage you to join in and spread the word!



### Join Us for the Oil and Gas Extraction Summit

The [Spring Health and Safety Summit](#) will cover state-of-the-art knowledge on occupational exposures to noise and heat stress in the upstream oil and gas industry, with representatives from NIOSH, OSHA, and upstream oil and gas industry partners. This free virtual event, hosted by the NORA Oil and Gas Extraction Council, and will be held April 6–7 from 12–4 p.m. (ET). [Register](#) now!

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## News from Our Partners

### New Report Examines Suicides in Massachusetts by Industry and Occupation

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health [released a new report](#) focused on suicides within the state by industry and occupation from 2016 through 2019. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is one of 22 institutions funded as a [NIOSH State-based Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance Program](#).



### New Publication on Occupation and Risk Related to Traumatic Brain Injury

A new [article](#) from the Southwest Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (SWCOEH) looks at traumatic brain injury in U.S. military service members by occupation and risk. This SWCOEH study is featured in the journal *Military Medicine*.



injury in U.S. military service members by occupation and risk. This SWCOEH study is featured in the journal *Military Medicine*. The SWCOEH is one of 18 NIOSH-funded [Education and Research Centers](#).

## Brief Updates From NIOSH-Supported Centers

Updates from the [Centers for Agricultural Safety and Health \(Ag Centers\)](#):

- [Northeast Center for Occupational Health and Safety March 2022 Newsletter](#) 
- [Western Center for Agricultural Health and Safety Monthly Seminar Series: Identifying Workers at Risk for Valley Fever in California](#) 

Updates from the [Centers of Excellence for \*Total Worker Health\*<sup>®</sup>](#):

- [Announcing Oregon Healthy Workforce Center's Annual Report](#) 
- [Center for Health, Work & Environment March 2022 Newsletter](#) 

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## Conferences, Meetings, Webinars, & Events

This page provides a list of publicly available occupational safety and health-related [conferences, meetings, webinars, and events](#) sponsored by NIOSH as well as other government agencies, and nongovernment agencies, such as universities, professional societies, and organizations.

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