

Category: Research to Practice

**Title: Trends in Fatal Occupational Falls in the U.S. Construction Industry, 1992-2008**

Author: **Sue Dong**

**Abstract**

Falls are the leading cause of death in the U.S. construction industry, accounting for one-third of all construction fatal injuries. In recent years, the overall death rate of construction workers has declined, but deaths from falls remain high.

**Objectives:** This study examined the patterns and trends of fatal falls in construction, analyzed demographics and characteristics of fatal falls among construction workers, identified high-risk occupations and populations, and provided insight to improve fall protections and interventions.

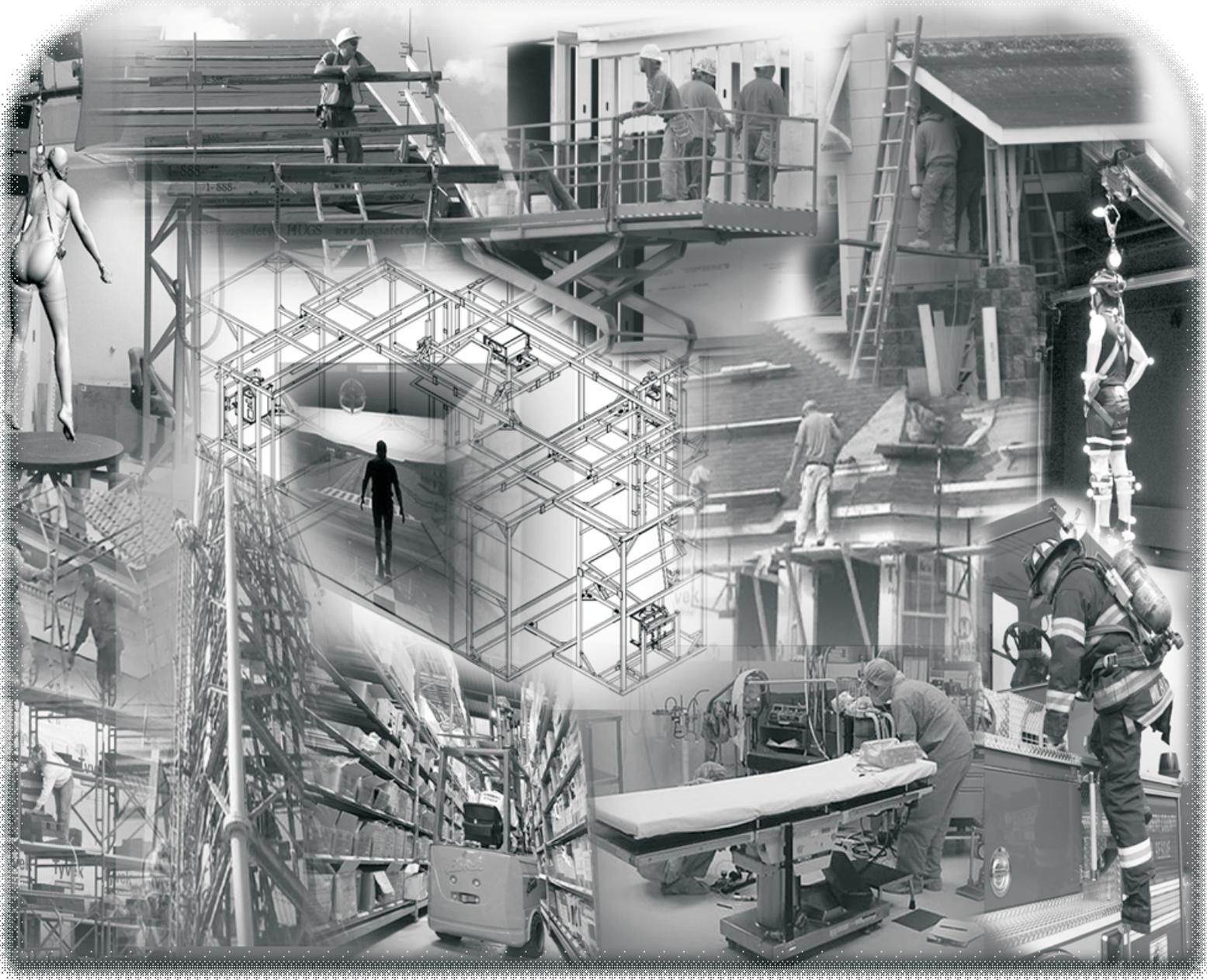
**Methods:** Two large national datasets, the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries and the Current Population Survey, were analyzed.

**Results:** The number of deaths from falls among construction workers totaled 6,300 from 1992 to 2008. Rates of fatal falls varied among occupations in which ironworkers, roofers, and construction laborers ranked the highest. Fatal falls also accounted for nearly 40% of deaths among Hispanic workers compared with just 31% for non-Hispanic workers. Most deaths caused by falls occurred primarily with workers aged 25 to 54 years, but were more prevalent among those youngest and oldest. In addition, most fatal falls among construction workers were found to be caused by falls to a lower level.

**Conclusions:** Older workers, young workers, and especially young Hispanic workers have a higher risk of work-related falls than other construction workers on average. Prevention strategies to reduce fall injuries and fatalities should focus on these populations.

# 2010 International Conference on Fall Prevention and Protection

Morgantown, WV May 18-20, 2010



Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health



