



MMWRTM

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

Weekly

April 27, 2007 / Vol. 56 / No. 16

Workers' Memorial Day — April 28, 2007

Workers' Memorial Day, April 28, was established to recognize workers who died or were injured on the job. On average, nearly 16 workers in the United States die each day from injuries sustained at work (1), and 134 die from work-related diseases (2). Daily, an estimated 11,500 private-sector workers have a nonfatal work-related injury or illness, and as a result, more than half require a job transfer, work restrictions, or time away from their jobs (3). Approximately 9,000 workers are treated in emergency departments each day because of occupational injuries, and approximately 200 of these workers are hospitalized (4). In 2004, workers' compensation costs for employers totaled \$87 billion (5).

Workers' Memorial Day 2007 also will commemorate the thirty-sixth anniversary of the creation of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the U.S. Department of Labor. Additional information on workplace safety and health is available online at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/homepage.html> or by telephone, 800-356-4674.

References

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics. National census of fatal occupational injuries in 2005. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor; 2006. Available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cfoi.pdf>.
2. Steenland K, Burnett C, Lalich N, Ward E, Hurrell J. Dying for work: the magnitude of U.S. mortality from selected causes of death associated with occupation. *Am J Ind Med* 2003;43:461–82.
3. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Workplace injuries and illnesses in 2005. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor; 2006. Available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/osh.pdf>.
4. CDC. Nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses—United States, 2004. *MMWR* 2007;56:393–7.
5. Sengupta I, Reno V, Burton JF Jr. Workers' compensation: benefits, coverage, and costs, 2004. Washington, DC: National Academy of Social Insurance; 2006. Available at http://www.nasi.org/usr_doc/NASI_workers_comp_2004.pdf.

Fixed Obstructive Lung Disease Among Workers in the Flavor- Manufacturing Industry — California, 2004–2007

Bronchiolitis obliterans, a rare and life-threatening form of fixed obstructive lung disease, is known to be caused by exposure to noxious gases in occupational settings and has been described in workers in the microwave-popcorn industry who were exposed to artificial butter-flavoring chemicals, including diacetyl (1,2). In August 2004, the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) and Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) received the first report of a bronchiolitis obliterans diagnosis in a flavor-manufacturing worker in California. In April 2006, a second report was received of a case in a flavor-manufacturing worker from another company. Neither worker was employed in the microwave-popcorn industry; both were workers in the flavor-manufacturing industry, which produces artificial butter flavoring and other flavors such as cherry, almond, praline, jalapeno, and orange. Both workers had handled pure diacetyl, an ingredient in artificial butter and other flavorings, and additional chemicals involved in the manufacturing process. Studies have indicated that exposure to diacetyl causes severe respiratory epithelial injury in animals (3–5). Because the manufacture of flavorings involves more than 2,000 chemicals, workers in the general flavor-manufacturing industry are

INSIDE

- 393 Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses — United States, 2004
- 397 Lead Exposure Among Females of Childbearing Age — United States, 2004
- 400 Notice to Readers
- 401 QuickStats