



# Small Businesses in Manufacturing

*Employers and employees in Manufacturing need your help*

## NORA

The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) is a partnership program to stimulate innovative research and improve workplace practices. Unveiled in 1996, NORA has become a framework for guiding Occupational Safety and Health research in the nation. Diverse parties collaborate to identify the most critical issues in the workplace. Partners then work together to develop goals, objectives, and an implementation plan for addressing these issues.

## Manufacturing

The Manufacturing Sector consists of industries that have been assigned a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) number between 31 and 33 ([www.census.gov/epcd/naics02/naicod02.htm#N31](http://www.census.gov/epcd/naics02/naicod02.htm#N31)), as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. This sector represents one of the largest workforces and includes a diverse group of manufacturing industries such as Beverage and Tobacco, Food, Wood Products, Primary Metals, Fabricated Metal Products, Transportation Equipment, Furniture, and Chemical Manufacturers.

## Small Businesses in the Manufacturing Sector

An estimated 15.9 million people worked in the Manufacturing Sector in 2008, which accounted for approximately 10.9% of the employed U.S. workforce.<sup>1</sup> In 2008, about one in seven recordable workplace injuries and illnesses and one in thirteen workplace fatalities occurred in Manufacturing.<sup>2,3</sup> In 2007 there were an estimated 302,836 companies in the Manufacturing Sector with fewer than 100 employees, accounting for approximately 91.4% of the U.S. manufacturing establishments.<sup>4</sup> Small manufacturers face limited staff and financial resources dedicated to workplace safety and health. Often the personnel responsible for occupational safety and health function in multiple jobs. Small manufacturers rely upon trade associations, consultants, insurance companies and governmental entities to help them understand hazards in the workplace and occupational safety and health methods to control hazards.



NIOSH is the federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations to prevent work-related injury, illness, and death. Its mission is to generate new occupational safety and health knowledge and to transfer that knowledge into practice.

## Strategic Goal: Reduce Injuries, Illnesses and Fatalities in Small Businesses in Manufacturing

The NORA Manufacturing Sector Council has developed goals to enhance the state of knowledge related to reducing the incidence of injuries, illnesses and fatalities within Small Businesses (fewer than 100 employees) and specific subsectors within the manufacturing sector. These goals can be found on the NORA Web site ([www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora)) under the Strategic Goal 8 of the National Manufacturing Agenda. Public comments on this document are accepted at any time.

### How You Can Help

#### *Apply research findings:*

- Pursue and foster partnerships with agencies to serve as communications pathways to small manufacturers for improvements in occupational safety and health
- Publicize proven effective interventions and engineering controls
- Develop methods to communicate best practices and lessons learned to employers and workers

#### *Share data:*

- Identify, disseminate, and promote the use of guidance documents and other resources with emphasis on company culture to assist small manufacturers in assessing and prioritizing interventions in a cost effective manner

#### *Partner with researchers:*

- Collect, compile and analyze data to identify and prioritize occupational safety and health issues
- Identify barriers to interventions, and implementation of best practices
- Develop new tools, resources and documents to help small manufacturers recognize and control hazards
- Develop materials to disseminate interventions and research results on controls

The NORA Manufacturing Sector Council includes individuals from industry, academia, labor, and government. The Council meets face-to-face twice a year. Additional communication occurs through email, conference calls, and web-based meetings. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) facilitates the work of the Council. The Council's Small Businesses workgroup relies on Corresponding Members for additional expert input and feedback on the goals.

Members and Corresponding Members primarily meet via conference calls and web-based meetings.

**For further information or to discuss opportunities for involvement, please contact:**

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**For more information about NORA or the NORA Manufacturing Sector, please visit:**

NORA Website: [www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora)

NIOSH Manufacturing Program Portfolio:  
[www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/manuf/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/manuf/)

#### **References**

*Bureau of Labor Statistics and Census Bureau estimates, latest available (accessed April 25, 2010)*

- (1) [www.bls.gov/cps/cpsa2008.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsa2008.pdf) —see Table 18
- (2) [www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/efoi/cftb0232.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/efoi/cftb0232.pdf)
- (3) [www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/os/ostb2073.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/os/ostb2073.pdf)
- (4) <http://www.census.gov/econ/cbp/index.html> —Select table for “United States”