



# 3276.0 - Fatal Injuries among Contracted Workers in the U.S. Construction Industry



## Abstract

### Background:

Contractors and subcontractors are common in the current economy, especially in the construction industry. To understand the complex employment relations and risks faced by contracted workers, this presentation analyzes fatal injuries among contracted workers in construction using data collected by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

### Methods:

BLS has collected data on contracted workers in the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries since 2011. A contracted worker is “employed by one firm but working for another firm that is responsible for the operations at the site”. Deaths among contracted workers were analyzed by contracting industry and direct employer industry. Denominators were estimated from the Current Employment Statistics and Current Population Survey. Death numbers and rates were stratified by construction subsectors, occupations, and demographics. Chi-square tests were applied to examine whether differences were statistically significant among subgroups. SAS version 9.4 was used for data analyses.

### Results:

In 2016, 503 workers directly employed in the construction industry died when they were working for other construction firms or non-construction (e.g., manufacturing) firms, accounting for 63% of the contracted worker fatalities in all industries. The number of contracted worker deaths has increased steadily since 2011. Between 2011 and 2016, a total of 2,555 construction workers died when they were

contracted; a quarter of such deaths occurred to construction laborers. By construction subsector, Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction had higher contracted worker deaths than any other subsector ( $p < .01$ ). In addition, about 43% of contracted construction workers died from falls. (Numbers will be updated to 2017 data)

### Conclusion/Discussion:

Construction is the largest employer industry as well as contracting industry for fatally injured contracted workers. To reduce such tragedies, workplace interventions should be enhanced, and both the contracting employer and direct employer should be jointly responsible for worker safety and health.

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## Learning Areas

Biostatistics, economics Epidemiology Occupational health and safety

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## Learning Objectives

Identify employer and contracting industries for fatally injured contracted workers  
Analyze fatalities among contracted workers in the construction industry  
Compare patterns of fatalities between contracted workers and other workers

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## Keyword(s)

Occupational Health and Safety, Epidemiology

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