

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH BRANCH

April 2025 Occupational Health Watch

Honoring Workers Memorial Day – April 28

On April 28th, the California Department of Public Health's Occupational Health Branch (OHB) will observe Workers Memorial Day—a time to honor those who have lost their lives due to work-related injuries and illnesses, and to recommit ourselves to protecting the health and safety of all workers across California.

According to the latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 439 workers in California died from work-related injuries in 2023, a decrease from 504 in 2022. The leading causes of these fatalities were transportation incidents (108 deaths) and exposure to harmful substances or environments (106 deaths), which together accounted for nearly half of all workplace deaths in the state. Notably, exposure to harmful substances including drug and alcohol overdoses has become a significant concern. In recent years, overdoses have surpassed falls and equipment-related incidents as leading causes of workplace deaths in California. The construction sector had the highest number of fatalities, with 78 deaths in 2023.

OHB continues to prioritize efforts to prevent workplace injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. Our website features timely information on key occupational health issues, as well as practical tools and resources for workers, employers, and advocates.

Commemorative events will take place both in person and virtually. Visit the AFL-CIO and OSHA Workers Memorial Day webpages for event details and ways to participate.

Resources

Workers Memorial Day website – American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

CDPH Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program – California Department of Public Health

Occupational Health Branch website – California Department of Public Health

California Worker Fatality Data – California Department of Industrial Relations

Email OHW@cdph.ca.gov with feedback about this update or change of address.

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