



Work-Related Respiratory Diseases

Employers and employees in Manufacturing need your help

NORA

The National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) is a partnership 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.

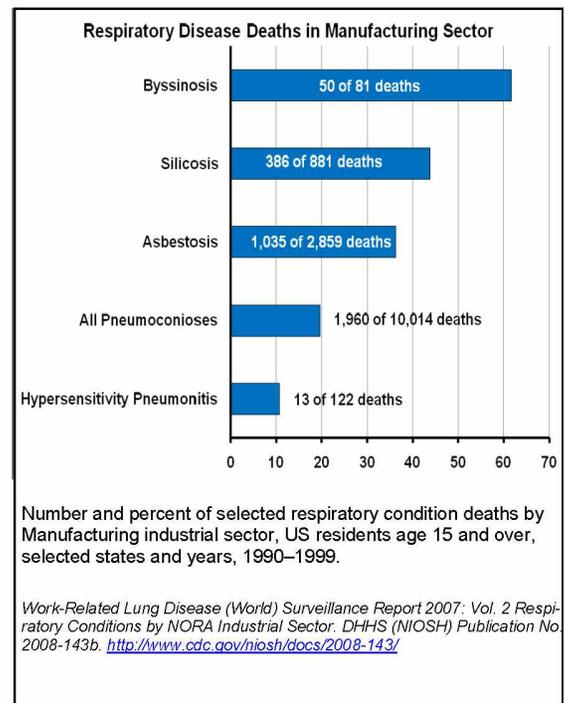
Manufacturing

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), as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. This sector employs 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.

Respiratory Disease 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.¹ In 2008, about one in seven recordable workplace injuries and illnesses and one in thirteen workplace fatalities occurred in Manufacturing.^{2,3}

Many respiratory diseases are almost exclusively caused by workplace exposures, including silicosis, asbestosis, byssinosis, and chronic beryllium disease. According to state-based surveillance data (1990-1999), the following diseases have a high percentage of deaths in the Manufacturing Sector compared to other sectors: silicosis, asbestosis, byssinosis, all pneumoconioses, and hypersensitivity pneumonitis (World Report 2007). See table to right. Some respiratory diseases, such as asthma, can be either caused or exacerbated by workplace exposures. Other respiratory diseases have also been linked to workplace exposures but not in manufacturing more than other sectors.



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

Strategic Goal: Reducing Work-Related Respiratory Diseases

The NORA Manufacturing Sector Council has developed goals to guide research related to the reduction of respiratory diseases in this sector. These goals can be found on the NORA web site (www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora) under Strategic Goal 5 of the National Manufacturing Agenda. Public comments on these goals will be accepted at any time.

How You Can Help

Use existing data:

- Use the results of surveillance and research studies to identify and track workplace hazards that have been linked to respiratory diseases.

Educate employers and employees:

- Share information on both known and suspected hazards for work-related respiratory diseases.

Apply research-based knowledge:

- Adopt intervention strategies shown to be effective in preventing work-related respiratory diseases.

Partner with researchers:

- Assess the extent, severity, and burden of work-related respiratory diseases.
- Conduct research on the cause-and-effect relationships for work-related respiratory diseases.
- Develop and apply methods to identify where relevant exposures occur, in both primary manufacturing and in downstream users.
- Develop and improve sampling and analytical methods for assessing exposure.
- Develop new interventions for reducing exposures.
- Evaluate both new and existing interventions.
- Identify strategies to improve industry-wide adoption of effective interventions.
- Develop and share best practice recommendations for reducing worker exposure.

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 e-mail, conference calls, and web-based meetings. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) facilitates the work of the Council. The Council's Respiratory Diseases Workgroup relies on Corresponding Members for additional expert input and feedback on disease reduction-related goals. Members and Corresponding Members primarily meet via conference calls and web-based meetings.

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

NORA Website: www.cdc.gov/niosh/nora

NIOSH Manufacturing Program Portfolio:
www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/manuf/

References

- Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates, latest available (accessed April 22, 2010)
- (1) www.bls.gov/cps/cpsa2008.pdf - See Table 18
 - (2) www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/osh/os/ostb2073.pdf
 - (3) www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/cftb0232.pdf