

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Promoting productive workplaces
through safety and health research 

NIOSH eNews



Director's
Desk



Research
Rounds



Highlights



Monthly
Features

Update on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response

General Resources

Heat Stress Fact Sheets

CDC published fact sheets for employees and employers on heat stress prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Industry-Specific Resources

Limiting Workplace Violence

CDC developed guidance for employers and employees in retail, services, and other customer-based businesses, to help prevent workplace violence associated with enforcing COVID-19 prevention policies.

Strategies for Protecting K-12 School Staff From COVID-19

CDC developed guidance to supplement existing CDC considerations. It is intended for K-12 school administrators preparing school programs for staff and students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prioritizing Nonhealthcare Worksite Assessments

CDC developed guidance to assist state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments in making decisions about how to allocate limited resources to respond to worksites reporting COVID-19-related concerns, complaints, or clusters.

Fact Sheets for Beauty Salons and Barber Shops

CDC developed fact sheets for beauty salon and barbershop employees and employers to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Upcoming Webinar: September 11, 1–2 p.m. (EDT): Issues Facing Collegiate Dining

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, new questions arise daily on how to safely serve students on campuses. Experts from the CDC will answer questions. Registration [☑](#) is required.



From the Director's Desk

John Howard, M.D. Director, NIOSH

NIOSH Recognizes 7th Year of Safety Stand-Downs to Prevent Falls In Construction

Many employers and workers around the world will take a break from work to participate in the [2020 National Safety Stand-Down to Prevent Falls in Construction](#) [🔗](#) on September 14-18.

The National Campaign to Prevent Falls in Construction was launched in 2012 by the [National Occupational Research Agenda \(NORA\) Construction Sector Council](#) with leadership from NIOSH, OSHA, and CPWR—The Center for Construction Research and Training. In 2014, the partners decided to dedicate five days each year to a national safety stand-down event where employers and workers would focus on preventing falls.

Falls are the leading cause of death among construction workers, accounting for about one of three construction fatalities. Thousands more workers suffer serious injuries because they lack the right safety equipment or the knowledge and training to prevent falls. Roofers, Hispanics, and older workers, as well as those working for small businesses, are most affected.

Construction falls are preventable. To respond to these preventable deaths and injuries, NIOSH researchers and partners have created helpful tools that can be highlighted during the stand-down:

- [NIOSH Ladder Safety App](#)
- [NIOSH Aerial Lift Simulator](#)
- [Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation \(FACE\) Program—Construction Database](#) [🔗](#)
- [FACE Construction Falls Reports: NIOSH commercial and residential and State commercial and residential](#)
- [FACE Factsheet: Prevent Construction Falls From Roofs, Ladders, and Scaffolds](#)
- [Worker Safety and Health Brochures and Posters in Spanish](#)

Throughout the week of the campaign, individual safety stand-downs are hosted by participating employers to educate workers about preventing construction falls through toolbox talks, demonstrations, and trainings. The campaign encourages contractors to follow three clear guidelines to prevent falls: **Plan** ahead to do the job safely before starting each and every job. **Provide** the right equipment for working at heights. **Train** workers to use the equipment properly and to work safely on roofs, ladders, and scaffolds.



Hard hat sticker for the campaign. Image credit: CPWR—The Center for Construction Research and Training

In This Issue:

Director's Desk

- [NIOSH Recognizes 7th Year of Safety Stand-Downs to Prevent Falls In Construction](#)

Research Rounds

- [Where Do We Start: Prioritizing Prevention Efforts for Traumatic Brain Injuries?](#)
- [Lasting Effects for Those Returning to Work After Permanent Work-related Injury](#)

Highlights

- [NIOSH Report on Filtration Efficiency of Non-NIOSH-Approved Respiratory Devices](#)
- [Special Virtual Session: COVID-19 & Occupational Safety and Health](#)
- [NIOSH Assists With Lebanon Explosion Response](#)
- [Funding Available for Centers of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*[®]](#)
- [New Decade of Healthy People 2030](#)

Last year, thousands of worksites participated in [stand-down events](#), reaching almost half-a-million workers across all 50 states and internationally. Industry and business leaders, universities, labor organizations, and community groups participated. More than one third of stand-downs involved firms with fewer than 20 workers. Small construction firms this size account for 75% of fatal falls.

It's not too late to host a stand-down this year. NIOSH invites you to join or host a virtual or socially distant stand-down and contribute to what has become an increasingly successful effort to prevent falls in construction. Your involvement can be as simple as sharing some of our resources at your worksite. Visit our [stop construction falls](#) webpage for more information, resources, and tools, including [infographics](#), training materials, [videos](#), hard-hat stickers, fall-related hazard alert cards, toolbox talks, and other stand-down resources available in both English and Spanish.

Research Rounds

Inside NIOSH: Where Do We Start: Prioritizing Prevention Efforts for Traumatic Brain Injuries?

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a common occupational injury, accounting for somewhere between 20% and 25% of work-related trauma. So, researchers at NIOSH are working to identify how best to focus prevention efforts for occupational TBIs. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [define TBI](#) as "disruption in the normal function of the brain that can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or penetrating head injury." TBIs can be mild; however, some can be fatal or cause short- to long-term disability. More severe TBIs can impact a worker's ability to return to their preinjury job and be expensive for both workers and employers in long-term rehabilitation and disability costs. The devastating consequences of occupational TBI prompted NIOSH researchers to conduct an analysis of work-related TBIs, which was published in the [American Journal of Industrial Medicine](#).

The NIOSH study used data from the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation to analyze 12,891 TBI cases from 2001 through 2011. The aim was to identify which industries are at higher risk for TBI to prioritize occupational prevention efforts. Of these cases, 40% (n =5,171) were lost time TBIs (meaning the employee lost ≥ 8 days away from work). Researchers identified high-risk industry groups using a ranking measure, giving equal weight to both TBI counts and rates. Industry groups that are ranked higher indicate a greater burden or risk of TBIs. In this study, researchers identified construction, truck transportation, and services to buildings and dwellings as priority industry sectors for prevention of lost-time TBIs.

Spectator sports had the highest lost-time TBI rate (13.5 per 10,000 full-

- [NIOSH Team Expands Occupational Safety and Health Guidance for COVID-19](#)
- [NIOSH Congratulates](#)

Monthly Features

- [New Communication Products & Reports](#)
- [NIOSH Science Blog](#)
- [Federal Register Notice](#)
- [NORA](#)
- [News From Our Partners](#)
- [Conferences, Meetings, Webinars, & Events](#)

NIOSH eNews is Brought to You By:

John Howard, M.D., Director
Christina Spring, Editor in Chief

Managing Editor

Tanya Headley

Section Editors

Anne Blank, Research Rounds
Kiana Harper, Highlights & Monthly Features

Contributing Editors

Sarah Mitchell
Emily Norton
Donjanea Williams

Copy Editor

Cheryl Hamilton

Technical Support

Steve Leonard, Technical Lead
Tonya White, Web Developer

time employees) while general freight trucking had the highest number of lost-time TBIs (n = 293). Several industry groups within the construction sector also represented a large number of the top 10 rankings for lost time TBIs.

In the article, NIOSH researchers suggest prevention efforts that could be tailored to different industries, understanding that TBI risks vary based on the nature of work. For example, the authors note that an industry group like general freight trucking transportation, with a high count and high rate, indicates a hazardous industry. Large, hazardous industries require comprehensive prevention programs including enforcement, outreach, and communication. However, an industry group like spectator sports, with a low count but a high rate, is a smaller industry group where risk may be concentrated in one area. In this case, a focused assessment for injury prevention would be more appropriate.

Next steps include research identifying which work tasks pose the greatest risk for TBIs within the identified high-risk industry groups to improve direct prevention efforts.

More information is available:

- [Traumatic Brain Injuries in Construction—NIOSH Science Blog](#)
 - [CDC Traumatic Brain Injury & Concussion webpage](#)
-

Sign up for NIOSH eNews

To receive the NIOSH eNews email newsletter, enter your email address:

[What's this?](#)

Outside NIOSH:

Lasting Effects for Those Returning to Work After Permanent Work-related Injury

Workplace and workers' compensation-based programs are needed for workers with permanent injuries to assist them in returning to work and prevent them from getting hurt again, according to a recent study from NIOSH-funded researchers at the University of Washington.

There are nearly three million nonfatal work-related injuries and illnesses in the United States each year. Of these, roughly 10% (300,000) result in permanent injury and ongoing partial disability. Certain workers' compensation awards pay workers with work injuries or illnesses that prevent them from working at full capacity but may not keep them from returning to work.

Researchers surveyed workers from Washington State with relevant workers' compensation claims to learn about their first year of going back to work. The aim of the survey was to describe outcomes for workers with permanent injury who had returned to work within a year of when their workers' compensation claim closed. Workers with a higher degree of injury were more likely to report poorer health status, poorer work-related ability, and problems getting or keeping a job compared to workers with a lower degree of injury.

Along with difficulty getting (47%) and keeping a job (58%), these workers report modest to severe pain (66%) and pain that gets in the way of working (40%). More than half of these workers thought their permanent injury increased their chance of getting injured again, and 13% reported new work injuries. Of these workers, 10.6% reported taking chronic opioids, defined as 60 or more days in a row in the past year.

Highlights

NIOSH Report on Filtration Efficiency of Non-NIOSH-Approved Respiratory Devices

A new NIOSH PPE CASE Report summarizes the first phase results of the NIOSH assessment of the [filtration efficiency](#) performance of non-NIOSH-approved international respirators used by workers. These challenges include chronic pain and limits caused by the poor particle filtration performance because these non-NIOSH approved respirators could potentially be used by U.S. workers. The goal is to provide these workers of general workplace safety and quantitative assessment of these devices.

workplace and workers' compensation system programs should be seen as

Special Virtual Session: COVID-19 & Occupational Safety and Health

The XXII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, International Organizing Committee is offering [free virtual sessions](#) on COVID-19 and occupational safety and health on October 5, 9 a.m. to noon EDT and October 6, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. EDT. The sessions will feature thought leaders discussing emerging innovations to address COVID-19 in the workplace, how the future of work is being shaped by the global pandemic, and the relevance of promoting a culture of prevention to address COVID-19.

[Workforce Reintegration After Work-Related Permanent Impairment](#)

[Workforce Reintegration After Workers' Compensation Claim Closure](#)



NIOSH Assists With Lebanon Explosion Response

NIOSH Investigator-Initiated Research and Mentored Research Scientist Career Development
At the request of the National Institutes of Health, the NIOSH Emergency Preparedness and Response Office (EPRO) responded to a request for assistance from the [American University in Beirut](#) following the ammonium nitrate

explosion in Lebanon on August 4. EPRO staff Commander Chad Dowell, U.S. Public Health Service, and Todd Niemeier, MS, CIH, provided valuable safety and health information, including training and worker protection best practices. For more information on this response, contact Chad Dowell at crd7@cdc.gov.

Funding Available for Centers of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*[®]

NIOSH recently published the [funding announcement](#) for the [Centers of Excellence for *Total Worker Health*[®] \(TWH\)](#). The deadline to apply for this grant is February 3, 2021. For more information, contact NIOSH Scientific Program Official, [Dr. Maria Lioce](#). To learn more about other NIOSH-funded extramural activities, visit [Extramural Research and Training Programs](#).



New Decade of Healthy People 2030

On August 18, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services officially launched a new decade of Healthy People: Healthy People 2030. Healthy People is a set of science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving health and well-being in the United States. NIOSH is the lead federal agency responsible for managing and tracking the occupational safety and health (OSH) topic area objectives. Visit the [Healthy People 2030](#) webpage to learn about the OSH objectives.

NIOSH Team Expands Occupational Safety and Health Guidance for COVID-19

NIOSH has put together a team of subject matter experts from universities across the country to provide critical occupational health and safety (OSH) guidance and technical assistance to assist employers, workers, government and public health officials with responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. These experts will be providing support through interagency personnel agreements between NIOSH and their employers. Occupational settings are vital to the long-term efforts to contain COVID-19. Both NIOSH and nonfederal partners will benefit from this collaboration through the advancement of OSH expertise, facilitation of outreach, and development of training. For more information, please contact [Lauralynn McKernan](#) or [Dawn Castillo](#).

NIOSH Congratulates



NIOSH Engineer Awarded Society of American Military Engineers Green Medal

The Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) awarded NIOSH researcher Dr. Chaolong Qi the SAME 2020 Green Medal. The medal is presented for outstanding contributions to public health engineering and science by a U.S. Public Health Service officer. The award also acknowledges Dr. Qi's contributions to public health engineering and engineering safety controls.

Researcher Honored for Commitment to Public Health Improvement

NIOSH researcher Dr. Kaitlin Kelly-Reif received the Rebecca James Baker award from the [International Society for Environmental Epidemiology](#). This early career

investigator award is given to researchers who demonstrate personal integrity, compassion, patience, and resourcefulness. The award also recognizes those with an appreciation of and commitment to research as a tool to foster international understanding and public health improvement.

Monthly Features

New Communication Products & Reports

FACE Reports

- [A Water Truck Operator Died After Being Struck by a Pressurized Hose—California](#)
- [School Crossing Guard Struck by Vehicle—Michigan](#)
- [Farmworker Dies in Grain Bin Engulfment—Kentucky](#)

Firefighter Fatality Report

- [Career Lieutenant Killed in Building Collapse while Fighting Row House Fire—Pennsylvania](#)

Health Hazard Evaluation Reports

- [Evaluation of Occupational Exposures to Illicit Drugs at Forensic Sciences Laboratories](#) 

Program Performance One-Pagers (PPOP's)

- [Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities Program](#)
- [Center for Occupational Robotics Research](#)
- [Hearing Loss Prevention Program](#)
- [Engineering Controls Program](#)
- [Small Business Assistance Program](#)

Topic Pages


- [Workplace Supported Recovery](#)
- [Rhabdomyolysis](#)
- [Hazard Communication for Disinfectants Used Against Viruses](#)

NIOSH Science Blog

- [Skin Irritation From Prolonged Use of Tight-fitting Respirators](#)
- [Heat Stress Imposed by PPE Worn in Hot and Humid Environments](#)
- [Stand-Down for Falls in Its 7th Year: Fatal Falls Are Falling](#)
- [Work Ability Among Older Nurses](#)
- [Research Questions for Aerosol Scientists Addressing COVID-19 and the Workplace](#)
- [A Guide to Respirators Used for Dust in Construction](#)
- [An Expanded Focus for Occupational Safety and Health](#)
- [Cannabis and Work: The Need for More Research](#)
- [Take Action to Protect Your Hearing](#)

Federal Register Notice

Reducing Fatigue Among Taxi Drivers

The [notice](#)  was posted on July 20. Comments must be received by September 18.

Proposed Project: Respiratory Protective Devices

The [notice](#) was posted on July 20. Comments must be received by September 18.

Board of Scientific Counselors; Notice of Meeting and Request for Comment

The [notice](#) was posted on August 12. The meeting will be held on September 29.

Research Project to Evaluate and Control Hazards to Landscaping and Grounds Management Workers; Request for Participants

The [notice](#) was posted on January 10. Letters of interest must be received by October 16.

Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health; Notice of Meeting and Request for Comment

The [notice](#) was posted on August 19. The meeting will be held on October 27.

National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA)

NORA Public Safety Sector Council Meeting Spotlights the Latest Science

The NORA Public Safety Sector (PSS) Council will hold a virtual meeting September 30 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. EDT. This meeting will allow researchers and innovators to summarize the scientific work being done in the PSS, no matter the funding source. Topics can include the fire service (wildland and structural), law enforcement, emergency medical services, and corrections. To attend, contact [Emily Novicki](#).

News from Our Partners

National Farm Safety and Health Week September 20–26

NIOSH joins the [Centers for Agricultural Safety and Health \(Ag Centers\)](#) in recognizing [National Farm Safety and Health Week](#) as a time to highlight the importance of working together to prevent injuries and illnesses among agricultural workers. The agriculture industry is consistently at the highest risk of occupational injury and fatalities, with harvest season being particularly hazardous. This year's events will focus on tractor and rural roadway safety, overall farmer health, young workers, emergency preparedness, and women in agriculture. Check out the free [webinars](#) planned throughout the week!

Study Examines Hypertension by Occupation and Sociodemographic Data

The Mississippi State Department of Health recently published a [study](#) in the *International Journal of Hypertension*. This research analyzed data on the prevalence of hypertension among workers in the state by job and sociodemographic characteristics. The Mississippi State Department of Health is a NIOSH-funded [state surveillance program](#).

Free OSHA COVID-19 Print Resources

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is offering COVID-19 posters, wallet cards, and guidance booklets for your workplace. The posters and wallet cards are available in multiple languages and cover topics such as reducing exposure in meat, poultry, and pork processing facilities; correctly wearing a respirator; and agricultural and automotive worker safety. Visit the OSHA [publication page](#) to place an order.

Conferences, Meetings, Webinars, & Events

This page provides a list of publicly available occupational safety and health related [conferences, meetings, webinars, and events](#) sponsored by NIOSH as well as other government agencies, and non-government agencies such as universities, professional societies, and organizations.

Follow NIOSH

 Facebook  Instagram  Pinterest  Twitter  YouTube  more sites

Page last reviewed: September 1, 2020

Content source: [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#)