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Is Your Job the Most Dangerous?

By RACHEL ZUPEK, CAREERBUILDER.COM WRITER

Every year, hapless events like natural disasters, traffic accidents, violent crime and equipment malfunctions injure and kill employees around the world. Every day, we read news stories about the sacrifices workers make in order to keep our neighborhoods safer, our highways more secure and our environment cleaner. Sometimes, these sacrifices are made at the ultimate cost: people's lives.

While any number of injuries or fatalities is unsettling, there have been a few encouraging figures in terms of harm done at work. Total workplace injuries decreased by 6 percent in 2007, according to the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, with 5,488 fatal work injuries recorded in the United States. The rate of fatal work injuries per 100,000 workers was 3.7, the lowest fatality rate ever, and was down from the final rate of 4.0 in 2006.

Additionally, transportation accidents fell to 2,234 cases in 2007, a series low. Highway fatalities were down 3 percent while non-highway incidents were down 15 percent; water vehicle accidents decreased by 28 percent; railway mishaps declined by 26 percent and aircraft incidents fell 23 percent.

Other industries that saw decreases in fatalities included construction; agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; trade and manufacturing.

Despite all of these declines, the CFOI did not see such positive numbers in all industries and occupations. The number of fatal falls in the workplace rose to 835 -- a series high and also a 39 percent increase since 1992, when the survey was first conducted. Workplace homicides rose 13 percent after seeing its lowest number of 540 in 2006; and the number of fatalities among protective service occupations increased 19 percent.

Here were the most dangerous occupations and industries in 2007, according to the CFOI.

Jobs with the highest fatality rates

The following 10 occupations had the highest fatality rates in 2007:

1. **Fishing and related fishing workers**

Fatality rate*: 111.8

2. **Logging workers**

Fatality rate: 86.4

3. **Aircraft pilots and flight engineers**

Fatality rate: 66.7

4. **Structural iron and steel workers**

Fatality rate: 45.5

5. **Farmers and ranchers**

Fatality rate: 38.4

6. **Roofers**

Fatality rate: 29.4

7. **Electrical power-line installers and repairers**

Fatality rate: 29.1

8. **Driver/sales workers and truck drivers**

Fatality rate: 26.2

9. **Refuse and recyclable material collectors**

Fatality rate: 22.8

10. **Police and sheriff's patrol officers**

Fatality rate: 21.4

Jobs With the Most Fatalities

The following 10 positions saw the most deaths in 2007:

1. [Motor vehicle operators](#)

Number of victims: 1,020

Most common manner of death: highway accidents, 66 percent

2. [Construction trades workers](#)

Number of victims: 877

Most common manner of death: falls, 40 percent

3. [Management occupations](#)

Number of victims: 511

Most common manner of death: highway accidents, 14 percent

4. [Material moving workers](#)

Number of victims: 255

Most common manner of death: struck by object, 15 percent

5. [Installation, maintenance and repair occupations](#) (other than vehicle and mobile equipment)

Number of victims: 214

Most common manner of death: falls, 28 percent

6. [Law enforcement workers](#)

Number of victims: 165

Most common manner of death: highway accidents, 39 percent; homicides, 37 percent

7. [Grounds maintenance workers](#)

Number of victims: 156

Most common manner of death: falls, 28 percent

8. [Sales supervisors](#)

Number of victims: 148

Most common manner of death: homicides, 63 percent

9. [Agricultural workers](#)

Number of victims: 123

Most common manner of death: highway accidents, 15 percent

10. [Supervisors, construction and extraction workers](#)

Number of victims: 118

Most common manner of death: falls, 29 percent

*Number of fatalities per 100,000 workers

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