*Connecticut's Work-Related Fatality Rate Second Lowest in Nation for Two Years in a Row*

*By Erin C. Wilkins, Associate Research Analyst, CT DOL*

Connecticut lost 34 lives to work injuries in 2022, for a rate of 2.0 deaths per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers. This is an increase from 2021’s 23 deaths but is below Connecticut’s annual average of 38 work-related deaths (Chart 1). Only one other state – Rhode Island – recorded a rate lower than Connecticut’s (Table 1).

 The nation lost 5,486 lives to workplace injuries in 2022, an increase from 2021’s 5,190 deaths. The fatal injury rate increased from 3.6 per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers in 2021 to 3.7 in 2022. The highest loss was seen in Texas with 578 deaths, followed by California with 504 deaths and Florida with 307 deaths. High rates were recorded in Wyoming (12.7) and North Dakota (9.8). Rhode Island had 7 deaths, the lowest recorded number for states.

**Industry**

 Nationally, the construction industry recorded the highest number of deaths at 1,069 followed by transportation and warehousing with 1,053 deaths. Together, these two industries account for 39 percent of deaths.

 The construction industry and the transportation and warehousing industry each had 9 deaths in Connecticut. Together, they accounted for 53 percent of 2022’s deaths. Manufacturing came in third with 4 deaths, or 11.8 percent of total deaths (Table 2). With an overall rate of 2.0, Connecticut saw a rate of 9.4 in transportation and utilities and 6.7 in construction. Rates for other industry sectors did not meet publishing criteria.

**Worker Characteristics**

 Twenty-eight of the workers were wage and salary workers; six were self-employed. Fifty nine percent (20) of deaths were white. Eight were Hispanic or Latino and three were Black or African American. Nationally, Hispanic or Latino workers made up 22.7 percent of fatal occupational injuries in 2022. Deaths for Black or African American workers climbed to 734 in 2022 from 653 in 2021, a 12.4 percent increase. Thirty-two of Connecticut’s deaths were men; nationally 92 percent of 2022’s work-related deaths were men.

**Event**

 Historically, the United States loses the most workers to transportation incidents. The year 2022 saw 2,066 lives lost to transportation incidents – 38 percent of all work-related deaths. Falls, slips and trips was the second most common event with 865 deaths (16 percent). Violence and other injuries by persons or animals was the third most common event with 849 deaths (15 percent). Workplace homicides claimed 524 lives and suicides claimed 267. Exposure to harmful substances or environments accounted for 839 deaths (15 percent).

 With twelve deaths, transportation incidents claimed the most lives in Connecticut, accounting for 35 percent of total deaths. Falls, slips, and trips incidents had 7 deaths, and the contact with objects and equipment category had 6 deaths.

**Occupations**

 Transportation and material moving occupations lost twelve lives in Connecticut, accounting for 35 percent of total deaths. Ten of the transportation and material moving occupations were heavy and tractor-trailer drivers (Table 4). Construction and extraction occupations lost 7 lives.

 Nationally, the transportation and material moving occupational group and the construction and extraction occupational group accounted for 48.8 percent of worker deaths in 2022. Transportation and material moving occupations lost 1,620 workers and construction and extraction occupations lost 1,056 workers. While the overall rate was 3.7 for 100,000 full time equivalent workers, logging workers saw a rate of 100.7. This was followed by roofers with a rate of 57.5 and fishing and hunting workers with a rate of 50.9.

**Identifying Work-Related Deaths**

 The CFOI (Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries) program reports fatal work injuries only. CFOI does not report any illness related information, including COVID-19. The CFOI program requires a minimum of two sources to verify a work-related death. The media is often the first notice of a work-related death. Other resources include death certificates, coast guard reports, the NHTSA (National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration), and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration).

 While every attempt is made to capture every work-related death, some are missed. The CFOI program uses diverse state, federal, and independent data sources to identify, verify, and describe fatal work injuries. This ensures counts are as complete and accurate as possible.

 It is important to note that the Bureau of Labor Statistics holds all information on companies and the deceased in strict confidence. Information is never shared for compliance measures.

 OSHA requires all employers to report workplace fatalities within eight hours. Included are small establishments and industries that are normally exempt from OSHA jurisdiction. Natural deaths, such as heart attacks, must also be reported. However, many employers are unaware of this requirement. Additionally, OSHA does not require employers to report all fatalities. Employers are not required to report:

o Street and transportation deaths unless they occur in a construction work zone

o Deaths on commercial or public transportation systems (airplane, subway, bus, train, etc.)

o Deaths occurring more than 30 days after the incident

 OSHA does not investigate every work-related death. Homicides and most transportation incidents fall outside OSHA’s jurisdiction. However, OSHA is beginning to investigate some of these incidents to develop training programs. Homicides may be prevented with changes in security cameras and enforcing safety rules. Transportation deaths can be prevented with training programs on distracted driving, sleep deprivation, and safe driving techniques.

**History of the Program**

 When President Nixon signed the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (OSHA) into law, a census of workplace fatalities did not exist. It was estimated that approximately 14,000 workers were killed on the job annually. While OSHA immediately began investigating workplace deaths, the U.S. Department of Labor did not have a comprehensive statistical program dedicated to documenting workplace deaths.

 In 1992, the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) was established to track all work-related deaths and collect the much-needed data. That first year, 6,217 deaths were documented nationally, 42 of which were in Connecticut. Since then, national numbers have dropped by 12 percent to 5,486 deaths in 2022.

 Since 1992, the CFOI program has seen several changes. Prior to 2006, rates were calculated per 100,000 workers. Now the rates take into account the number of hours spent in the workplace, resulting in rates per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers. The coding structure for nature, part of body, event, and sources was changed in 2011. In 2012, the program began documenting contractor status, the use of drugs or alcohol, seat belt use, and union status.

 Most recently, there has been a change in the release of data. Formerly, a preliminary release was made in August or September with revised, final data published in April of the following year. Beginning with the 2015 reference year, final data is now released in December – 4 months earlier than in past years. This December release is the only release of CFOI data.

 The program continues to develop to meet the needs of researchers, as the data is beneficial in creating engineering solutions, regulations, and education programs to minimize workplace deaths. n