

## Worker Fatalities in Nebraska, 2014

Worker fatalities are injuries occurring at work that result in death. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 4,821 workers in the United States died due to a fatal work-related injury in 2014, an average of 13 deaths per day. The social and economic burden of worker fatalities is substantial, and these deaths impact both families and businesses. While significant improvements in worker health and safety have occurred over the last several decades, additional efforts are needed to prevent worker fatalities.

The Nebraska Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance Program promotes worker health and safety through collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information on work-related injuries and illnesses. Public health surveillance of work-related fatalities can detect trends, identify priorities, and evaluate prevention strategies. In Nebraska, worker fatalities are tracked by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). The CFOI collects information on fatalities that occur in private sector, public sector, small farms, and other industries.

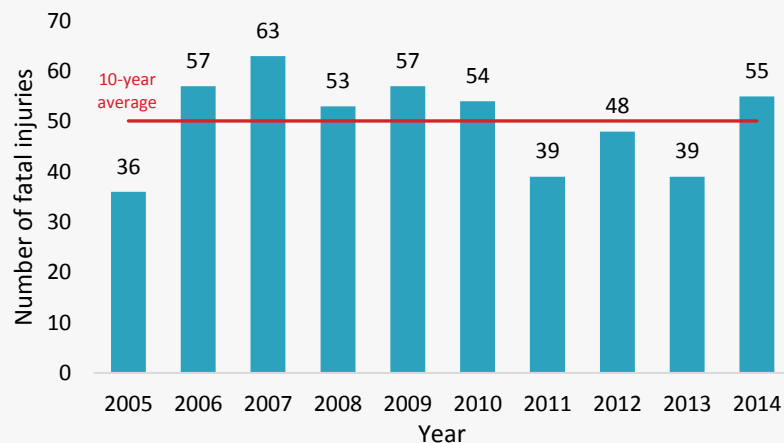
This report presents a brief summary of aggregate fatality data published by the CFOI and descriptions of selected worker fatality incidents that occurred in 2014. Limitations and considerations of worker fatality data are described at the end of this report.

### Fatality Trends

In 2014, 55 workers in Nebraska died due to fatal work injuries (Figure 1). This was the highest number since 2009. In the 10 years from 2005 to 2014, 501 worker fatalities occurred, an average of 50 fatalities per year or about one fatality per week.

**Figure 1. Annual number of fatal work injuries, Nebraska, 2005-2014**

Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data.

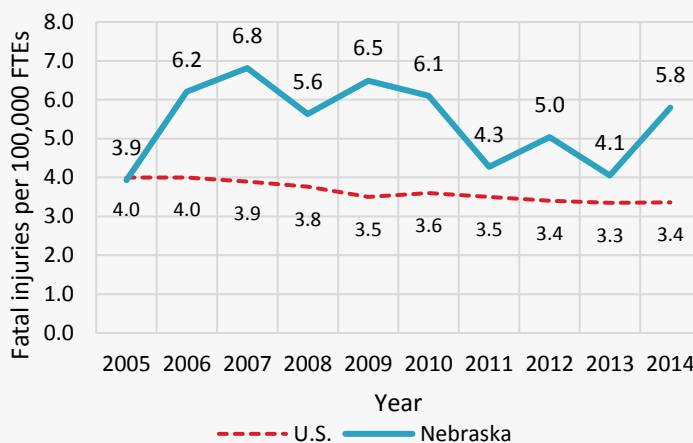


The worker fatality rate for Nebraska in 2014 was 5.8 deaths per 100,000 full-time workers (FTEs) workers (Figure 2). Nebraska had the 9th highest fatality rate in the nation in 2014. While the U.S. rate followed a decreasing trend, the rate for Nebraska varied over years and was higher than the U.S. rate in all years except 2005.

**Figure 2. Annual rate of fatal work injuries, Nebraska and the U.S., 2005-2014**

Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data (numerator); BLS Current Population Survey (denominator).

Note: Rates may not match BLS-published rates due to a different denominator used by BLS.

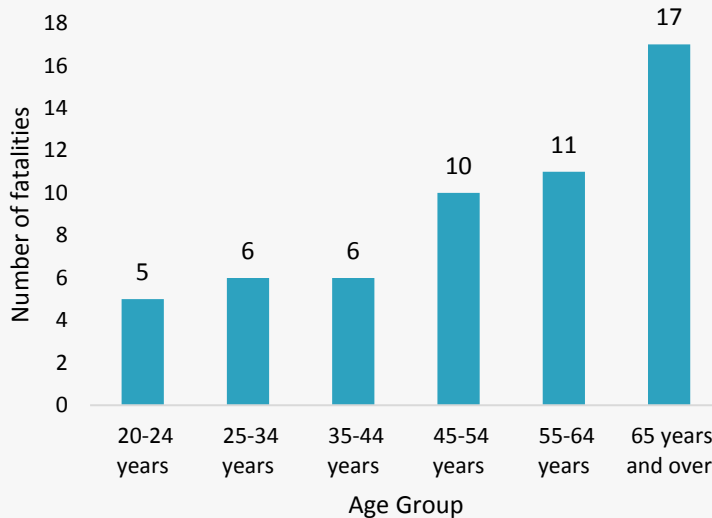


## Fatalities by Worker Age Group

In 2014, the majority of worker fatalities occurred among men (93%, n=51) and older workers (Figures 3 and 4). Workers aged 55-64 years old accounted for 20 percent of deaths (n=11), while workers aged 65 years and older accounted for 31 percent of fatalities (n=17).

**Figure 3. Number of fatal work injuries by age group, Nebraska, 2014 (N=55)**

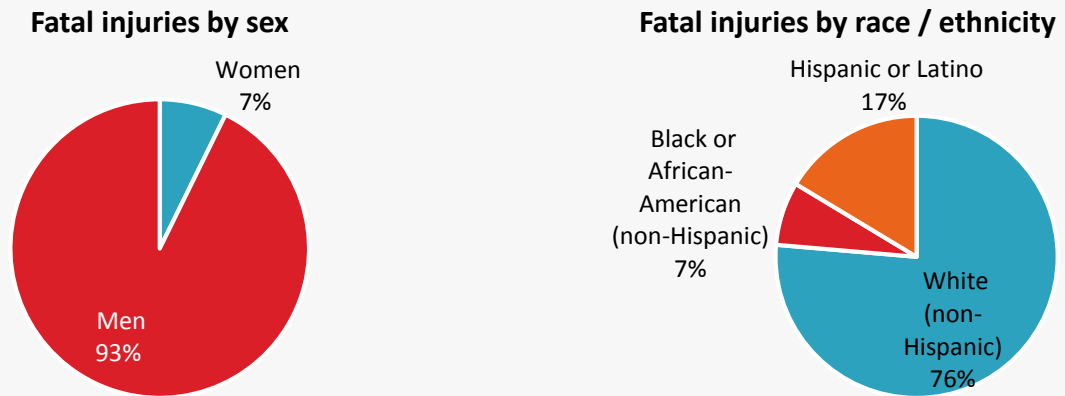
Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data (numerator); BLS Current Population Survey (denominator).



## Fatalities by Worker Characteristics

White non-Hispanic workers experienced about three-fourths of fatalities (n=42), while 17 percent were among Hispanic or Latino workers (n=9) and 7 percent were Black or African-American (non-Hispanic) (n=4) (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Percent of fatal work injuries by sex and race/ethnicity, Nebraska, 2014 (N=55)**



Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data. Note: BLS reports aggregate totals for each category and suppresses numbers when they do not meet the publication criteria. Therefore, number totals may not sum to 100%.

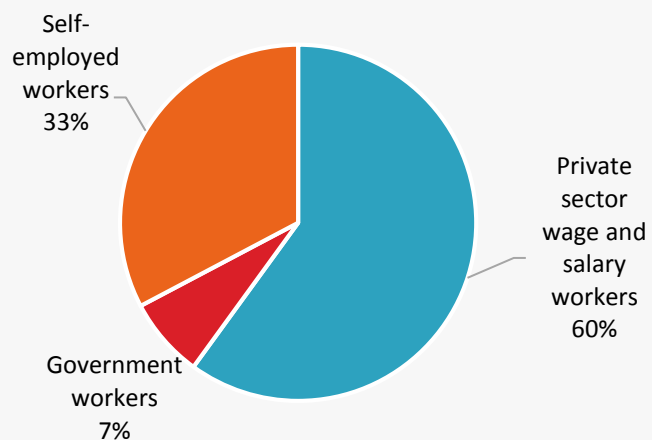
## Fatalities by Type of Worker

In 2014, 60 percent of worker fatalities occurred among private sector wage and salary employees (n=33) (Figure 5). About one-third of fatalities occurred among self-employed workers (n=18), while seven percent of fatalities occurred among government workers (n=4).

**Figure 5. Percent of fatal work injuries by type of worker, Nebraska, 2014 (N=55)**

Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data.

Note: BLS reports aggregate totals for each category and suppresses numbers when they do not meet the publication criteria. Therefore, number totals may not sum to 100%. Government category includes all fatal injuries in government, regardless of industry classification system.



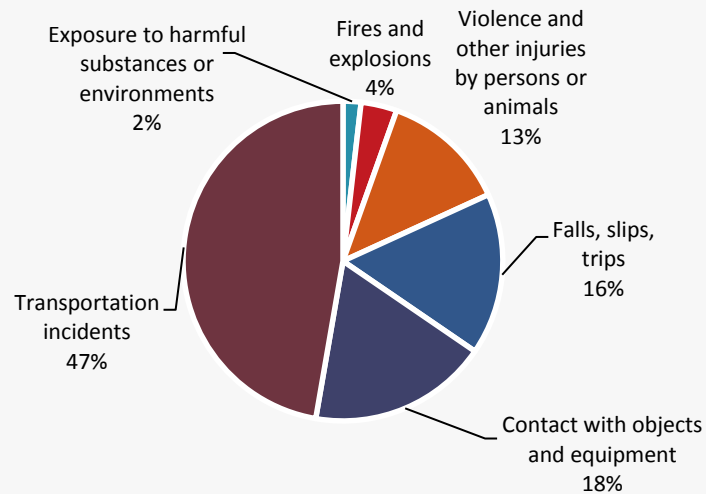
## Fatalities by Event Type

In 2014, nearly half of all worker fatal injuries were due to ‘transportation incidents’ (n=26) (Figure 6). The second most frequent fatality event in 2014 was ‘contact with objects and equipment’ (18%, n=10), followed by ‘falls, slips, trips’ (16%, n=9), and ‘violence and other injuries by persons or animals’ (13%, n=7).

**Figure 6. Percent of fatal work injuries by event, Nebraska, 2014 (N=55)**

Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data.

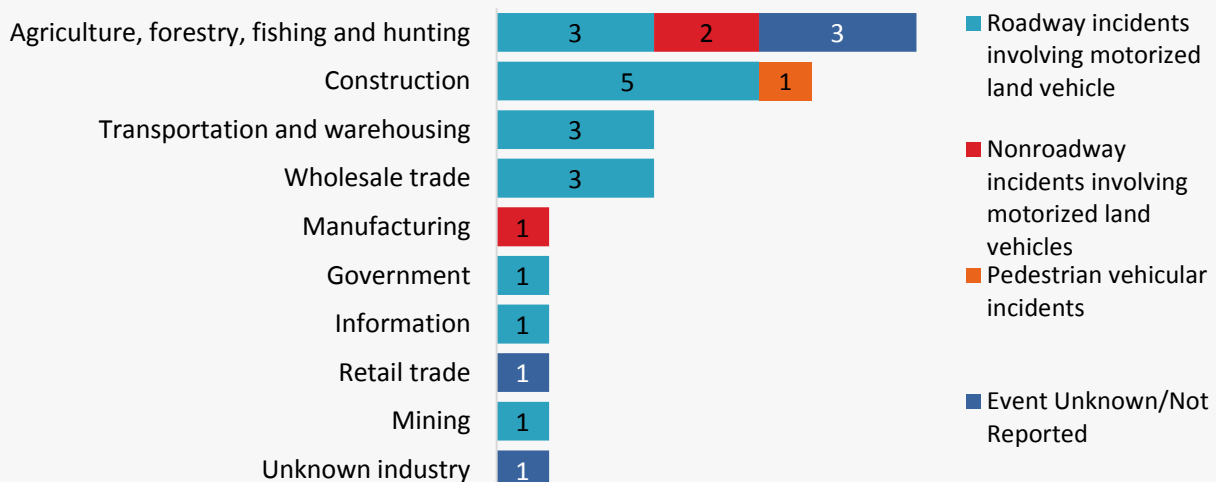
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## Transportation Incident Fatalities

As shown above in Figure 6, transportation incidents were the leading event for fatal work injuries in 2014. Out of the 26 transportation-related fatalities in 2014, 17 deaths (65%) were roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicles, and 4 deaths (15%) were non-roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicles. The majority of transportation-related fatalities were in the agriculture and construction industry sectors (Figure 7).

**Figure 7. Number of fatal transportation incidents by industry sector and event, Nebraska, 2014 (n=26)**



Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data. Note: BLS reports aggregate totals for each category and suppresses numbers when they do not meet the publication criteria. Therefore, number totals may not sum to 100%. Government category includes all fatal injuries in government, regardless of industry classification system.

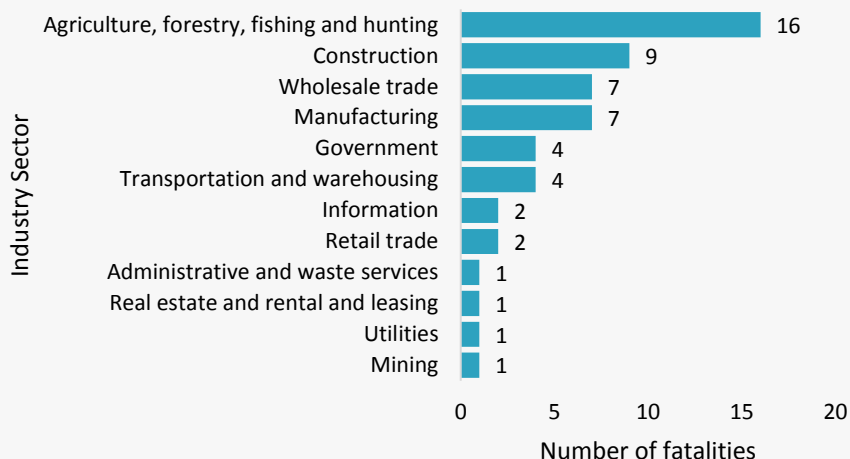
## Fatalities by Industry Sector

Sixteen fatal work injuries in Nebraska occurred among workers employed in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry sector (29%), which accounted for the most fatalities in 2014 (Figure 8). Nine fatalities occurred in the construction industry (16%), and seven fatalities occurred both in wholesale trade and manufacturing industries (13%). In 2014, there were both four fatalities (7%) among workers in the Government and Transportation and Warehousing industry sectors.

**Figure 8. Number of fatal work injuries by industry sector, Nebraska, 2014**

Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data.

Note: BLS reports aggregate totals for each category and suppresses numbers when they do not meet the publication criteria. Therefore, number totals may not sum to 100%. Government category includes all fatal injuries in government, regardless of industry classification system.

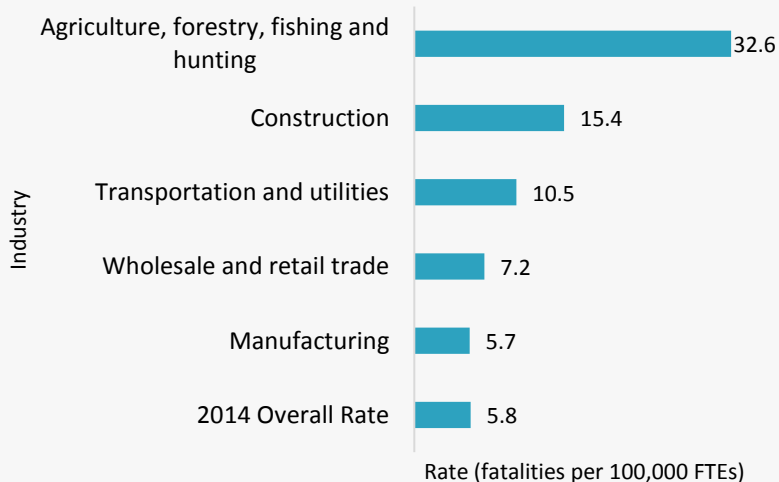


The 2014 rate of fatal work injuries in the agricultural, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry sector was 32.6 fatalities per 100,000 full-time workers (FTEs), which was more than five times higher than the Nebraska rate for all industry sectors. The construction, transportation and utilities, and trade industry sectors also had fatality rates in 2014 that were higher than the Nebraska rate for all sectors (Figure 9).

**Figure 9. Rate of fatal work injuries by selected industry sector, Nebraska, 2014**

Source: DHHS analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) data.

Note: BLS publishes rates for only selected industry sectors, therefore not all industry rates are available.



## Worker Fatality Incidents in 2014

The following includes a description of worker fatality incidents that occurred in the calendar year of 2014. Not all fatalities are shown.



### Structural Collapse in Omaha Kills Two Workers

In the morning on January 20, 2014, a structural collapse occurred at an animal feed supplement manufacturing facility in Omaha, NE. Two workers died and another nine were injured. Among the fatally injured included a 53-year-old worker who was cleaning on the second floor and a 47-year-old worker who was conducting maintenance when rooftop storage bins collapsed.

Source: OSHA

### Worker Dies from Exposure to Anhydrous Ammonia

On March 20, 2014, a 63-year-old truck driver in Tecumseh, NE died from exposure to anhydrous ammonia. The anhydrous ammonia was released when a 250-gallon tank ruptured. Three other workers were injured.

Source: OSHA

### Construction Worker Falls to Death

On Sept 15, 2014 a 42-year-old construction worker fell 16 feet to his death and a 25-year-old coworker suffered serious injuries. The two workers were installing heavy-duty, weatherproof tarpaulin on a residential home in Grand Island, NE.

Source: OSHA

### Agricultural Worker Dies After Being Caught in Auger

On November 20, 2014, an agricultural worker died after being caught in the auger of a grain truck on a turkey farm near Lincoln, NE. The 34-year-old worker was cleaning the auger on an empty grain transport truck used to feed turkeys when his clothing got tangled on the auger blade shaft.

Source: Lincoln Journal Star

## Summary

This report summarizes aggregate data published by the CFI for worker fatalities from 2014, along with selected worker fatality incidents. Fifty-five workers died due to fatal work injuries in 2014. Nebraska's worker fatality rate is substantially above the national average. The majority of worker fatalities in 2014 occurred among men and older workers. Nearly half of worker fatalities involved transportation incidents, most of which were roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicles. Deaths occurred most frequently among workers employed in the agriculture industry sector, which also had the highest fatality rate. Fatal injury rates for the construction, transportation and utilities, and wholesale and retail trade sectors were also higher than the state average rate.

Worker fatalities are preventable. Occupational health surveillance can help identify trends and prevention strategies. Employers, workers, and other occupational health and safety stakeholders need to work together to address this public health problem.

## About the Data: Considerations and Limitations

In Nebraska, the CFOI is administered by the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court (NWCC). The CFOI counts all fatal traumatic injuries. A fatal injury is considered work-related if an event or exposure results in the fatal injury of a person 1) on the employer's premises and the person was there to work; or 2) off the employer's premises and the exposure was related to the person's work or status as an employee. Work-related fatalities are reported by CFOI according to the state in which the fatality occurred and not the state of the worker's residence. Because BLS uses a different methodology to calculate fatal work-related injury rates, there are slight differences between the rates presented here and the BLS published rates. For more information regarding the BLS methodology visit the BLS website at: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshnotice10.htm> and <http://www.bls.gov/pub/hom/pdf/homch9.pdf>.

## For More Information

- For additional information about the occupational safety and health surveillance in Nebraska, visit the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Website at: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/occhealth/>
- For more information about the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, visit the BLS Website at: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm>
- For Nebraska data published by the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, visit: <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshstate.htm#NE>
- For Nebraska CFOI reports published by the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court (NWCC), visit: [http://www.wcc.ne.gov/publications/osh\\_cfoi.aspx](http://www.wcc.ne.gov/publications/osh_cfoi.aspx)