

Workers' Memorial Day — April 28, 2016

Workers' Memorial Day, observed annually on April 28, recognizes workers who suffered or died because of exposures to hazards at work. In 2014, 4,679 U.S. workers died from work-related injuries (1). Although deaths from work-related injuries are captured by surveillance systems, most deaths from work-related illness are not. In 2007, an estimated 53,445 deaths from work-related illness occurred (2). In 2014, employers reported approximately 3 million nonfatal injuries and illnesses to private industry workers and 722,000 to state and local government workers (3); an estimated 2.7 million work-related injuries were treated in emergency departments, resulting in 113,000 hospitalizations (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC-NIOSH), unpublished data, 2016)*

Occupational injuries and illnesses also have economic costs. The societal cost of work-related fatalities, injuries, and illnesses was estimated at \$250 billion in 2007 on the basis of methods that focus on medical costs and productivity losses (2).

New estimates of worker hearing impairment from the CDC-NIOSH Occupational Hearing Loss Surveillance program are reported in this issue of *MMWR*. The audiometric data analyzed in this report represent one example of existing health data that CDC-NIOSH uses for occupational health surveillance.

* <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/surveillance/default.html>.

References

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics. National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2014 preliminary results [Table 2]. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; 2015. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/foi.pdf>
2. Leigh JP. Economic burden of occupational injury and illness in the United States. *Milbank Q* 2011;89:728–72. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0009.2011.00648.x>
3. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employer-reported workplace injuries and illnesses in 2014 [Table 2]. Washington, DC: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; 2015. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/osh.pdf>

Hearing Impairment Among Noise-Exposed Workers — United States, 2003–2012

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Hearing loss is the third most common chronic physical condition in the United States, and is more prevalent than diabetes or cancer (1). Occupational hearing loss, primarily caused by high noise exposure, is the most common U.S. work-related illness (2). Approximately 22 million U.S. workers are exposed to hazardous occupational noise (3). CDC compared the prevalence of hearing impairment within nine U.S. industry sectors using 1,413,789 noise-exposed worker audiograms from CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Occupational Hearing Loss Surveillance Project (4). CDC estimated the prevalence at six hearing impairment levels, measured in the better ear, and the impact on quality of life expressed as annual disability-adjusted life years (DALYs), as defined by the 2013 Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study (5). The mining sector had the highest prevalence of workers with any hearing impairment, and with moderate or worse

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