



# DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS AT WORK



The number of **drug overdose deaths at work is rising.**

The top 3 industries with the **highest numbers of drug overdose deaths at work** from 2011-2016\*



**Transportation & Warehousing**  
116 deaths



**Construction**  
114 deaths



**Healthcare & Social Assistance**  
96 deaths

## What do we know about drug overdose deaths at work?



**Most overdose deaths at work were from *opioids***

*Opioids* are drugs commonly used to reduce pain and can be prescribed or used without a medical reason



**Workplace factors can influence the use of prescriptions and other substances**

Examples: opioids prescribed for work-related back pain, and workers using substances to deal with work-related stress

## What don't we know about drug overdose deaths at work?

- The circumstances for substance use
- If the drug use was associated with work injury and pain

## Employers: You can take steps to prevent worker drug overdose

- Identify and remove workplace dangers
- Protect workers who do physically demanding jobs from getting injured
- Educate yourself on how you can support a worker with a substance use disorder
- Educate employees on risks for substance use and overdose prevention
- Consider implementing a program to make **naloxone** available in the workplace in the event of an opioid overdose  
*Naloxone* is a life-saving medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose



### Large Employers:

Provide training and encourage use of an employee assistance program, health plan, and other resources for treatment of substance use disorders



### Small Employers:

Work with your local health department for resources in your community

### Employer Resources

National Safety Council Employer Toolkit  
[nsc.org/work-safety/tools-resources/prescription-drug-employer-toolkit](https://nsc.org/work-safety/tools-resources/prescription-drug-employer-toolkit)

U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
[uschamber.com/Americas-opioid-crisis](https://uschamber.com/Americas-opioid-crisis)

### Learn More

[cdc.gov/niosh/topics/opioids](https://cdc.gov/niosh/topics/opioids)

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\* Tiesman H, Konda S, Ciminieri L, Castillo D [2019]. Drug overdose deaths at work, 2011-2016. Inj Prev. <https://doi.org/10.1136/injuryprev-2018-043104>

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