

# Wholesale and Retail Trade

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF WHOLESALE  
AND RETAIL TRADE FOR A SAFE FUTURE

Winter 2019 – January 2020

## Meet our new NORA WRT co-chairs



Adrienne Eastlake, MS, RS/REHS, MT (ASCP), serves as a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps. She has worked as an industrial hygienist for NIOSH since 2011. With a keen interest in emerging technologies, she has been involved in fieldwork, research, guidance, and publications.



Debbie Hornback, MS, has worked with NIOSH since 1991. She is the Division of Science and Integration's Health Communication Specialist and manages the division communication needs. Debbie is involved in a variety of activities, such as marketing and social media campaigns, outreach, and dissemination.

*"We are so glad to join this group and contribute our expertise for the benefit of WRT worker safety, health, and wellbeing!"*

## Activities in NORA WRT

An online NORA Wholesale and Retail Trade Sector Council meeting was held in 2019. On May 17, Gary Jarvis, of Safety Solutions, presented on Preventive Management versus Claims Management. Gary shared his perspectives on the benefits of preventive management in the

workplace. By making use of preventive management to reduce work-related incidents, employers can promote a safe and healthy work environment. Promotion of safety in the company culture from the point of hire leads to safer work practices and conditions and overall cost

savings, especially in indirect costs, such as lost time.

If you would like a copy of either of the presentations, or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

## What is next? Save the date

On the basis of our recent NORA WRT call, we will be moving forward with creating a forum to share solutions. Participants can share successes and case studies so that others can make use of existing knowledge. Look for more information to come on this exciting new forum.

We are looking for information from you! If you have questions or information that

you would like to share at our next NORA sector council meeting, please reach out to us.

Our next NORA WRT sector council meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 17, 2020, and we want to make sure that your needs for appropriate information and guidance are addressed.



## New Publication!

# NIOSH study provides a comprehensive assessment of the burden of injury, illness, and fatality in the WRT sector

A comprehensive overview of Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and other data on injuries, illnesses, and fatalities in WRT was recently published in the *American Journal of Industrial Medicine* (AJIM) [Anderson et al. 2019]. The article, “Wholesale and retail trade sector occupational fatal and nonfatal injuries and illnesses from 2006–2016: Implications for intervention,” offers insight on WRT injury and illness burden, investigates changes in demographics that could factor into safety and health risks, and highlights specific WRT subsectors that are worth further investigation. The study’s purpose was to identify developments and potential interventions in workplace safety, health, and well-being in the WRT sector.

The authors noted these highlights of the period 2006 through 2016:

- The wholesale sector’s fatality rate increased and the retail fatality rate declined.
- The fatality rate for one wholesale subsector (recyclable materials) was

nearly seven times higher than the overall private industry rate.

- Two retail subsectors (gasoline stations and convenience stores) had high fatality rates, nearly four times the rate in the entire retail sector.
- Overexertion and bodily reaction, falls, and contact with objects reportedly caused more than 90% of the WRT injuries.
- Seven specific wholesale subsectors (durable and nondurable goods, recycling materials, motor parts, lumber, metal and mineral, grocery, and alcohol merchants) and ten specific retail subsectors (motor parts dealers, gasoline stations, nonstores [which sell merchandise outside of brick-and-mortar buildings], tire stores, home and garden centers, supermarkets, meat markets, warehouse clubs, pet stores, and fuel dealers) had higher injury and illness rates.

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Read about the AJIM article [Anderson et al. 2019] in the NIOSH Science Blog.

Anderson (Putz) V, Schulte PA, Sestito J, Linn H, Nguyen LS [2010]. Occupational fatalities, injuries, illnesses, and related economic loss in the wholesale and retail trade sector. *Am J Ind Med* 53(7):673–685, doi:10.1002/ajim.20813.

Anderson VP, Novakovich J, Schulte PA [2019]. Wholesale and retail trade fatal and nonfatal injuries and illnesses: 2006–2016. NIOSH Science Blog. Posted November 22, 2019, <https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2019/12/02/retail-injury/>.

Anderson VP, Schulte PA, Novakovich J, Pfirman D, Bhattacharya A [2019]. Wholesale and retail trade sector occupational fatal and nonfatal injuries and illnesses from 2006–2016: implications for intervention. *Am J Ind Med* DOI: 10.1002/ajim.23063. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/wrt/description.html> (accessed 09/20/ 2019).

## Why is NIOSH studying workers in the WRT sector?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It has the mandate to assure “every man and woman in the Nation safe and healthful working conditions and to preserve our human resources” [NIOSH 2018a].

We support worker safety and health through performing research, promoting interventions, and making recommendations to reduce worker fatalities and nonfatal illnesses and injuries. We accomplish this by building and maintaining partnerships and enhancing communications throughout the

wholesale and retail sector, including trade association collaborations.

The NIOSH WRT program and its leadership seek to reduce the number of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities among the U.S. WRT workforce, encompassing over 20 million employees that work in 1.6 million establishments. The NIOSH WRT program focuses on subsectors with the highest rates of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities. These include merchant wholesalers of nondurable and durable goods, building material and garden equipment and supply stores, food and beverage stores, furniture and home furnishing stores, general merchandise stores, and

motor vehicle and parts dealers. This work enables other government agencies, employers, and other organizations or associations to take steps to improve the overall safety, health, and well-being of the U.S. WRT workforce [NIOSH 2018b].

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NIOSH [2018a]. About NIOSH. 3/2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/about/default.html> (accessed 09/20/2019).

NIOSH [2018b]. Wholesale and retail trade: program description. 5/2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/programs/wrt/description.html> (accessed 09/20/ 2019).

## Vern Anderson

Vern Anderson, PhD, CPE, coordinator of the Wholesale and Retail Trade (WRT) program, retired from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in the fall, 2018. Vern worked for NIOSH over 44 years. During his career, he published more than 81 articles and a number of NIOSH documents.

Vern initially served as a public health analyst, branch chief, and researcher investigating the neurobehavioral effects on workers exposed to organic solvents. Later, Vern developed a keen interest in ergonomics. His work in ergonomics crosscut sectors, where he developed many solutions to reduce musculoskeletal disorders. His final position at NIOSH was as coordinator for the NIOSH Wholesale and Retail Trade (WRT) program. Vern was also a valuable co-chair for the WRT National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) sector council. The council comprises more than thirty members from the

WRT community. On the council, many stakeholders, representing employers, academia, government, labor unions, and other professional associations, work together for a safer, healthier workplace.

Vern remains an active and vigorous member of the WRT community, as he continues his work through retirement as a consultant and guest researcher at NIOSH. His most recent project involves a review of the past 11 years of nonfatal injury, illness, and fatality surveillance data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. While his leadership role has passed on to the next generation, we are grateful for Vern's insight and experience.

Many of the NORA WRT Sector Council members continue to serve as active members today. We hope you join with us in saying we wish Vern all the best in retirement, and we are thankful for the time he devoted and expertise he shared!



To find previous editions, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/nora/councils/wrt/bulletins.html>

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