

Workplace Fatalities in the U.S. Decline for Second Year as Hazards Persist

The latest data from the *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* reveal that the number of fatal work injuries in the United States fell for the second consecutive year in 2024, offering a modest sign of progress in workplace safety—but persistent dangers remain for many workers.

According to the *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries* released on February 19, there were **5,070 fatal work injuries** last year, marking a **4.0 percent decrease** from the **5,283 deaths** recorded in 2023. This translates to a rate of **3.3 fatalities per 100,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers**, down from a rate of 3.5 in the previous year.

A Worker Dies Every 104 Minutes

The figures underscore the sobering reality that a fatal work-related injury still occurred roughly **every 104 minutes** in 2024, compared with every 99 minutes in 2023. Although the overall trend points downward, this pace highlights the continued human cost of occupational hazards across industries.

Transportation and Material Moving Occupations Lead

Transportation incidents remained the most frequent cause of work-related deaths, accounting for **38.2 percent** of all fatal injuries. While the total number of transportation-related deaths dipped slightly—from 1,942 to 1,937, the dangers associated with roadway and vehicle-related work still dominate the statistics.

Within that category:

- **Roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicles** fell by 8.5 percent.
- **Pedestrian incidents involving motorized vehicles** — such as workers struck while outside the vehicle — rose by 19 percent.

Falls, Substance Exposure, and Violent Acts

Other leading causes of fatal workplace injuries included:

- **Falls, slips, and trips**, which remained a top hazard with 844 deaths, though slightly down from 2023.
- **Exposure to harmful substances or environments**, which saw a notable **16.2 percent drop**—largely driven by a decline in drug and alcohol overdoses, which accounted for 410 deaths in 2024.

Meanwhile, deaths due to **violent acts at work**—including homicides and suicides—totaled 733. Homicides alone increased slightly, accounting for 470 deaths.

Occupation and Demographic Differences

Certain job categories faced disproportionate risks:

- **Construction and extraction workers** experienced 1,032 fatalities, most of any occupational group.
- **Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance workers** saw an increase in work-related deaths.
- **Protective service occupations** also reported slightly higher fatalities, with homicides constituting more than a third of deaths in that group.

The report also highlighted demographic trends: fatal injury counts and rates decreased for Black or African American workers, and the rate for Hispanic or Latino workers fell slightly as well. Women accounted for 8.1 percent of all workplace deaths but represented **15.3 percent of workplace homicides**.

Progress, But No Room for Complacency

Safety advocates say the data point to meaningful progress, especially in reducing deaths tied to harmful substance exposure, but emphasize that further efforts are needed to protect workers in high-risk roles.

Experts note that the continued prevalence of transportation incidents and fall-related deaths highlights enduring challenges in roadway safety, vehicle operation, construction practices, and other high-hazard environments.

If your DART Rate is at or above the national average, or you are seeing disturbing trends, take action before you become a statistic. Give **Baldwin Safety Solutions** a call **682.381.8680** to schedule an appointment, we can help.

Joe Baldwin

Baldwin Safety Solution