

Safety and Health Research on Hispanic Construction Workers by CPWR



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Introduction

CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training is funded by NIOSH and has conducted a substantial amount of safety and health research on Hispanic construction workers. This presentation summarizes our key findings on employment, safety and health, and health services among Hispanic construction workers in the United States.

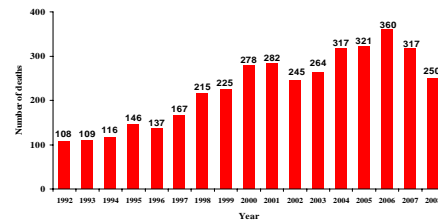
Hispanic employment in the construction industry peaked during the economic boom. The current economic downturn had a significant impact on Hispanic workers. About one of three Hispanic construction workers lost jobs in the last two years (CPWR 2009). Demographically, Hispanic workers are younger, less educated, new immigrants, lack of fluency in English, and more likely to work in blue collar occupations, but less likely to be unionized or self-employed than white, non-Hispanic workers (CPWR 2008, 2009). In general, Hispanic construction workers have a higher risk of injury on worksites. Work-related death rates are consistently higher for Hispanic construction workers than their non-Hispanic counterparts, especially for workers in high-risk occupations (CPWR 2008, Dong and Platner 2004). Hispanic workers also have a higher risk of fatal falls, which is the leading cause of death in construction (Dong et al, 2009). Nonfatal injury data from the BLS does not yield the same patterns as the fatality data, but our findings from household surveys show that Hispanic construction workers are more likely to experience medical conditions resulting from work-related injuries (Dong et al, 2010). Unfortunately, less than 30% of Hispanic construction workers with such injuries received workers' compensation (Dong et al, 2007). Furthermore, many Hispanic construction workers and their children lack health insurance and are less likely to receive needed healthcare than white, non-Hispanic workers (Dong et al, 2009).

Highlights

- Construction employment rose by 71% from 6.9 million in 1992 to 11.8 million in 2007, then dropped by 2.1 million (20%) to 9.7 million in 2009.
- Hispanic employment in construction dramatically increased in the last two decades from 342,000 in 1980 to nearly 3 million in 2007.
- More than 900,000 Hispanic workers lost their jobs in construction during the economic downturn.
- Deaths among Hispanic construction workers tripled from 108 in 1992 to 360 in 2006.
- From 1992 to 2008, 3,857 Hispanic construction workers died from work-related injuries.
- Deaths caused by falls among Hispanic construction workers rose by almost 400%, from 33 in 1992 to 148 in 2006.
- Research findings suggest that injuries are underreported in construction, especially for Hispanic workers.

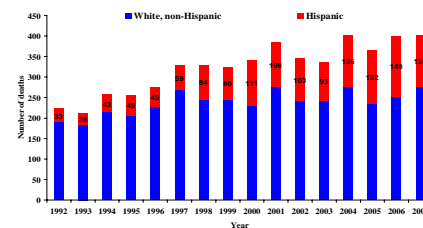
Main Findings

Work-related deaths among Hispanic construction workers, 1992-2008



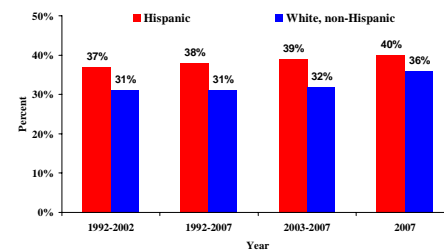
Source: 1992-2008 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Calculations by CPWR Data Center.

Number of fatal falls from work-related injuries by ethnicity in construction, 1992-2007



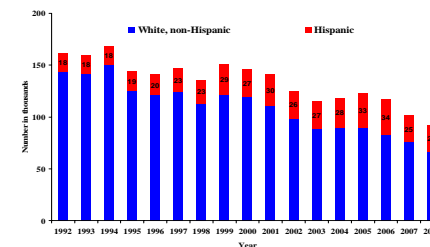
Source: 1992-2007 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. Calculations by CPWR Data Center.

Percentage of fatal falls in different time periods



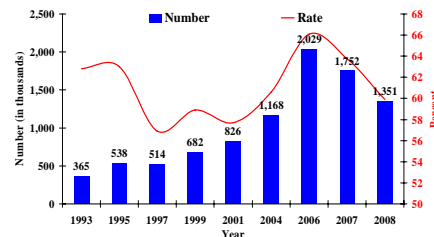
Source: Dong X, Fujimoto A, Ringen K, Men Y. Fatal falls among Hispanic construction workers. *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 2009;41:1047-1052. Note: Chart contains updated data.

Lost-workday injuries and illnesses in construction, 1992-2008



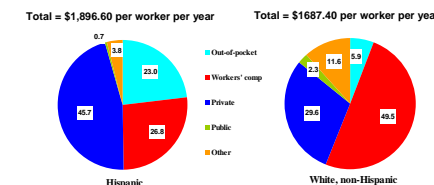
Source: 1992-2008 Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and 1992-2008 Current Population Survey.

Number and rate of the uninsured among Hispanic construction workers, 1993-2008



Source: 1993-2008 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey. Calculations by the CPWR Data Center.

Sources of payment for medical costs of work-related injuries in construction



Source: Dong X, Ringen K, Men Y, Fujimoto A. Medical costs and sources of payment for work-related injuries among Hispanic construction workers. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 2007;49(12):1367-1375.

Publications

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