



WMSDs in Construction down from 1992, but Still Major Occupational Hazard

Work-related musculoskeletal disorders among construction workers in the United States from 1992 to 2014

Xuanwen Wang, Xiuwen Sue Dong, Sang D. Choi, John Dement. Occupational and Environmental Medicine, December 2016 (Online)

Overview

Researchers examined data from the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII), the Current Population Survey (CPS), and Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) to document trends and patterns in work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs) among American construction workers.

Key Findings

- The study found that the number of reported WMSDs among American construction workers dropped by 66% between 1992 and 2014. However, the rate of WMSDs in the construction industry remained higher than the average across all industry sectors.
- The median days away from work (DAFW) due to WMSDs in construction increased from 8 days to 13 days between 1992 and 2014, and the proportion of WMSDs for construction workers aged 55 to 64 years almost doubled.
- By occupation, construction laborers had the largest number of WMSD cases, while helpers, heating and air-conditioning mechanics, cement masons, and sheet metal workers had the highest rates of WMSDs.
- The major cause of WMSDs in construction was overexertion, with back injuries accounting for more than 40% of WMSDs among construction workers. The estimated wage loss for private wage-and-salary construction workers was \$46 million in 2014.

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See abstract:

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