

Foreword

Each day in the United States, more than 11 million men and women go to work in the dynamic, complex and changing industry that builds, repairs and maintains the structures we all inhabit. That is the construction industry.

The Construction Chart Book attempts to give readers a compilation of data that show how this industry is performing, growing and changing, based on the hard numbers collected from sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The data compares construction to other U.S. industries and evaluates characteristics within the industry itself to present an overview of construction employment, occupations/trades, demographics, economics, training, and occupational safety and health. The book gives readers the most up-to-date information available.

This fourth edition offers readers information not found in previous editions, and this information can be eye-opening. Within the expanded information on the surging Hispanic worker population, readers will find that these workers die on the job with greater frequency than their non-Hispanic counterparts. These workers, when they are injured, also receive far less in workers' compensation than other construction workers. And a new page, the last one in the book, covers construction workers' use of health care services. Again, particular attention is directed to the use of services for Hispanic workers versus non-Hispanics.

Other new topics covered include the total cost of injuries and illnesses among construction workers, descriptive statistics on construction worker blood lead levels, data on immigrant workers, day laborers, respiratory disease, and new findings on chronic illnesses and health risk factors among construction workers (diabetes, obesity and heart disease).

Readers familiar with previous editions will see updated and expanded information on numerous topics relevant to the industry. This edition also gives expanded information on available data sources to help readers understand the nuances of the data and the context of the findings.

As with previous editions, this version is expected to raise more questions than it answers. The attempt of the authors is to elicit discussion and, perhaps, spur action on the issues raised. The result could be the improvement of data tracking, further research, and support for interventions that will reduce deaths and injuries among construction workers worldwide.

Cognizant of the loss of four workers a day in these United States, the authors hope that the book will be a catalyst for eliminating these unnecessary, and persistent, tragedies.

Mark H. Ayers

President, Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Board Chair and President, CPWR

Sean McGarvey

Secretary-Treasurer, Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO
Secretary-Treasurer, CPWR

Erich (Pete) Stafford

Executive Director, CPWR – The Center for Construction Research and Training
Director of Safety and Health, Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO