



OSHA Consultation Programs' Impact on Construction Worker Fatalities

Do Variations in State Consultation Programs Affect Construction Fatality Rates?

Wayne B Gray, John Mendeloff. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, 2026.

Overview

With support from OSHA, each state offers its own free, voluntary consultation program that helps firms identify hazards at their workplaces. To examine whether these programs affect construction worker fatality rates, the authors extended their prior research on the topic and looked at data from 2016 to 2022, comparing the 21 states that manage their own OSHA enforcement programs ("State Plan states") to the 29 states covered by Federal OSHA enforcement. Of the 47,418 consultation visits during the study period, 72% occurred in State Plan states, even though they employed only 43% of construction workers. The researchers focused on the frequency of consultation visits in the state, but they also considered the average number of hazards identified per visit and the scope of those visits (full vs. limited). They then used a panel regression analysis to identify the connection between those factors and the state's construction fatality rate.

Key Findings

- More frequent consultation visits, more hazards identified, and greater visit scope were all associated with lower construction worker fatality rates.
- State Plan states conducted more frequent—and more comprehensive—consultation visits at construction firms than Federal OSHA states.
- Eleven of the 21 State Plan states recorded 2.0–6.6 visits per 1,000 workers, while 20 of the 29 Federal states had rates below 0.5. Nine of the ten highest visit-rate states were State Plan states.
- Consultation scope differed sharply: 72% of State Plan consultation visits were full scope, compared with only 31% in Federal states.
- Budget commitment influenced activity—states contributing more than the minimum 10% required by law tended to conduct more consultation visits.
- Current program reach is limited, with only about 2% to 3% of projects receiving an OSHA consultation in a typical year.

For more information, contact:

Wayne Gray: wgray@clarku.edu

Read the article:

bit.ly/3QD0UWc

©2026, CPWR—The Center for Construction Research and Training. All rights reserved. CPWR is the research and training arm of NABTU. Production of this document was supported by cooperative agreement OH 012761 from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). The contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of NIOSH.



THE CENTER FOR CONSTRUCTION
RESEARCH AND TRAINING

WWW.CPWR.COM