



## Charting a Path Forward for Construction Safety

### **Construction Safety and Health in the USA: Lessons from a Decade of Turmoil**

*Knut Ringen, Xiuwen Sue Dong, Linda M Goldenhar, and Christine T Cain. Annals of Work Exposures and Health, 2018.*

#### **Overview**

The construction industry is one of the largest and also most hazardous industries in the USA. It is affected more severely by the business cycle than most other industries. During 2008 to 2010, as a result of the recession, 2.7 million workers and 20% of all employers left the industry. By 2010, the number and rate of traumatic fatalities had reached their lowest point ever, only to gradually increase again as the industry recovered from the recession. The authors examined industry trends during the last decade including the severe recession, and proposed methods to address the increase.

#### **Key Findings**

- Small employers (<20 employees) accounted for 37.5% of employment but were responsible for 57% of all fatalities.
- Small employers — especially those which hire immigrant workers and self-employed workers — lag far behind in terms of adopting even essential elements of good safety cultures and management practices.
- State and local governments could improve construction safety by mandating skills qualifications for licensed contractors and workers; adopting occupational safety and health requirements for construction permits; and making greater use of criminal prosecution where it is obvious that basic requirements for safety and health have been ignored.

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#### **See abstract:**

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