

Nonfatal Workplace Injuries and Illnesses in Maryland for 2011

Nearly 65 thousand nonfatal work-related injuries and illnesses were reported by Maryland's public and private sector workplaces during 2011 according to the latest results of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). These injury and illness estimates cover approximately 2.3 million workers in the State. There were 9,200 fewer cases reported in 2011 than in 2010. The number of injuries and illnesses converts to a total recordable case (TRC) incidence rate of 3.4 injuries and illnesses per 100 equivalent full-time workers. Maryland's TRC rate for all industries, including State and local government was 11 percent below the national average of 3.8 and was the lowest rate ever recorded for Maryland in the 40 year history of the program.

Occupational Injury and Illness Summary Data, Maryland's Private Sector, 2011

Occupational injuries and illnesses among Maryland's private sector employers occurred at a rate of 3.0 cases per 100 equivalent full-time workers. The private sector's TRC rate represented a 17 percent decline from the previous year and was the lowest recorded rate for Maryland since the inception of the SOII program.

Ninety-seven percent of the 48,700 cases reported by private sector employers were injuries with the remaining 1,400 cases, illnesses. Maryland's private sector injury and illness estimates cover almost 2 million workers.

Occupational Injury and Illness Summary Data, Maryland's Public Sector, 2011

Public sector injury and illness estimates for Maryland State and local government have been published every year since 1979. Representing some 349,000 employees, State and local government recorded 15,900 injuries and illnesses in 2011. The total recordable case incidence rate for all injuries and illnesses was 5.8 cases per 100 fulltime equivalent employees. This rate remained unchanged from the previous year.

State Government

With 4,700 reported cases converting to a total recordable case rate of 5.0 injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time equivalent workers, Maryland State government's incidence rate declined 6 percent from the previous year. Of that total, 2,200 cases were severe enough to require the injured or ill worker to be away from work for at least one day to recuperate.

Local Government

Local government experienced a 5 percent increase from the previous year's recorded rate of 6.0 cases per 100 equivalent fulltime workers to 6.3 cases for 2011. Maryland's local government rate was 3 percent above the national average for local government. Of the 11,100 cases reported 3,700 were severe enough to require at least one day away from work for recuperation. In 2011, nearly 238,000 workers were employed by the State's county governments and local municipalities.

Maryland Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Highlights for 2011

Private Industry

- Although 48,700 new OSHA recordable cases were reported by Maryland employers in 2011, the total number of cases declined by over 10,000 from the previous year.
- Private industry construction's TRC rate declined 9% from 4.3 to 3.9
- Manufacturing's TRC remained the same from the previous year (3.5) but continues to remain below the U.S. rate of 4.4.
- The Goods-producing sector's TRC rate declined 8% down to 3.7.
- The Service-providing sector's TRC rate declined 17% from 3.5 to 2.9 during this reference period.
- Transportation and warehousing's TRC rate declined 26% from 7.8 to 5.8.

Maryland's Public Sector

Although State government's TRC rate showed a decline from 5.3 to 5.0., certain sectors within State government remain high. Some notable examples:

- The TRC rate for State hospitals increased from 17.3 to 17.8
- The rate for State nursing and residential care facilities declined slightly from the previous year but continues to remain very high at 21.3. This industry reported the highest rate in Maryland during 2011.
- State correctional institutions reported a TRC rate increase from 10.6 to 12.0 injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time equivalent workers.

- Local government’s TRC rate increased from 6.0 to 6.3.
- Local government public elementary and secondary schools’ TRC rate increased from 4.1 to 5.5.
- Local government water, sewage and other systems (NAICS 2213) reported a TRC rate of 8.2.

The incidence rates represent the number of injuries and illnesses per 100 full-time equivalent workers and were calculated as: $(N/EH) \times 200,000$, where:

N = number of injuries and illnesses
 EH = total number of hours worked by all employees during the calendar year
 200,000 = base for 100 full-time equivalent workers (working 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year)

Background of the Survey

The Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) is a cooperative program between the State of Maryland’s Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Division of Labor and Industry and the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. SOII provides estimates of the number and frequency (incidence rates) of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses by industry code as defined by the 2007 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) manual. The SOII program also provides details on the circumstances and characteristics of the more seriously injured and ill workers. These injury and illness estimates are based on safety and health logs that, by law, employers are required to keep. Occupational injury and illness statistics have been published for Maryland’s private sector every year since 1972 and for State and local government since 1979.

The SOII program utilizes an employer-based questionnaire to collect occupational injury and illness data. Questionnaires are mailed to a scientifically selected random sampling of businesses in Maryland. The responses are compiled, tabulated and published annually.

Statistical sampling techniques are used to produce the estimates. Because the results are based on a random sampling of establishments in the universe file (the universe is all operating in-scope establishments in Maryland’s unemployment insurance tax file), the estimates probably differ from the figures that would be obtained if every establishment in the State had participated. To determine the precision of each data estimate, a standard error is calculated. The standard error defines a range (confidence interval) around each estimate. Relative standard errors are calculated for every SOII estimate produced.

The quality of the data are dependent on the employer's understanding of which cases are recordable under the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's recordkeeping regulation. Maryland State agencies and all local government municipalities and jurisdictions are required by law, to keep records of occupational injuries and illnesses. Additionally, many private sector establishments are required to keep injury and illness records. In order to have a complete picture of the occupational injury and illness experience for the economy, many establishments normally exempt from OSHA's recordkeeping requirements are included in the survey. The OSHA recordkeeping system is designed to measure the incidence, rather than the prevalence, of occupational injury and illness. Prevalence measures capture all injuries and illnesses that occur in a given year including ongoing or unresolved cases from previous years. The intent of the OSHA recordkeeping system is to measure each occupational injury and illness only once. The SOII, therefore, provides estimates of the number and rate of only new injuries and illnesses in a given year.

Excluded from the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses are the self-employed, farming operations with fewer than 11 employees, private households and federal government agencies. Occupational injury and illness data for coal, metal and nonmetal mining, and for railroad activities were provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration and The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration, respectively.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses is the primary source for charting the nature and magnitude of the occupational injury and illness problem across the country.

Occupational Illness Statistics

Collecting occupational illness statistics remains a challenge with the true number and rate difficult to measure. Unlike injuries, which result from sudden, acute events that are easily observed, reported and documented, many types of occupational disease are not diagnosed until long after the initial exposure to workplace carcinogens or other toxins have taken place. It may be years before the cumulative effects of these exposures present as occupational disease and the ill employee may no longer be in the workforce. Because of this, it is believed the incidence of certain long-term, latent forms of occupational disease is understated by the SOII. The overwhelming majority of the reported illness cases are those that are easier to directly relate to the workplace such as contact dermatitis or carpal tunnel syndrome.

For further information, please contact:

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