CalOSHA Inspections Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. The slowdown in inspections could prove dangerous for millions of workers: A Public Integrity analysis shows the vast majority of deaths and catastrophes have occurred at workplaces that weren't inspected by OSHA.
2. Under federal law, the OSHA doesn't need to visit every workplace – an impossibility given that it has never had more than 1,500 inspectors to cover millions of workplaces.
3. A cotton factory in Lawrence, Massachusetts, collapsed and killed about 145 workers. That led the state to pass the nation's first law requiring factory safety inspections. New Jersey, New York and a handful of other states followed.

STATS

- Even though the labor force grew by 16%, the number of workplace safety inspections dipped slightly during the first three years of Donald Trump's presidency – before taking a nosedive during the coronavirus pandemic.
- 4 %– 40 inspectors out of 1,000. That's the percentage decline in OSHA inspectors since Donald Trump took office and instituted a federal hiring freeze.
- In 2019, OSHA's safety inspectors conducted 962 investigations into fatal or catastrophic workplace incidents – the highest number since the agency began publishing the data in 2011.
- OSHA has conducted more than 6,800 investigations into workplaces that had a fatal or catastrophic incident. The vast majority of them – about 91 % – had not been inspected in the previous 10 years.
- Researchers at Harvard University and the University of California Berkeley found that companies subject to the

agency’s random inspections showed a 9.4 % decrease in injury rates compared with uninspected ones.

- Researchers with the RAND Corporation found that OSHA inspections were linked to a sharp decline in reported injuries at medium-size companies. Inspections that led to citations with penalties played a role in reducing injuries by an average of 19 % to 24 % each year for the two years following each inspection.
- The Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Census of 2016 Fatal Occupational Injuries reported there were 5,190 workplace fatalities in 2016, a seven percent increase from 2015.
- The study found that within high-hazard industries in California, inspected workplaces reduced their injury claims by 9.4 % and saved 26 % on workers’ compensation costs in the 4 years following the inspection, compared to a similar set of uninspected workplaces.