Struck-By Caught-Between Stats and Facts

DID YOU KNOW?

Each day, on average, two construction workers die of work-related injuries in the United States. In fact, one in five workplace fatalities are construction-related.

The top causes of construction-related fatalities are falls, struck-by an object, electrocution and caught between objects.

Generally, an employee cannot sue his or her employer for on-the-job injuries other than using the workers' compensation system. However, at times the owner of the premises, the general contractor or other contractors could be liable in cases where employees have been injured.

1. One in five worker deaths annually is in construction. [OSHA]
2. Workplace fatalities that were crane-related fell to their lowest level recorded in 2017 with 33 deaths. [BLS]
3. Construction workers accounted for 1008 (47 percent) of all fatal work injuries in 2018. [BLS]
4. The "Fatal Four" leading causes of private sector working fatalities in the construction industry are falls, being struck by an object, electrocution and being caught in something or between two objects. These accidents are responsible for 58.6 percent of construction worker deaths. [OSHA]
5. Companies with 10 or fewer employees and those who are self-employed account for nearly half of all deaths on construction sites. [CDC]
6. Of all industries, construction sees the most fatal falls, accounting for 51 percent of all falls in the United States. [CDC]
7. During a 45-year career, there is a 1 in 200 chance that a

construction worker will die from a work-related incident. [Safety & Health Magazine]

8. One in every 10 construction workers is injured annually. [OSHA]
9. Construction sees non-fatal injury rates that are 71% higher than any other industry. [Accident Analysis & Prevention]
10. Around half of serious workplace injuries go unreported each year.
11. Lifting, using a tool or machine, and carrying heavy objects are the leading causes of strain injuries in construction. [CWPR]
12. Workers who are between the ages of 35 – 34 are the most likely to be injured while working in construction. [National Safety Council]
13. Construction worker illnesses and injuries are down from 10.9 incidents per 100 workers in 1972 to 2.8 per 100 workers in 2017.

Eliminating the Fatal Four would save 591 workers' lives in America every year.

- **Falls:** Approximately 36.5% of all deaths in the workplace occurred due to employees falling. These includes workers who have fallen due to unprotected sides or holes, improperly constructed walking or working surfaces, workers who have fallen off ladders, roofs, scaffolding, large skyscraper construction areas, etc., all due to failure to use proper fall protection. Incorporating the OSHA fall protection requirements would resolve these issues, which includes 1910.269(g)(2) Fall Protection.
- **Struck by an Object:** An estimated 10.1% of deaths occurred due to swinging, falling, or misplaced objects. These also include falling objects due to rigging failure, loose or shifting materials, equipment malfunctions, and vehicle or equipment strikes.
- **Electrocutions:** About 8.6% of employees died due to electrocution. Workers face a number of electrocution risks on construction sites, such as exposed wiring, wet

conditions while outlets are exposed, etc. These are caused by contact with overhead power lines or energized conductors or circuit parts in electrical panels and equipment panels, poorly maintained extension cords and power tools, as well as lightning strikes. Strict adherence to OSHA 1910.331-.335, 1910.269, and NFPA 70E Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace would prevent these accidents.

- **Caught-in or Caught-between:** Employees caught in or between machines, devices, or tools causing death accounted for about 2.5% of deaths. These also include trench or excavation collapses, as well as workers caught between moving or rotating equipment, or caught in collapsing structures or materials.