

Material Handling Problems continued to plague industry in 2016

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What's the top cause of employee injury? The answer might surprise you.

An analysis of millions of workers' compensation claims found that about a third were related to one type of activity. Keep reading to find out what it is and if your workers are at risk.

The Travelers Companies, Inc., the country's largest workers' compensation carrier, released its Injury Impact Report, which identifies the most common causes of occupational accidents and injuries. The company analyzed more than 1.5 million compensation claims filed over a four-year period from a variety of businesses. The most frequent causes of workplace injuries were:

- Material handling—32 percent of total claims.
- Slips, trips, and falls—16 percent of total claims.
- Being struck by or colliding with an object—10 percent of total claims.
- Accidents involving tools—7 percent of total claims.
- Trauma occurring over time, such as when a body part is injured by overuse or strain—4 percent of total claims.

According to The Travelers findings, the above incidents most often resulted in strains, sprains, cuts, punctures, contusions, inflammation, fractures, or chronic illnesses. On average, strains and sprains resulted in 57 missed workdays, followed by cuts and punctures at 24 days. Inflammation and fractures caused the most time away from work at 91 and 78 days respectively.

Noted Woody Dwyer, a Travelers vice president for risk control, "The most common injuries we see can often be prevented if the proper safety measures are in place, if safety issues are promptly addressed, and if leaders continuously emphasize a culture of safety with employees."

What else did The Travelers learn about causes of job injury?

The Travelers survey of workers' compensation injuries also found:

- Falling from heights was among the top causes of injury in both construction and retail.
- Eye injuries were one of the most frequent types of injury in manufacturing and construction.
- The injuries with the highest average incurred costs include amputations, dislocations, electric shock, crushing, and multiple trauma injuries.

The carrier has developed an approach called Travelers Workforce Advantage to help businesses establish a safer workplace and prevent employee injuries. The initiative focuses on attracting and hiring the right candidates, onboarding and training, and supporting and engaging the workforce. Learn more at <http://www.travelers.com>

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