

BRAD BARGSLEY, 35 • JEREMY BARHSVALE, 43 • B.B. BAZILE, 56 • DAVID BRISTER, 43
• MICHAEL BROOKS, 47 • RICHARD J. CANO, 35 • UNNAMED WORKER •
ALLEN DAVID CLAY, 51 • THOMAS COUNTS, 57 • BINO CRASTO, 40 •
CHARLIE CROWNOVER, 66 • SAUL ISRAEL CRUZ, 71 • JIMMY DELEON, 42 •
ERNESTO EQUIA, 49 • WILMAN FUENTES, 23 • JUAN GABRIEL-RANGEL, 32 •
DARREN GOFORTH, 47 • SALVADOR GOMEZ JR., 46 • GREGORY GONZALES, 43 •
SERGIO GRANADOS, 24 • FREDERICK GUEVARA, 39 • BRIAN HENDERSON, 50
• JORGE HERNANDEZ, 59 • SOSTENES HERNANDEZ, 39 • LUIS HERRERA, 29 •
ROBERT GARY HUNTER, 52 • LINO IBARRA, 36 • GARY JOHNSON, 58 • SHUN JONES, 23

Worker Memorial Day Report 2016: Workplace Fatalities in the Houston Area

Pray for the Dead, Fight for the Living

• TRONSKI JONES, 26 • ALVIN KINNEY, 60 • DAVID MAGANA, 45 • EDSON MANZANO, 20
• RICHARD MARTIN, 47 • JUAN MARTINEZ, 33 • GEORGE MCALLISTER, 31 •
FRANK MEDRANO, 19 • PARIS MENDOZA, 31 • DANIEL MIREGI, 53 • OTTO MONTALVO, 50
• TOMMY MOSER, 55 • ISMAIL MUJICA, 57 • LEONARDO NAVA, 25 • DINH NGUYEN, 66
• JOSE ANTONIO ORTIZ, 32 • MARTIN PARKS, 42 • JASON PEARCE, 33 •
TIMOTHY RAKOTONIRAINY, 39 • JASSO RAMIREZ, 53 • MANUEL DIAZ RAMIEZ, 63 •
RAMOS RAMIREZ, 51 • STEVEN REYNA, 53 • JUAN RODRIGUEZ, 21 • JESUS ROSALES, 32
• LANDON RUSSELL, 20 • FRANCISCO SANTILLAN, 21 • STANLEY SHYLKOFSKI, 60 •
JOHNNY SKINNER, 59 • CARL TURPIN, 52 • JOSE VARGAS, 70 • MICHAEL VAUGHN, 40
• JOSE VILLACORTA, 48 • JASON YANKO, 40 • THOMAS YEAGER, 45 • UNNAMED WORKER

Workers' Lives Cut Short: On-the-Job Fatalities in the Houston Area

On average, 12 U.S. workers die each day from fatal on-the-job injuries. In this report, we set out to honor workers in the Houston area who died on-the-job in 2015. One way to do that is remembering them by name, and if possible, with a photo. We used newspaper stories, death notices and government data to assemble information on 63 people who died last year in the Houston area from fatal work-related injuries. Their names and faces are the highlight of this report.

We remember, for example, **Daniel Miregi, 53**, who was fatally injured on Sept. 8, 2015. Mr. Miregi was a licensed commercial truck driver who was operating a cement truck on State Highway 249 near the Cypress Creek overpass. One of the tires blew and the cement truck hit the retaining wall. The truck plunged over the overpass and caught on fire. Mr. Miregi died from his injuries. He is survived by his wife, six children (ages 6 to 16), and an extended family in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

Salvador Gomez Jr., 46, was also an immigrant to the U.S. and had a large, loving family. He suffered a fatal work-related injury on Jan. 6, 2015. Mr. Gomez was part of a small crew that was removing old wooden utility poles on Paso Fino Street near Humble, Texas. While the crew used a chainsaw and forklift to pull down one of the poles, Mr. Gomez was struck by the pole. A native of Matamoros in the Mexican

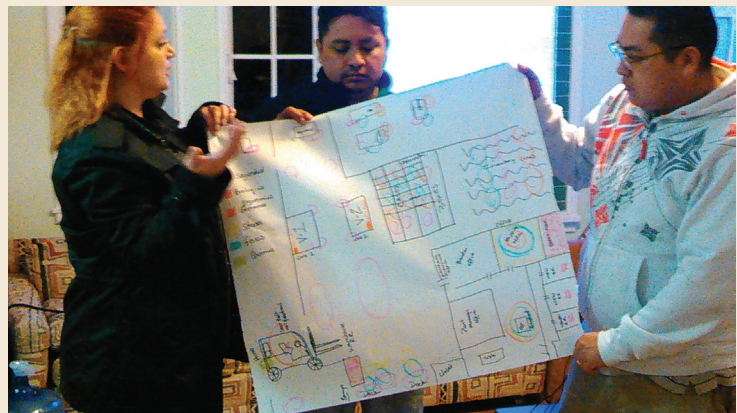
state of Tamaulipas, Mr. Gomez is survived by his mother, wife, four daughters, four brothers, eight sisters and many other relatives.

Work-related fatalities like the deaths of Daniel Miregi and Salvador Gomez Jr. unfold each day in the U.S. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that more than 4,800 men and women were fatally injured on the job in 2014 (most recent data available.) Some were killed by electrocutions, falls from heights and unshored trenches, while others died from explosions, toxic gases, motor vehicle crashes and violence.

We researched and identified the names of 63 workers from the Houston area who suffered on-the-job fatal injuries in 2015. We know, however, that our list is not complete. Many work-related deaths are not reported in the press or subject to investigations, which makes it difficult to remember all the victims by name. In addition, many workers die from work-related illnesses, such as respiratory diseases or cancers, and their deaths are not part of the official government count of worker fatalities. Tragically, most of these deaths, injuries and illnesses could have been prevented had the hazards been controlled, proper protections used and regulations followed. No one should lose his or her life for a paycheck.

“Any time a worker is exposed to machinery without proper guarding is one more time that worker is in jeopardy of losing a limb or even a life.”

— Joann Figueroa, OSHA Houston Office, August 2015. Her comments accompanied citations against Rock Wool Manufacturing and C&C Personnel. OSHA learned about the company’s hazardous conditions because a group of workers came together to file a safety complaint.



Workers from Rock Wool Manufacturing received guidance from Fe Y Justicia Worker Center on a diagram of safety hazards at their worksite.

International Worker Memorial Day: April 28

Each year across the globe, workers, families, faith and justice leaders, and health and safety activists join together to remember individuals who died from a work-related injury or illness. Worker Memorial Day is commemorated in more than 50 countries. Families and supporters remember

the more than 2.3 million workers worldwide who die from work-related causes every year. About 14 percent of such deaths were caused by traumatic injuries, while 86 percent were due to cancers, infectious diseases, respiratory conditions and other work-related illnesses.



Houston Workers' Lives Cut Short

Alvin Kinney, David Magana and Scotty Stanley are just three names of Houston-area workers who lost their lives on the job in 2015. We used newspaper stories, death notices, and government data to assemble information on 63 people who died last year in the Houston area from fatal work-related injuries. It is our best effort to identify the victims of work-related fatalities. Behind all of them stand the family and friends who are left behind.

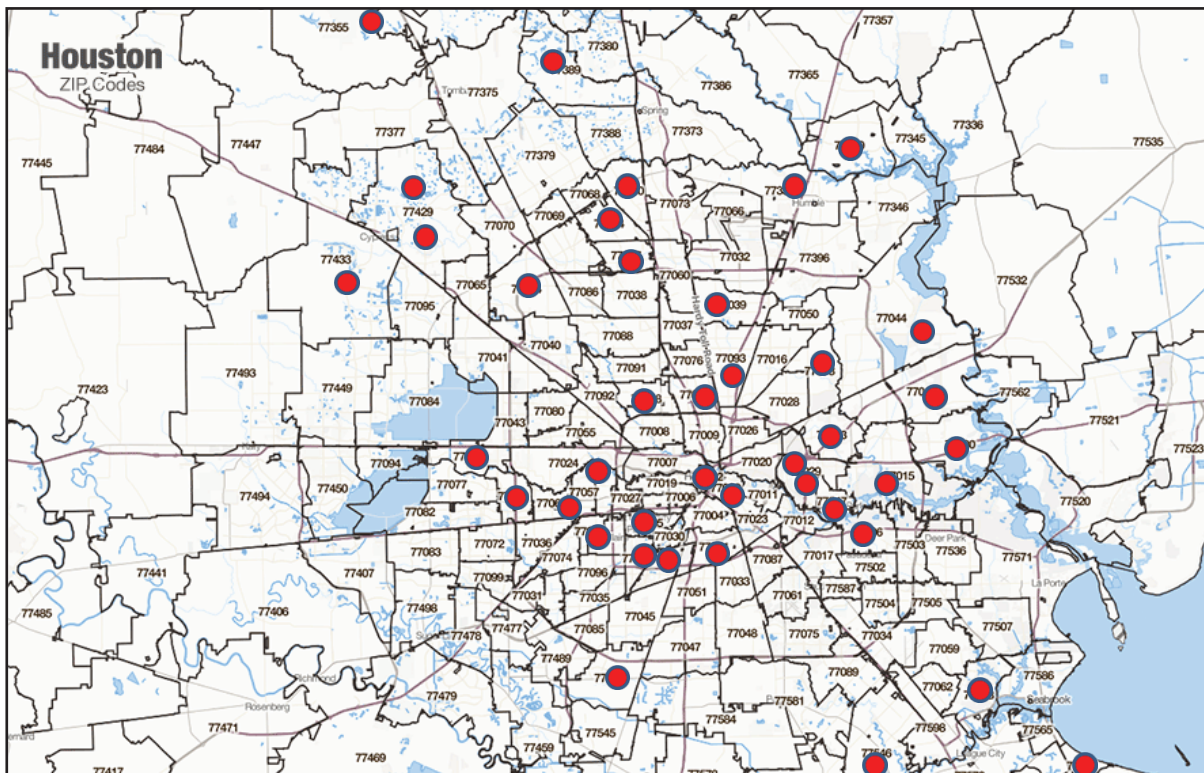
On-the-job deaths in the Houston area during 2015 were caused by a host of factors. We identified:

- 15 incidents in which workers were fatally struck by machinery, tools, equipment or vehicles;
- 12 incidents in which workers were fatally injured from falls, such as off a roof or a ladder;
- 9 incidents in which workers were electrocuted and 6 who died from excessive exposure to heat; and
- 10 workers who died on the job from gunshots and other violence, including a police officer, store clerks and security guards.

Other factors that contribute to or cause work-related fatalities include pressure from bosses to work too quickly and to cut corners on safety, a company's failure to follow safety regulations, inadequate training, improper equipment, language barriers and worker fatigue.

Of the work-related fatalities investigated by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in Houston in 2015, 92 percent resulted in citations, fines and other penalties. The employers in these cases ignored the law and did not responsibly address workplace hazards and comply with safety and health regulations.

The Houston-area victims of work-related fatal injuries fall into all age categories. Some of them were new to their jobs, while others had been with their employers for decades. Many were working in the city of Houston, while others were on jobs in surrounding communities, such as Conroe, Humble and Pasadena. Among their similarities and differences, they all have one thing in common: they went to work one day, but didn't return home safely at the end of their shifts.



Texas: A Dangerous Place to Work

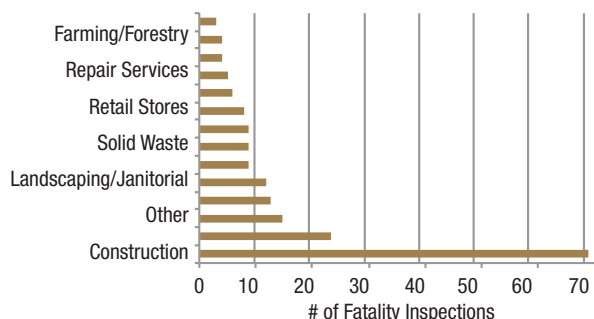
More than 500 workers in Texas died in 2015 from work-related injuries, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The US Department of Labor's OSHA offices in Texas investigated about 200 of the fatal injury incidents in Texas. Five on-duty deaths of firefighters were investigated by the Texas State Fire Marshal Office, and 12 work-related deaths involved law enforcement officers.

The majority of work-related fatal injuries, however, are not investigated by an independent agency. Nationwide and in Texas, about 40 percent of work-related fatalities are trans-

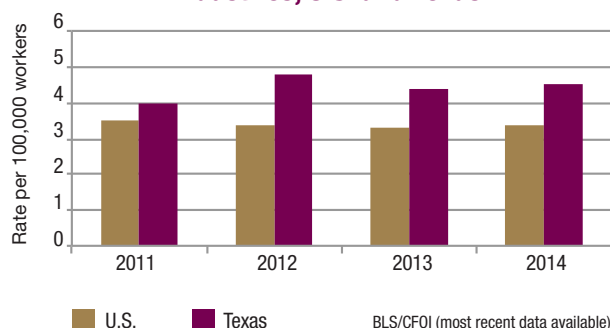
portation-related incidents. This includes motor vehicle crashes involving workers (e.g., truck drivers, delivery drivers) and rollovers of farming equipment, but such incidents are typically not investigated by OSHA.

Workplace hazards affect Texas workers of all ages. Of the fatal injuries investigated by OSHA in 2015, the victims ranged in age from 19 to 71. The ages of the victims were fairly evenly divided among the age categories of workers in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s.

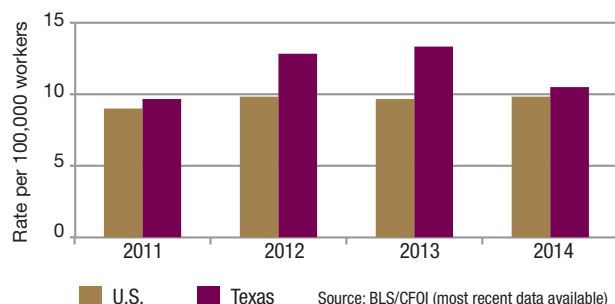
OSHA Fatality Inspections in Texas by Industry, 2015



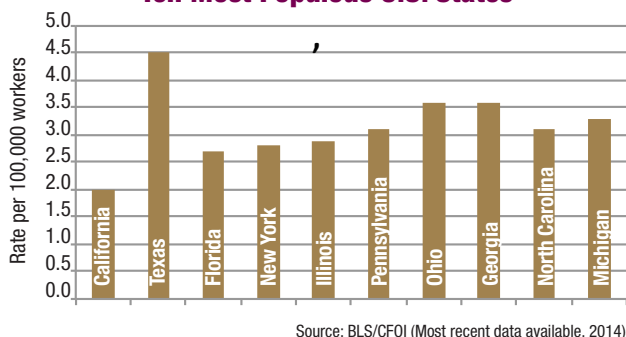
Work-Related Fatal-Injury Rate All Industries, U.S. and Texas



Work-related Fatal Injury Rate Construction Industry, U.S. and Texas



Work-Related Fatal-Injury Rates in Ten Most Populous U.S. States



OSHA Update of the Houston Area: Work-Related Fatalities in 2015

By Jim Shelton, MS, Compliance Assistance Specialist, Houston North OSHA Area Office

In fiscal year (FY) 2015, the Houston OSHA Area Offices had 48 incidents under OSHA jurisdiction, compared to 47 in FY 2014. Sadly, 51 workers didn't return home to their families. These incidents don't include sole proprietors, vehicle accidents and the five reported workplace violence fatalities.

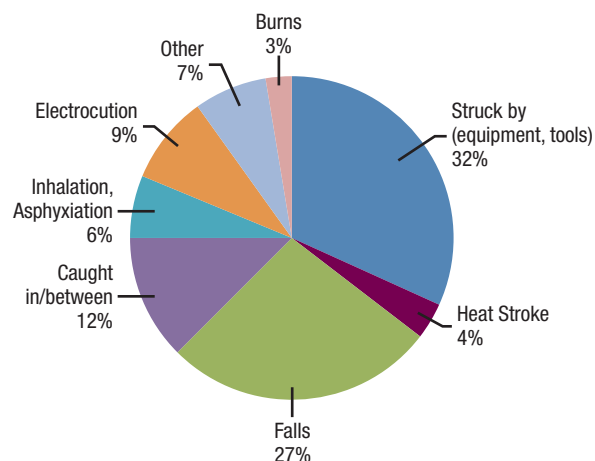
Nineteen incidents were construction-related, compared to 14 the previous year. That marks a pretty significant increase and a reversal from construction-related incidents trending downward the past few years. Of the 19 incidents, we had nine fall fatalities, four related to roofing, three falls to a lower level, and two falls from ladders. Falls increased and were nearly half the construction-related fatalities. Falls are easily preventable by planning the work, providing fall protection and training the workers. Incidents also included four electrical, two caught-between, three struck-by incidents and a heat-stress incident.

General industry had 29 incidents, down four from the previous year. Falls, electrical, struck-by and caught-between incidents all declined. However, "other" types of incidents increased from four to 10 incidents.

"Other" type incidents included two asphyxiations related to confined space entry and four heat-related deaths. With the one in construction, that's five heat-related deaths in one year in the Houston area. In 2016, we'll be emphasizing heat illness prevention again. I hope you'll join me in spreading the word that heat-related deaths can be prevented.

Since January 2015, inpatient hospitalizations, amputations and loss of an eye that occur at the workplace have to be reported to OSHA within 24 hours. The Houston Area Offices received approximately 462 Serious Incident Reports (SIRs) in calendar year 2015. The reports represent serious incidents that have occurred in the workplace and many were investigated and resulted in significant penalties. In one case, an employer failed to notify OSHA of a serious fall incident and a \$70,000 willful citation for failure to report was issued. Though not every case was investigated, employers are still required to abate any hazards they identify in their own inci-

OSHA Fatality Inspections in Texas by Cause, 2015



dent investigation, protecting workers from future exposure to these hazards.

One thing that can be learned when looking at all the incidents that occurred is that so many of them happened because basic safety rules were not followed. The causes weren't complicated, unforeseen or out-of-the blue — they were basic things like not having fall protection or failing to use ladders correctly, install guarding, have a heat illness prevention program or implement lockout procedures. Too many workers don't return home to their families and suffer serious, sometimes life-altering injuries, because well-known hazards were ignored. Hopefully in the coming year, we will do better. The challenge is for each of us to recommit ourselves to the safety of every worker and do all we can to ensure they return home to their families at the end of the day, injury-free.

To find information on how to prevent worker injuries and fatalities on the job, go to OSHA's website at www.osha.gov and use the A-Z index and other tools to help you find the information you need.

Hidden Toll of Worker Fatalities: Occupational Illnesses

Each year, an estimated 53,000 to 96,000 people in the U.S. die from and with work-related diseases. These include different types of cancers, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, neurological illnesses, silicosis and asbestosis. These and other work-related illnesses typically develop over time and may not be diagnosed until a worker is older, retired or otherwise having left employment. Physicians may not make the link between a patient's occupation and on-the-job exposures and his or her health problems. Most health care providers are focused on providing medical treatment to their patients, not investigating the cause of their disease.

There is no government agency or coordinated system to track deaths related to occupational illnesses. Moreover, because of serious shortcomings and injustices in the workers' compensation system, many work-related illnesses are never captured and documented by the insurance system.

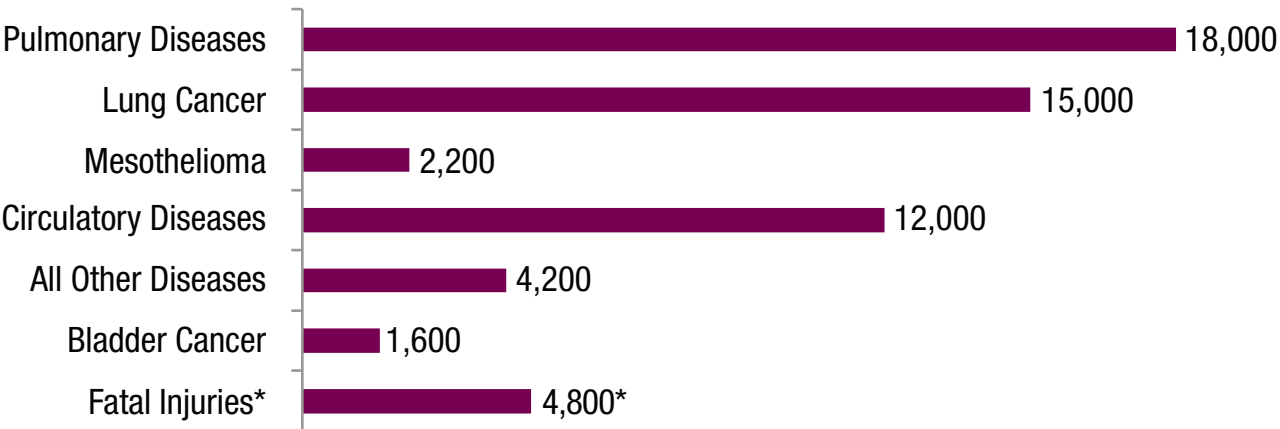
One estimate, based on data from the World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization, suggests that as many as 96,000 individuals in the U.S. die each year from occupational diseases.[†] Another estimate by J. Paul Leigh, PhD, of the University of California-Davis, puts the estimate at more than 53,000 deaths per year in the U.S. from work-related diseases.^{††} His calculation is based on federal labor statistics as well as workers' compensation and health services data and is captured in the table below.

Workers in Texas suffer about 11 percent of all work-related fatal injuries in the U.S. If Texas workers suffer the same percentage of occupational illnesses, Leigh's estimate suggests that the annual toll in Texas would be 5,830 deaths.

[†] Takala J, et al. Global Estimate of the Burden of Injury and Illness at Work. *J Occup Environ Hygiene*, 2014.

^{††} Leigh JP. Economic Burden of Occupational Injury and Illness in the U.S. *Milbank Quarterly*, 2011.

Causes of Work-related Deaths in U.S. per Year



Disease estimates from: Leigh JP. Economic Burden of Occup. Injury and Illne in the US. *Milbank Quarterly*, Dec. 2011;

*Fatal injury data from BLS 2014.

“Worker Not Identified”

Most work-related fatalities are not reported in the press. Those that are reported often do not identify the worker who was killed. The victim becomes someone who is nameless and faceless with the label “worker not identified.”

Most people in the U.S. who die from a fatal work-related injury are eventually counted in the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ annual Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). There is a long delay, however, before the data is released. The final CFOI data for incidents that occurred in 2015 will not be released until December 2016. (And individ-



uals who died from work-related disease have never been part of the CFOI count.) Many of the government agencies that assemble this data keep the names and other details of the incident secret. The victims remain nameless and faceless.

In this report, we’ve done our best to research and identify by name as many of the Houston-area workers who died in 2015 as possible. There are many, however, who we have not been able to identify. We regret that we cannot remember them by name.

Temp Workers

In the last several years, OSHA has focused special attention on the hazards faced by temp workers and day laborers. The agency emphasizes that companies that supply labor as well as those who hire temp workers share a joint responsibility to ensure workplace safety. The day laborers and temp workers who died in Houston last year from work-related hazards include: Jorge Hernandez, 59, and Shun Jones, 23.

Another Houston temp worker suffered serious injuries after falling 12 feet through a roof while working at Cotton Commercial USA in Katy, Texas. Prior to his fall, the temp worker had asked for a safety harness. The egregious nature of the incident led OSHA to issue citations for five willful and two serious violations and to propose a \$362,500 penalty. Cotton Commercial is contesting OSHA’s findings.



PENALTIES FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY VIOLATIONS ARE WEAK

\$1,972 Average federal OSHA penalty for serious violations
\$5,050 Median federal OSHA penalty for worker deaths

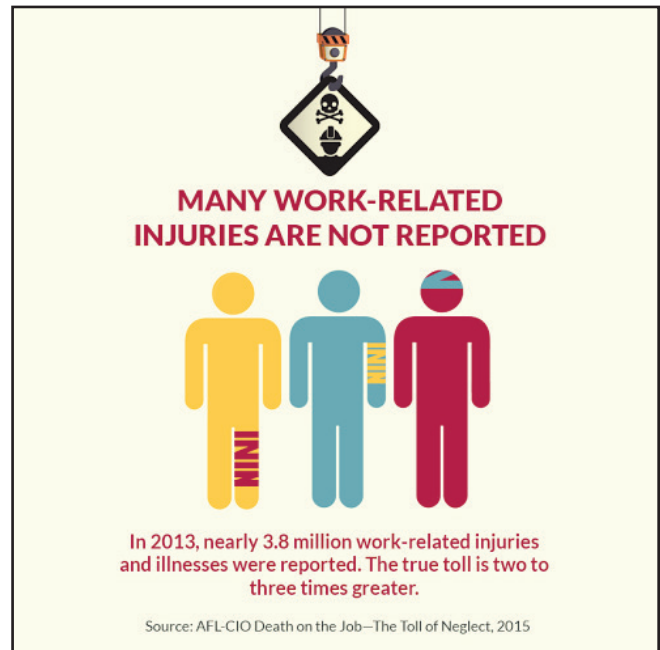
Of the 390,000 worker deaths since 1970, only 88 cases have been criminally prosecuted under the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Source: AFL-CIO Death on the Job—The Toll of Neglect, 2015

Worker Fatalities: Tip of the Iceberg

A work-related fatal injury is the starkest reminder of what happens when on-the-job hazards are not addressed. But for every workplace fatality, there are hundreds of people who are injured or made ill by their work. In 2015, in Texas alone, employers reported about 128,000 on-the-job incidents that caused workers to miss work or be transferred to light-duty jobs. That's about 350 Texas workers per day. And those estimates are based on reports from employers and workers' compensation records. A June 2015 report from the U.S. Labor Department, "Adding Inequality to Injury," noted that these estimates of work-related injuries are "undoubtedly only a fraction of the true number."

The *Texas Tribune's* investigation, "In Texas, Injured Workers Struggle to Be Counted," illustrated the mismatch between official statistics and reality. For example, Isidro Almendarez worked as a carpenter for Austin Commercial for more than two decades. The *Tribune's* Jim Malewitz, described how Almendarez suffered serious lacerations on his hand, but his supervisor refused to send him to a clinic or to report the injury. Weeks later when he suffered a grave infection and was hospitalized, he had missed the deadline for filing a workers' compensation claim. Almendarez's hand — essential for a carpenter — was permanently damaged. He was fired because



he could no longer do the work. The investigation led by Malewitz at the *Tribune* helps illustrate why the annual count of workplace fatalities reflects only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to actual work-related injuries and illnesses.

Heat: Deadly Hazard in Houston

Jorge Hernandez, 59, was a day laborer. In late June 2015, he was hired by Al Star Recycling to sort aluminum cans at their location on Aldine Westfield Road. The outside temperature was more than 90 degrees and Mr. Hernandez was feeling overheated. He died during his lunch break from hyperthermia. That same week, Ernesto Equia, 49, was doing landscaping work for McDugald-Steele at a property on Bissonnet near Buffalo Speedway. He also suffered fatal heat-related injuries.

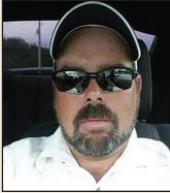
The hot days in Houston continued throughout the summer. In mid-July, Jasso Ramirez, 53, was working on a road project for Reytec Construction Resources. He collapsed on the job from heat exhaustion. Mr. Ramirez was hospitalized for a week with hyperthermia before he succumbed to his injuries. August 20 was Shun Jones' first day on-the-job. Jones, age 23, was working outside on a waste collection

truck and succumbed to the heat. He was employed by Taylor Smith Consulting as a temp worker and had been assigned to work for Waste Management on one of their trucks.

When workers are assigned to jobs in which they will be exposed to hot temperatures, employers must take precautions to keep those workers safe. Our bodies need several days or more to acclimate to the heat. Those who work in the heat also need frequent rest breaks in a shaded, cool area, along with plenty of water.



IN MEMORIAM*



ALTON "BRAD" BARGSLEY, 35

July 6, 2015: Fatally struck by equipment being off-loaded from a flatbed truck while working for C&J Well Services. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and the company paid a \$6,000 penalty.

JEREMY BARHVALE, 43

Sept. 10, 2015: Electrocuted while installing a plumbing pipe into a ceiling while working for V.T.M.C. Corporation. OSHA cited the company for five serious violations and proposed a \$35,000 penalty. The company is contesting OSHA's findings and penalty.



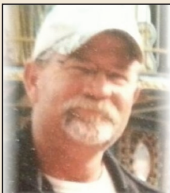
DWIGHT "B.B." W. BAZILE, 56

Feb. 21, 2015: Suffered a fatal heart attack after responding to a structural fire on England Street. He was a fire captain with the Houston Fire Department.



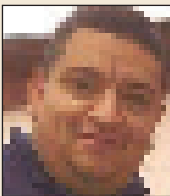
DAVID BRISTER, 43

June 15, 2015: Suffered fatal crushing injuries between a trailer and a trailer bed while working for Roll-Lift USA Inc. The company received an OSHA citation for one serious violation and paid a \$6,250 penalty.



MICHAEL BROOKS, 47

July 6, 2015: Asphyxiated in a confined space while working for Fluor Daniel Service Corp. OSHA cited the company for three serious violations and proposed a \$21,000 penalty. The company is contesting OSHA's findings and penalty.



RICHARD J. CANO, 35

Nov. 29, 2015: Suffered a fatal heart attack after working a 24-hour shift, including response to a three-alarm fire. He was a firefighter with the Cy-Fair Volunteer Fire Department.

*We used publicly available data to assemble these workers who suffered fatal on-the-job injuries. We apologize if any of the information is incorrect. Please bring it to the authors' attention at cmonfort@gwu.edu

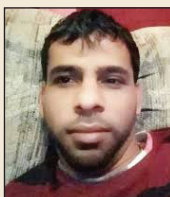


ALLEN DAVID CLAY, 51

Sept. 16, 2015: Suffered fatal injuries on a scissor lift while working at Air Products and Chemicals. Mr. Clay's employer was American Fire Coatings, Inc. which received an OSHA citation for one serious violation and paid a \$5,250 penalty.

THOMAS COUNTS, 57

Sept. 5, 2015: Fatally injured by scalding water at Total Petrochemicals' refinery. OSHA cited Kinder Morgan energy company for two serious violations and assessed a \$14,000 penalty.



CONBINO "BINO" CRASTO, 40

Dec. 16, 2015: Fatally shot by three armed robbers while working at the ExxonMobil Cleveland Market. The suspects were arrested.

CHARLIE CROWNOVER, 66

June 20, 2015: Electrocuted when the boom of a forklift struck an overhead power line. No OSHA citations were issued to BRG Energy Inc.



SAUL ISRAEL CRUZ, 71

Dec. 22, 2015: Fatally shot while in his security guard vehicle at a gas station near Anderson Road and Camden Hill. Two men face prosecution for his death.

JIMMY DELEON, 42

March 16, 2015: Electrocuted while testing a high-voltage transformer. OSHA cited Schneider Electric for one serious violation and the company paid a \$7,000 penalty.

ERNESTO EQUIA, 49

June 23, 2015: Suffered fatal heat-related injuries while performing landscaping tasks for M.S.N./McDugald-Steele. OSHA cited the company for two serious violations and proposed a \$14,000 penalty. The company is contesting OSHA's findings.

WILMAN OROZCO FUENTES, 23

April 13, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall from a roof while working for RKS Roof Systems. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and the company paid a \$5,250 penalty.

JUAN GABRIEL-RANGEL, 32

Oct. 8, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall while installing a new roof on a home. OSHA cited his employer Julie Hernandez/Sabj Roofing for serious violations and assessed a \$12,000 penalty.



DARREN GOFORTH, 47

Aug. 28, 2015: Shot in the back while pumping gas into his patrol vehicle. He was a deputy sheriff with Harris County. The assailant was arrested.



SALVADOR GOMEZ JR., 46

Jan. 6, 2015: Fatally struck by a wooden utility pole during the process of removing it. OSHA cited North Houston Pole Line for one serious violation and the company paid a \$7,000 penalty.

GREGORY GONZALES, 43

April 1, 2015: Fatally struck by industrial pipes while working for IOS/PCI, LLC. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and the firm paid a \$6,000 penalty.



SERGIO GRANADOS, 24

Nov. 17, 2015: Electrocuted when a ladder struck a power line while working for Efrain Lujano. OSHA continues to investigate the incident.

FREDERICK GUEVARA, 39

June 28, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall from a ladder while working for Anytime Electric LLC. OSHA cited the company for three serious violations and proposed a \$12,600 penalty.

BRIAN HENDERSON, 50

Jan. 14, 2015: Fatally crushed by a industrial bundle of pipes while working for North Shore Supply Company. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and it is paying off a \$4,900 penalty.

JORGE HERNANDEZ, 59

June 24, 2015: : Suffered fatal heat-related injuries while working for AI Star Recycling. The company is paying a \$9,120 penalty in installments for two serious OSHA violations.

SOSTENES HERNANDEZ, 39

Jan. 29, 2015: Fatally injured from a fall at a residential housing construction project. Mr. Hernandez was self-employed.

LUIS JIMENEZ HERRERA, 29

June 15, 2015: Collapsed and died while working for American Textile Export. OSHA investigated the incident and cited the company for three serious violations. The company paid a \$7,200 penalty.



ROBERT GARY HUNTER, 52

Feb. 10, 2015: Fatally struck by the bucket of a backhoe while making repairs to the equipment. His employer, Mustang Machinery/Catepillar was cited by OSHA for one serious violation and the company paid a \$5,250 penalty.

LINO IBARRA, 36

Jan. 5, 2015: Fatally injured from a fall from the roof of an apartment building on Hayes Road. His employer, Martin Ibarra, received an OSHA citation for two serious violations related to fall protection and is paying off a \$14,000 penalty in installments.

GARY JOHNSON, 58

Dec. 14, 2015: Drowned when his trackhoe collapsed into an excavated pit. The OSHA investigation continues involving his employer Ceres Environmental Services Inc..



SHUN JONES, 23

Aug. 20, 2015: Suffered fatal heat-related injuries while working on a waste collection truck. Mr. Jones was hired by Taylor Smith Consulting and assigned to work for Waste Management. The companies were each cited by OSHA for one serious violation and assessed a \$7,000 penalty. Waste Management paid the penalty; Taylor Smith Consulting is contesting it.



TRONSKI DONTTEL JONES, 26

Aug. 20, 2015: Suffered a heart attack after transferring a combative inmate at the Baker Street Jail to his cell. He was a deputy sheriff with Harris County.



ALVIN KINNEY, 60

Feb. 12, 2015: Fatally shot by three assailants in an armed robbery at the Capital One Bank near the Galleria. Mr. Kinney worked for Brink's Inc. Law enforcement continues its search for the criminals.



DAVID SANTOS MAGANA, 45

Oct. 1, 2015: Fatally crushed between spools of tubing and a forklift while working for Tenaris Coiled Tubes. OSHA investigated but did not issue any citations.



EDSON ALANIS MANZANO, 20

June 30, 2015: Fatally struck by an 18-wheeler while trimming weeds along Highway 146 in Bacliff. News reports indicate that Mr. Manzano was employed by BIO Landscape & Maintenance, which had a contract with the Texas Department of Transportation for the work.



RICHARD MARTIN, 47

May 18, 2015: Fatally struck by a car being driven by a robbery suspect. He was attempting to stop the criminal when he was struck. Officer Martin was with the Houston Police Department.

JUAN MARTINEZ, 33

Oct. 29, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall through a ceiling at a residential construction project while working for Josue Zamora. OSHA cited the company for three serious violations and it is paying off a \$7,800 penalty.

GEORGE MCALLISTER, 31

Sept. 16, 2015: Fatally stabbed by a co-worker at R+L Carriers. The assailant faces prosecution for the death.



FRANK MEDRANO, 19

Feb. 18, 2015: Fatally shot while he worked at a residential construction project. The assailant tried to rob him.

PARIS MENDOZA, 31

June 19, 2015: Fatally injured underneath a vehicle while working at Duarte's Auto Service. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and the company is paying a \$7,000 penalty in installments.



DANIEL MIREGI, 53

Sept. 8, 2015: Fatally injured when the cement truck he was driving blew a tire. The vehicle crashed over the Cypress Creek overpass on State Highway 249 and caught on fire.



OTTO MONTALVO, 50

June 28, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall from a ladder while working for Westwood Residential. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and proposed a \$7,000 penalty. The company is contesting the OSHA findings and penalty.



TOMMY MOSER, 55

June 19, 2015: Electrocuted while working on an HVAC unit. Mr. Moser owned Moser Electric and was also a member of the LaPorte, Texas, City Council.

ISMAIL MUJICA, 57

Sept. 2, 2015: Fatally injured while driving an all-terrain vehicle on FM 1095. He was employed by Hansen Farm. There was no investigation by OSHA.

LEONARDO NAVA, 25

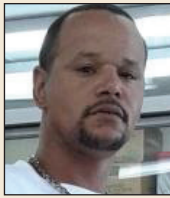
April 29, 2015: Fatally injured from a fall off a residential roof. His employer, Pablo Nava, was cited by OSHA for one serious violation and paid a \$500 penalty.

DINH NGUYEN, 66

Feb. 12, 2015: Fatally injured in fall from a scissor lift while working at the Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Church. OSHA investigated but did not issue any citations.

JOSE ANTONIO ORTIZ, 32

July 24, 2015: Fatally injured by a falling tree limb while working for Penaloza Brothers Lawn & Landscaping. OSHA cited the company for three serious violations and it is paying a \$15,800 penalty in installments.



MARTIN PARKS, 42

July 6, 2015: Asphyxiated by kerosene vapors inside a rail car while working for Rescar Companies. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and the company is paying a \$15,000 penalty in installments.



JASON ROBERT PEARCE, 33

Aug. 7, 2015: Electrocuted while working as a landscaper for Callaway Outdoor Designs. The company was cited by OSHA for one serious violation and paid a \$6,300 penalty.



TIMOTHY NATHAN RAKOTONIRAINY, 39

Dec. 23, 2015: Suffered a medical emergency while working on a ladder and fell to his death. Mr. Rakotonirainy was a self-employed electrician.

MANUEL DIAZ RAMIEZ, 63

July 14, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall from structural decking at a construction site while working for Isabel Facundo Garcia. OSHA issued a penalty for one serious violation and assessed a \$5,250 penalty.

JASSO RAMIREZ, 53

July 13, 2015: Suffered fatal heat-related injuries while working for Reytec Construction. OSHA cited the company for failing to report the fatality and the company paid a \$4,208 penalty.

RAMOS RAMIREZ, 51

Aug. 19, 2015: Fatally struck by a falling tree while working for Trees Inc. The company paid a \$7,000 penalty for one serious OSHA violation.



STEVEN REYNA, 53

Nov. 12, 2015: Fatally overcome by carbon monoxide while working for Atlantic Coffee Industrial Solutions. OSHA continues to investigate the incident.

JUAN RODRIGUEZ, 21

Sept. 22, 2015: Electrocuted while installing a light fixture and working for Integrity Electrical System. OSHA cited the company for two serious violations. The company is paying a \$4,900 penalty.

JESUS ROSALES, 32

April 28, 2015: Electrocuted while helping to repair a downed power line. His employer, Utility Plus Inc., was cited by OSHA for four serious violations and the company paid a \$28,000 penalty.



LANDON RUSSELL, 20

June 26, 2015: Fatally crushed between a crane boom and railing while working for Trans-Global Solutions. OSHA cited the company for one willful and seven serious violations and proposed a \$109,000 penalty. The company is contesting OSHA's findings and penalty.



FRANCISCO SANTILLAN, 21

Dec. 3, 2015: Fatally struck by a vehicle while working for Davis Excavation. OSHA continues to investigate the incident.



STANLEY MICHAEL SHYLKOFSKI, 60

May 19, 2015: Fatally crushed by an overturned tractor while working for LaBarge Coating. OSHA issued a citation for one serious violation and the company paid a \$7,000 penalty.

JOHNNY SKINNER, 59

Nov. 4, 2015: Fatally injured by a falling tree while working for M&G Logging. OSHA issued a citation for two serious violations and the company is paying a \$9,000 penalty.

CARL TURPIN, 52

March 26, 2015: Fatally struck by a conveyor being lifted by a crane while working for Gulf Coast Centrifuge. The company paid a \$4,550 penalty for one serious violation.

JOSE VARGAS, 70

March 20, 2015: Fatally injured in a fall while working at Gulf Copper. OSHA cited the company for one serious violation and the company paid a \$7,000 penalty.



MICHAEL VAUGHN, 40

Dec. 21, 2015: Fatally shot by a co-worker in the City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department.

JOSE VILLACORTA, 48

Sept. 15, 2015: Collapsed on his first day on the job working for PGS Landscaping. Possible heat-related death. OSHA cited the company for three serious violations and it is paying off a \$7,980 penalty.



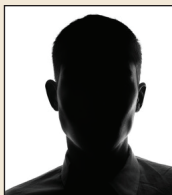
JASON SHAY YANKO, 40

June 23, 2015: Fatally stabbed by a co-worker at Val-Fit, Inc. The assailant faces prosecution for the death.



THOMAS YEAGER, 45

Dec. 9, 2015: Electrocuted during a repair/maintenance job while working for MRC Global. OSHA continues to investigate the incident.



We know there are many other individuals from the Houston area who died in 2015 from work-related causes. We regret that we do not know who they are so we can remember them by name.

“Focusing on statistics to talk about fatalities isn’t enough. The stories, names and faces of deceased workers show us the human consequences of failing to address dangerous working conditions.”

— Bethany Boggess, MPH, Workers Defense Project

“How do we improve efforts to prevent work-related fatalities? We have to treat every single worker fatality as the horrendous tragedy it is — and learn lessons to stop these preventable deaths. We need to grieve the person lost — not a number but a name, a life lost senselessly and violently.”

— Peter Dooley, CIH, CSP, LaborSafe & National COSH

“Help, Help, Help”: Six Workers Injured

Many Houstonians will remember the news stories and video of the massive scaffolding collapse at a construction site near Minute Maid Park. The Oct. 16, 2015, event seriously injured six construction workers. Eric Valdez, 18, a plumber on the project told the *Houston Chronicle*: “All I heard was a thud and that’s when the scaffolding fell. I rushed toward the window to see what was happening and everything was falling apart.” Others heard a trapped worker yell, “help, help, help.”

Photos of the twisted metal wreckage illustrate how the incident could have been deadly. It also reinforces the importance of companies complying each and every day with safety regulations. An investigation by OSHA determined that the scaffolding was missing essential parts and that Triple S Masonry had not inspected the structure before workers were allowed to use it.



Ninety-two percent of the workplace fatalities in Houston in 2015 and that were investigated by OSHA resulted in citations. Most work-related fatal injuries could be prevented if worker safety regulations and sound work practices are followed.

Dangerous Work for Bus Drivers

Bus drivers with Houston’s Metropolitan Transit Authority (METRO) often contend with traffic jams and erratic vehicles, but a serious threat to their health and safety is violence from passengers. In 2015, more than 50 bus drivers reported being physically and verbally assaulted — the highest number in six years. Bus drivers reported being punched, spit on and punched. The disturbing growth in violence led METRO to launch a special campaign called “Respect is Mutual” as well as the “MPD Connect” app, which allows passengers to text the police department to report an altercation or assault. Mr. Horace Marves, president of Local 260 of the Transportation Union Workers, said that bus drivers are “like a captain of a ship or a pilot of an airplane. You have a responsibility and you want to be treated with respect.”

Sources: Houston Chronicle, “Spike in Metro bus driver assaults leads to public plea,” Dec. 17, 2015; Click2Houston.com, “Metro hopes to curb crime on buses,” Dec. 17, 2015.



“It’s Not Just Dust”: Victory for Workers

“Workers across America can breathe easier today!” That was the reaction of Jessica Martinez of National COSH, to the March 2016 OSHA announcement regarding a long-awaited regulation to protect workers who are exposed to respirable silica dust. It’s a victory for workers in Houston who cut bricks, mortar, and cement, cut granite, and perform other tasks that create dust from quartz-containing materials. “I see construction workers all over Houston pull shirts over their noses and mouths to stop from breathing in the dust,” noted Alejandro Zuniga, health and safety trainer with Houston’s Fe y Justicia Worker Center (FJWC). “Now companies will have to take the proper steps to control silica dust.”

The North America’s Building Trades Unions, Laborers’ International Union of North America, and others from organized labor have been fighting for an OSHA silica standard

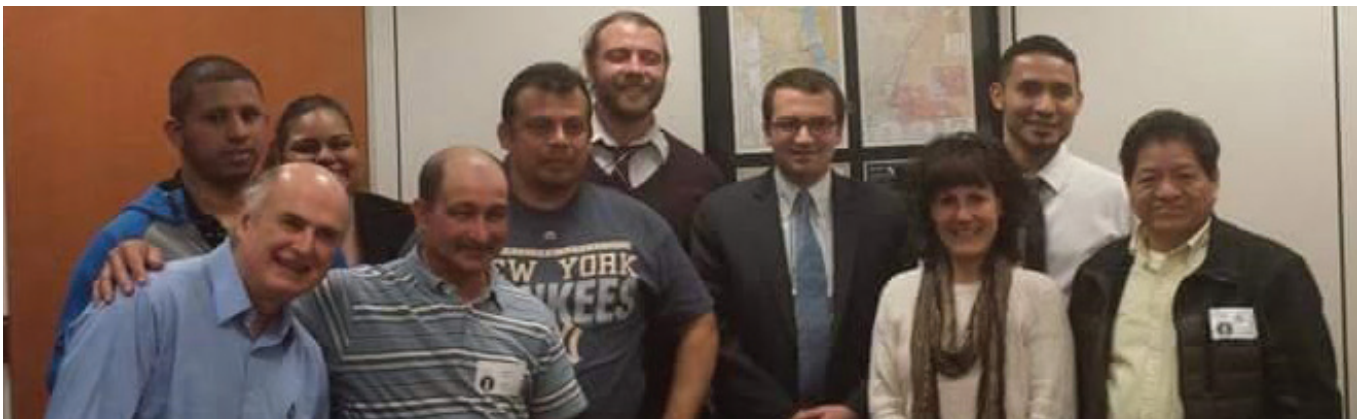


Alejandro Zuniga protests in Washington, DC, in support of OSHA’s silica rule.



Workers breathing silica dust while cutting bricks in Dallas, Texas, March 2016. (Credit: Peter Dooley)

for decades, with the help of the American Public Health Association and other allies. Supporters included Houstonians José Granados and Santos Edilberto Almendarez of FJWC. They traveled in April 2013 to Washington, D.C., to testify at OSHA’s public hearing on the proposed rule. It was the first time in OSHA’s 40-year history that it received testimony from Spanish-speaking workers. Mr. Granados told OSHA that “silicosis is known as ‘the silent killer’ because by the time symptoms develop, it is too late and there is no longer anything to do.” Congratulations to all who were involved in ensuring this important new protection for workers in Houston and across the country.



José Granados (front row, striped shirt) and Santos Almendarez (back row, far right) joined with allies from National COSH, New Labor and Voces de la Frontera to push for an OSHA silica standard. (Washington DC, April 2013.)

National Safety Stand-Down: May 2-6, 2016

Whether you fall 20 stories or 20 feet, a workplace fall can change your life in seconds. It can be debilitating, causing you to lose your livelihood — or even your life. Even the most experienced of workers can fall without the proper safety measures in place. In 2014 alone, 337 workers in the U.S. died from falls on construction sites. Falls remain the leading cause of death in the construction industry, and lack of proper fall protection remains the most frequently cited violation by OSHA.

The National Safety Stand-Down for fall prevention in construction takes place from May 2-6, 2016. OSHA, the Na-

tional Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the Center for Construction Research and Training are encouraging employers, labor unions, safety associations and workers to set

aside time during the week to talk about fall prevention.



“Falls continue to affect workers in all kinds of jobs across the country; it’s a broad problem that has a terrible impact on workers and their families.”

David Michaels, PhD, MPH, OSHA Director

Six steps to improve workplace safety:

- 1** Workers should have access to information about their rights to a safe workplace.
- 2** Employers should implement programs to identify and control hazards, each and every day, on each and every shift.
- 3** Workers should wear required safety equipment and follow safety rules.
- 4** Employers should ensure that production goals and scheduling do not compromise workers’ safety.
- 5** Workers should be provided safety training and materials in a language they understand.
- 6** Employers should comply with all health and safety regulations, and seek assistance when they are unsure about their safety responsibilities.

Important Step for Latino Day Laborers

Latino Day Laborers (LDLs) endure incredible hardships as they fight every day to make a wage for themselves and their families. Most are undocumented immigrants who don't speak much English. They must take temporary, low-wage jobs, and then fear that their employer might threaten them. In theory, LDLs are protected by federal and state employment laws covering wages, workplace health and safety, and the right to organize for better working conditions. LDLs however might not be aware of these rights.

Beginning in 2014, researchers with the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston and the Fe y Justicia Worker Center have collaborated to develop an injury prevention program for LDLs. Their work was enhanced by a community advisory board (CAB) which included LDLs, researchers, and other community members. The project pinpointed four areas of concern for LDLs: exploitation on the job, mental health related to stress, job conditions, and self-efficacy. The CAB emphasized mental health as a priority for injury prevention, and identified three potential strategies for the program's first steps. In order to reduce the risk of injury for LDLs, a combination of motivational interviews, group activities, and distribution of public health brochures seems to be helpful for preventative measures. Essentially, this pilot program allowed for LDLs to talk about risks on the job and come up with resolutions for themselves. LDLs made their own plan and pledge for themselves and their health.

Overall, the group of LDLs who participated in the pilot study seemed to like the strategies and felt that the time spent in the program was beneficial and productive.

Although there have been positive results from this pilot project, the program has not been spread to all LDLs in Houston. As with many projects like this one,



Jose Lenin discusses fall hazards with day laborers in Houston, 2015.

there are changes and analysis to be made before further development and implementation. However, more importantly, UT Health - Houston and Fe y Justicia prioritized reducing risk in LDLs. Moreover, LDLs themselves have been involved every step of the way through the pilot study of the three strategies. The project has been an important step in the fight to better the health of LDLs.



Texas Localities with Work-Related Fatal Injuries in 2015

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor, the State Fire Marshal Office and other government agencies investigated fatalities in more than 120 Texas cities. Based on the data available to us, the cities are listed below, along with the number of worker fatalities if more than one occurred.



Abilene	Cisco	Friona ²	Lockhart	Post
Albany	Cleveland	Fritch ²	Lubbock ³	Poth
Allen	Coahoma	Galena Park	Magnolia	Pottsboro
Amarillo	Concepcion	Garland	McKinney	Powell
Andrews	Conroe	Goldthwaite	Melissa	Pyote
Argyle ²	Corpus Christi	Gonzales	Mentone	Quanah
Austin ³	Corsicana	Graford	Midkiff ³	Rockwall
Ballinger	Cypress	Grand Prairie	Midland ³	Saginaw ²
Bay City	Dallas ¹	Henderson	Midlothian	Salado
Beaumont ²	Del Rio ²	Hereford	Monahans	San Angelo
Belton	Denton	Hillsboro	Montague	San Antonio ³
Big Sandy	Detroit ²	Humble	Montgomery	San Juan
Big Wells	Devine ²	Huntsville	Mount Pleasant	San Marcos ²
Brownsville ³	Douglass	Hutto	Murphy	Shepherd
Buda	Eden	Irving	New Braunfels ³	Spring ³
Buffalo	El Paso ¹	Jacksboro	Orange ²	Stafford
Burleson	Eldorado	Jewett	Palacios	Stanton
Burnet	Fair Oaks Ranch	Karnes City ³	Palo Pinto	Temple ²
Canyon	Fairfield	Kermit ³	Pasadena	Texarkana ²
Carrollton ²	Farmers Branch	Kingwood	Penwell ²	Vernon
Catarina	Flower Mound	Kyle	Perryton	Victoria
Cedar Hill	Fort Worth ³	Laredo ²	Plano	Vidor
Center	Freeport	Leona	Port Arthur ²	Waco ³
Channelview	Freer	Lewisville	Port Lavaca	Woodville

Five Years of Worker Memorial Day Commemorations in Houston

This year marks the fifth anniversary of a community-wide Worker Memorial Day (WMD) event in Houston, Texas. During each of the previous four commemorations, we remembered those who went to work, were fatally injured and didn't return home at the end of their shifts. Here are the names of the 220 people we were able to remember by name at our previous WMD vigils:

2011

Enrique Aguilar, 33
Taelangi Angilau, 66
John Leo Baumann, 61
Ricardo Benavidez, 55
Herbert Bob, 62
Scottie W. Burnett, 40
George A. Cantu, 30
Ray Cardenas Jr., 19
Efron Castrol, 59
Manual Ceji, 47
Allen Chase, 65
Daniel Santa Cruz, 41
Carl Davis, 37
James Escobedo, 26
Mejia Felipe, 33
Boris Fuentes, 38
Jose Garcia, 26
Jonathan Garner, 24
Jaime Godines, 31
Jesus Gonzalez, 31
Raul G. Gonzales, 50
Charles Griffin, 33
Kyle Helton, 22
Ralph Hudspeth, 57
Clayton Johnson, 44
Sharon Joseph, 49
Rick Kelley, 38
Michael Allan Lorie, 23
Delbert Major, 51
Adan Martinez, 38
Anibal Martinez, 21
Salvador Maza, 43
Raymundo Medrano, 64
Ivan Mendoza, 19
David A. Miller, 33
Juan Naranjo, 48
Thomas Park, 46
Jose Parra, 32
Glen Rambo, 80
Herman Ramirez, 27
Teodoro Reyes, 39
Geroge Rodriguez, 25
Martin Rosales, 55
Martin Segura-Linare, 32
Richard Shaw, 47
John C. Shirley, 27
Greg Smith, 58
Richard Steineche, 22
Aaron Sullender, 21
Ceil Tyner, 55
Sebastian Velasquez, 49
Dustin L. White, 23
Johnny Williams, 57
Joseph Williams, 58
Mun K. Yim, 73

2012

Carlos Andrade, 46
David Cody Bogard, 32
Grady Brandt, 63
Julio Castro, 36
Luis Cerda, 22
Simon Coverson, III, 59
Jose A. Cruz, 36
Carlos Cuellar, 51
Javier Delgado, 48
Brian Eaton, 42
David Edwards, 54
Bradley Felchak, 39
Eugenio Flores, 30
Joyce Foster, 66
Manuel Antonio Funez, 45
Paulino Garay, 41
John Goode, 39
Carlos Govea, 23
Carlos Guillen, 34
Silvino Hernandez, 54
George Houston, 46
James Hudnall, 63
Bryan Hunt, 19
John Jansevanrensborg, 33
Efrain M. Jaramill, 44
Brian Johns, 45
Phillip Knotts, 50
Willis Kohl, 69
Ciro Lagunas, 43
Jose Lara, 32
Alejandro Limon, 27
Xavier Maldonado, 20
Ezequiel Martinez, 26
James May, 40
Bonifacio Montoya, 57
Jose Muguia, 30
Jeremy Neely, 34
Angel Nunez, 32
Louis Padilla, 31
Jamine Perez, 22
Juvencio Perez, 52
Arturo Pineda, 36
Lloyd G. Posey, 66
Jason Reed, 40
Alfredo Ruiz, 61
Louie Ruiz, 56
Jaime G. Silva, 54
Jenry Sorto, 29
Rafael Soto, 61
Virgel Stoker, 26
Spencer Symons, 22
Antonio Torres, 20
Larry Trahan, 61
Eloy Vargas-Contreras, 29
Ranulfo Velasquez-Perez, 44
Robert Dustin Whittaker, 36

2013

Oscar Alfaro, 57
 Rafael Alexander Almanza, 2
 Mondale Armstrong, 26
 Alberto Barcenas, 60
 Oscar Chavez, 29
 Dustin Creekmore, 24
 Jose Manuel Cruz-Mora, 33
 Kevin Fairman
 Jacob Felps, 37
 Drake Floyd, 19
 Rafael Guerrero
 Juan Hernandez, 40
 Mark Honeseyett, 42
 Bardomiano Jaimes, 47
 Robert Shelby Jones, 22
 Josh Kroll, 27
 Dustin Kruthaupt, 19
 Mr. Kuentz, 30
 Eugene Lara, 42
 Fred M. Escamilla, 37
 Otilio Macedo-Soto, 53
 Kerry Marley, 54
 James May, 40
 Chad McDonald, 29
 Jaime Mejia, 32
 Jose Munguia, 30
 Ronald Newman, 52

Merrill Norphrup, 48
 Javier Ortiz
 John Parker, 55
 Eusebio Reyna, 49
 George A. Robertson, 50
 Marco Rodriguez, 43
 Miguel Rodriguez, 34
 Oswaldo Valenti Sanchez, 34
 Lincoln Smith, 30
 Ismael Lopez Tellez, 43
 Feliciano Puerta, 49
 Terry Thomas Jr., 29
 Antonio Torres, 20
 Reginaldo Valdez, 41
 Juan Vega, 52
 Victor Veillon, 55
 Jose Antonio Ventura, 68
 Glen White, 31
 Arron Williams, 38
 Jarrod Wittenhaben, 38

2014

Sheldon Adams, 33
 Rene Almeida, 51
 Jose Alvarez, 55
 Samuel Anderson, 20
 Wade Baker, 60
 Julian Balderas Jr., 50

Mark Benoit, 55
 William Bernal, 45
 Elmer Barrera, 26
 Bobby Beall, 50
 Barry Benson, 61
 Drew Brenek II, 19
 Marty Carroll, 52
 Jeremi Canady, 26
 William Coffey, 56
 April Corely, 30
 Mark Dorsey, 30
 Elvis Edenfield, 76
 Redes Funes, 43
 Gabriel Garcia, 61
 Gilberto Garcia, 41
 Richard Garcia Jr., 30
 Jimmy Mack Goff, 65
 Alejandro Gonzalez, 30
 Harold Lee Gould, Jr., 31
 Daniel Groover, 46
 Juan Guerrero, 18
 Christopher Hunt, 22
 Padrick Jordan, 51
 D.L. Kirkindall, 43
 Charles Kovar, 56
 Felipe Lopez, 38
 Francisco Meza, 32
 Kenny Morris, 58

Samuel Palacios
 Satish Patel, 58
 Edgardo Perez-Suarez, 64
 Grant Pesak, 43
 Quy Pham, 46
 Rueben Portillo, 53
 Timoteo Ramirez
 Jacob Reed, 30
 Eldon Reich, 64
 Donalvon Rhyne, 52
 Trevor Riddick Sr., 27
 Patrocinio Rocha, 49
 Thomas Romo Jr., 22
 Sam Sadruddin
 Gilberto Salas Jr., 37
 Pedro Sanchez
 Roy A. Scott, 52
 Russell Soltani, 66
 Glenn Thorpe Jr., 62
 Manuel Tisnado, 48
 Robert Tisnado, 39
 Jesse Valdez III, 32
 Lucio Vasquez, 39
 Walter Warner, 53
 William J. Washington, 33
 Connor Wilson, 32
 Crystle Wise, 53
 Gary Wortman Jr., 31

☆ **SAUL ISRAEL CRUZ, 71**, was a married grandfather. “He’d wave and watch us out to make sure we got out safely,” said Joe Guidry, a barber shop owner. “He would stay here until 6 or 7 in the morning until the store opened.” Cruz was a security guard for a convenience store and gas station and was fatally shot three days before Christmas.

J. Willey. HPD releases video of deadly security guard shooting,” ABC13.com, Dec. 24, 2015.

☆ **THOMAS COUNTS, 57**, loved operating bulldozers and backhoes. “That was his life,” his wife said, but he also didn’t want his family to worry about him at work. “It was such a dangerous job,” said his sister, “that he didn’t want us to know too much about it.” Counts was killed in a scalding pit of wastewater at the Total Petrochemicals’ refinery.

E. Besson. “Worker who died at Port Arthur refinery didn’t want to worry family,” *Beaumont Enterprise*, Sept. 9, 2015.

Contributors

Celeste Monforton, DrPH, MPH

(Milken School of Public Health, George Washington University)

Martha Ojeda

(Fe y Justicia Worker Center)

Jim Shelton

(OSHA Houston-North Area Office)

Cristell Perez

(student, Rice University)



Published: April 2016

Graphic Design: TheresaWellingDesign.com