

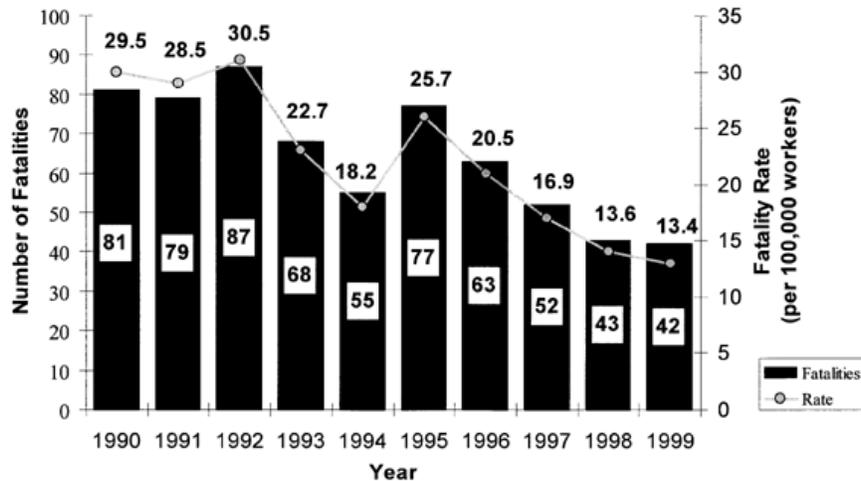


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Bulletin No. 16
September 22, 2000
Occupational-related Fatalities in Alaska, 1990-1999

From 1990 through 1999, 647 workers died as a result of work-related injuries in Alaska. The State and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) are investigating worker deaths in Alaska to identify preventive measures for reducing the death toll in Alaska and in other states and countries where workers face similar risks.

Occupational-related Fatalities in Alaska, 1990-1999



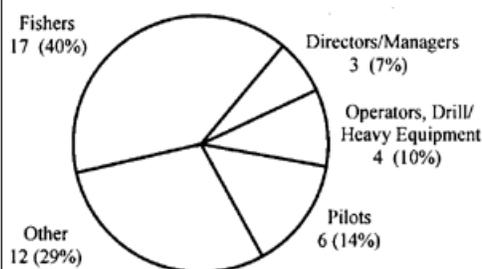
Sources: Alaska FACE Program, NIOSH-Alaska Field Station, Current Population Survey (CPS), Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development-Research and Analysis Section.

Average crude fatality rates were calculated as the number of deaths among workers (including compensated volunteers and military personnel) for each year divided by the number of employed workers plus the estimated military personnel in Alaska. Rates dramatically declined nearly 55% from 29.5 per 100,000 workers in 1990 to 13.4 per 100,000 workers in 1999. The total number of fatalities decreased 48% from 81 in 1990 to 42 in 1999. Although the annual fatality rates for Alaska workers have consistently been greater than for the United States (4.4 per 100,000 in 1994 for the U.S.), much progress has been made to reduce occupation-related fatalities in Alaska. Possible reasons for the decrease in Alaska include improved safety programs, better training, new technology, and greater awareness of workplace hazards.

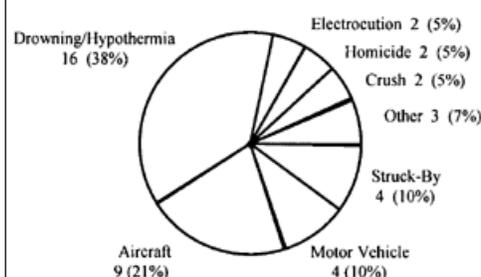
Of the 42 workers who died on the job in Alaska in 1999, 17 were fishers, 6 were pilots, and 4 were drill and heavy equipment operators. Commercial fishing (17 deaths) and air/marine transportation (10 deaths) led all Alaska industries in the number of work-related fatalities. These industries have historically experienced the greatest number of worker deaths in Alaska.

Thirty workers died during 1999 from injuries that were watercraft-related, aircraft-related, or motor vehicle-related. These incidents represented 71% of all occupational deaths and 65% (22/34) of fatal incidents. Of the 17 commercial fishing-related deaths, 16 died as a result of drowning or hypothermia; one died after being struck by a collapsing boom. Four workers died as a result of motor vehicle injuries, of which one was crushed while attempting to attach a chain to a snow-bound vehicle. Four workers died from struck-by injuries of which two were timber cutters. Two workers died as a result of assault injuries (homicides): a law enforcement officer and a restaurant manager.

Occupational-related Fatalities in Alaska, 1999 By Occupation (N=42)



Occupational-related Fatalities in Alaska, 1999 By Mechanism (N=42)



The Section of Epidemiology, Occupational Injury Prevention Program (OIPP) administers the Alaska Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program. The OIPP focuses on preventing workplace fatalities and injuries, especially in construction, skilled trades, logging, and other industrial settings. Reports, flyers, and work-related *Epidemiology Bulletins* are available on the OIPP website at- www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/programs/injury/injury.htm

(Submitted by Deborah Choromanski, M.P.H., Section of Epidemiology.)