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# Top 10 Causes of Workplace Injuries: Liberty Mutual

By [Denise Johnson](#) | January 14, 2015

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Overexertion and falls account for more than \$25 billion in workers compensation costs in the U.S., according to Liberty Mutual Research Institute for Safety's 2014 Workplace Safety Index.

In its 15th year, the annual ranking of top 10 causes of serious, nonfatal workplace injuries is based on the company's workers' compensation claims data and data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the National Academy of Social Insurance.

The research institute examined 2012 claims data (the most recent available) for injuries lasting six or more days and ranked the injuries by total workers compensation costs.

## 10 Leading Causes and Direct Costs of Workplace Injuries in 2012:

1. Overexertion \$15.1B 25.3%
2. Falls on same level \$9.19B 15.4%
3. Struck by object or equipment \$5.3B 8.9%
4. Falls to lower level \$5.12B 8.6%
5. Other exertions or bodily reactions \$4.27B 7.2%
6. Roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicle \$3.18B 5.3%
7. Slip or trip without fall \$2.17B 3.6%
8. Caught in/compressed by equipment or objects \$2.1B 3.5%
9. Repetitive motions involving micro-tasks \$1.84B 3.1%
10. Struck against object or equipment \$1.76B 2.9%

### Overexertion

The leading cause of injury on the list, overexertion, was typically related to lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, carrying or throwing. Other exertions, which came in at number five, includes injuries due to bending, crawling, reaching, twisting, climbing, stepping, kneeling, sitting, standing or walking.

According to statistics compiled by the City of Denver, 311 overexertion claims were reported by employees in 2013. Injuries most often occurred as a result of holding, carrying or lifting.

## **Falls**

Recently, Accident Fund Insurance Company of America and United Heartland reported that close to a third of all Midwestern workers' comp claims with lost time were due to slip and falls on ice and snow.

According to the insurers, winter-related slip and fall claims doubled between 2013 and 2014.

The top five states were:

1. Indiana – 37 percent
2. Wisconsin – 33 percent
3. Michigan – 32 percent
4. Illinois – 32 percent
5. Minnesota – 29 percent

## **Road deaths**

According to the BLS, there were 105 worker deaths at road construction sites in 2013. Texas, Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania and California were the top ranking states for roadway worker deaths. The top cause (69 percent) were pedestrian workers killed by motor vehicles.

In 2013, 63 percent of occupational fatalities in work zones were to the following occupations: construction laborers, highway maintenance workers, heavy and tractor trailer truck drivers, first-line supervisors of construction an extraction workers and construction equipment operators.

Private sector construction – primarily heavy/civil engineering construction and specialty trades contractors – accounted for 60 percent of worker fatal injuries in work zones.

Service producing industries in the private sector, such as the transportation and warehousing industry and the administrative and support services industry, accounted for an additional 27 percent of worker deaths in work zones. Ten percent of workers fatally injured in work zones were in the government sector.

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, worker deaths in America are down. In 1970, there were on average 38 worker deaths a day and in 2012, the figure was down to 12 deaths a day. OSHA reports workplace fatalities have been reduced by more than 65 percent and occupational injury and illness rates have declined by 67 percent. At the same time, U.S. employment has almost doubled.

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