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Wisconsin Worker Injury Rate Declines in 2013

According to estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII), Wisconsin’s overall incidence rate of nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses fell slightly from 4.1 cases per 100 equivalent full-time workers in 2012 to 4.0 cases in 2013.

Nationally, the total injury and illness case rate per 100 full-time workers fell from 3.7 in 2012 to 3.5 in 2013. In surrounding Midwestern states (IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, NE, OH), Iowa had the highest total recordable case rate of 4.8 cases per 100 fulltime workers while Ohio had the lowest rate of 3.0.

SOII is the largest work injury data collection conducted nationwide. The Wisconsin SOII program collects data from a representative sample of 6,000 establishments in both the private and public sector.

Key Findings:
• There were an estimated 85,200 total injuries and illnesses in Wisconsin workers, with 23,200 (27%) requiring time off due to injury. That number is slightly down from the estimated 23,600 cases requiring time off work in 2012.

• Private industry total incident rates remained unchanged at 4.0 cases per 100 fulltime workers, while local government rates dropped from 5.2 in 2012 to 4.9 in 2013, and state government rates increased from 3.2 to 3.6 cases.

• The leading cause of injury requiring days away from work was sprains, strains, and tears, at 38.2% of the 23,200 cases, a decrease from 40% of cases with time off work in 2012.

• The highest rate of workers with time off due to injury was among establishments with 50-249 employees at 5.0 cases per 100 full-time workers. Employers with 250-999 employees were second-highest, with a rate of 4.3 cases per 100 full-time workers.

• The median number of days away from work across all industries in Wisconsin was 7. This is lower than the national median of 8 days away from work.

Survey Background and Wisconsin’s BLS/OSH Program
The annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses has been conducted nationwide since 1973. The Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene’s (WSLH) Bureau of Labor Statistics/Occupational Safety and Health Statistics Unit has a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics to conduct their Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in Wisconsin. The WSLH, a part of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the state’s public, environmental and occupational health laboratory.

For Wisconsin occupational injury profile tables and graphics, visit: www.slh.wisc.edu/bls.