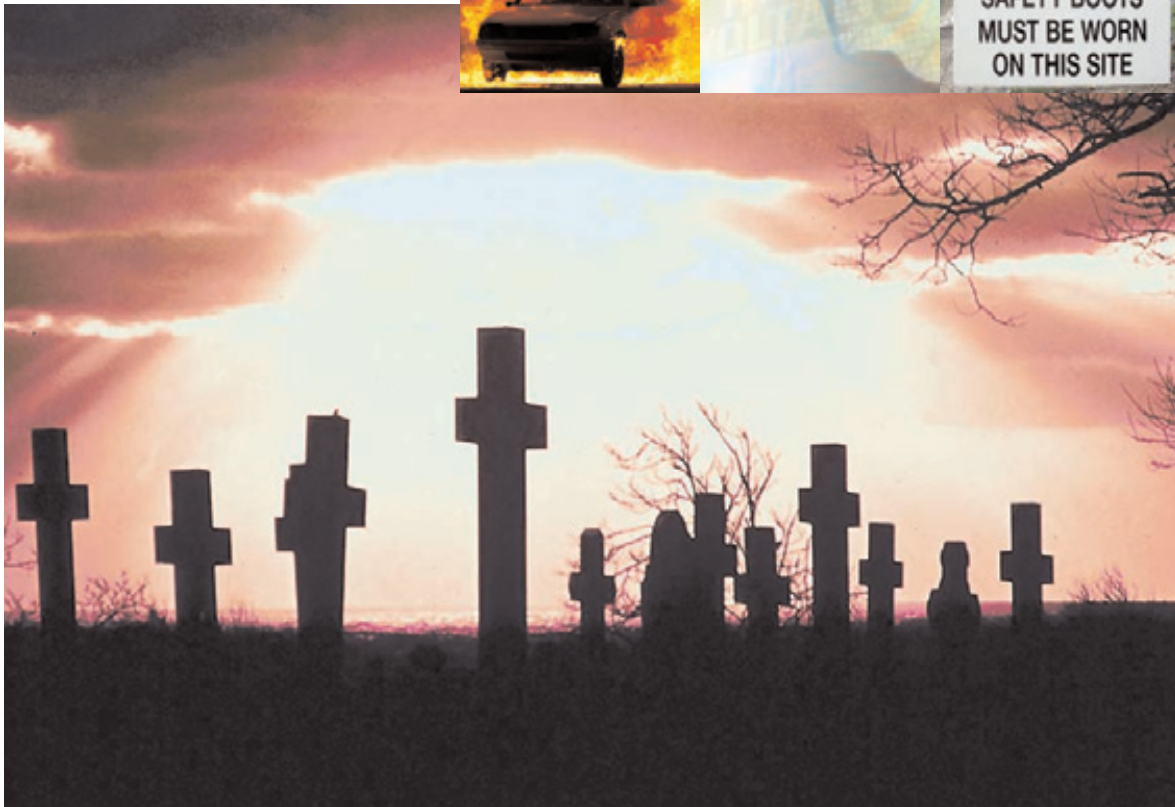




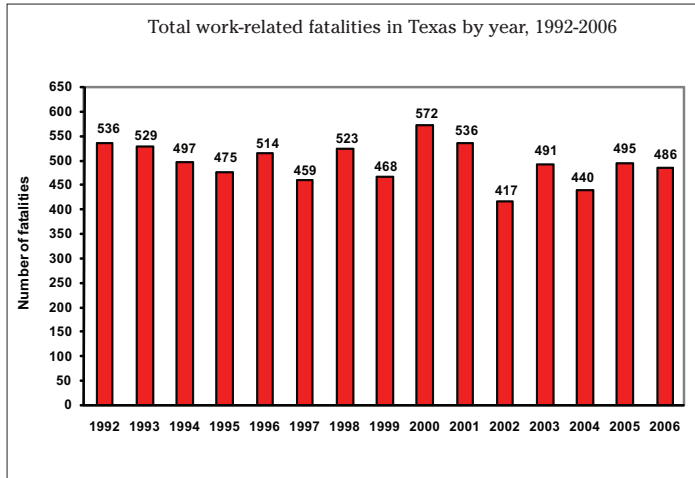
TEXAS WORKPLACE FATALITIES

By Cheryl R. Abbot



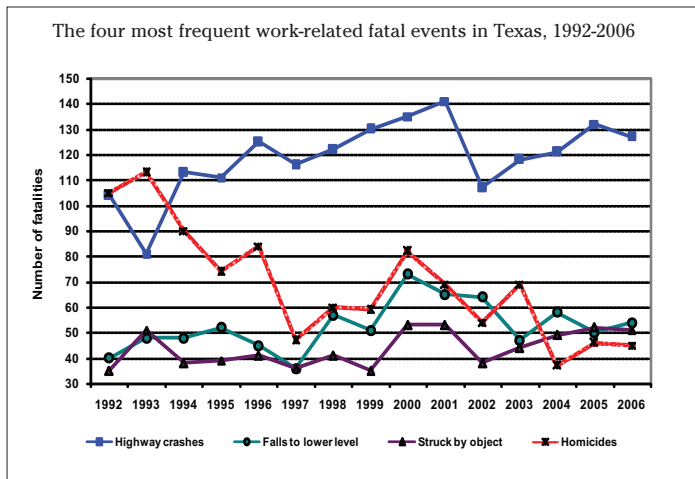
A total of 486 fatal work injuries were recorded in Texas during 2006, down slightly from the 495 that occurred in the previous year, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that this was well below the State high of 572 reached in 2000.

Nationally, fatal job injuries also dipped slightly in 2006, to a level of 5,703 as 24 states reported fewer deaths.



The most frequent events leading to workplace fatalities in Texas in 2006 were highway crashes (127), falls to a lower level (54), being struck by an object (51), and homicides (45).

Combined, these four events accounted for 57 percent of all work-related fatalities in the State. These data are from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which was first conducted in 1992.



Highway crashes remained the most frequent type of fatal workplace event for both the State and the nation in 2006. In Texas, highway crashes have led all other fatal events since 1994. Nationally, this event has led all others since the program's inception in 1992. The 127 fatal injuries resulting from highway incidents in Texas accounted for 26 percent of the statewide total in 2006. In the U.S., highway incidents accounted for 23 percent of work-related deaths.

Occupational fatalities caused by falls to a lower level rose by four cases in 2006, the only event to register an increase among the top four categories in Texas. The 54 work-related deaths

represented 11 percent of all workplace fatalities in Texas; this event accounted for 13 percent of the national total.

Fifty-one fatalities in Texas resulted from workers being struck by an object in 2006, about the same as in the previous year. These types of fatal work injuries accounted for 10 percent of on-the-job fatalities in both the State and the nation.

Homicides accounted for nine percent of on-the-job deaths at the statewide level as well as for the nation. The number of work-related homicides (45) in the State in 2006 was little changed over the year. In fact, the number of homicides has remained under 50 in each of the last three years, well below the peak level of 113 reached in 1993, when homicides accounted for 21 percent of all fatal work injuries in Texas. Nationwide, the number of workplace homicides fell to 516 in 2006, its lowest level since the fatality census was first conducted.

Some of the other fatal events in the State in 2006 recorded notable increases or series highs. Fatal work injuries due to pedestrian incidents (42) and being caught in or compressed by equipment and objects (28) both registered their highest levels since these series began in 1992. The 18 fatalities in Texas from non-highway transportation fatalities (except rail, air, and water) in 2006 were the highest on record since 1999.

In contrast, fatalities resulting from fires and explosions, as well as electrocutions, fell over the year – from 31 in 2005 to 23 in 2006. Work-related fatal injuries among the less frequent events also fell in 2006, as fatalities caused by exposure to caustic, noxious, or allergic substances (13), self-inflicted injuries (13) and aircraft incidents (6) declined from 2005 levels.

Distribution of fatal occupational injuries in Texas by selected event, 1992-2006

Year	Total fatalities	Highway crashes		Falls to lower level		Struck by object		Homicides	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1992	536	104	19	40	7	35	7	105	20
1993	529	81	15	48	9	51	10	113	21
1994	497	113	23	48	10	38	8	90	18
1995	475	111	23	52	11	39	8	74	16
1996	514	125	24	45	9	41	8	84	16
1997	459	116	25	36	8	36	8	47	10
1998	523	122	23	57	11	41	8	60	11
1999	468	130	28	51	11	35	7	59	13
2000	572	135	24	73	13	53	9	82	14
2001	536	141	26	65	12	53	10	69	13
2002	417	107	26	64	15	38	9	54	13
2003	491	118	24	47	10	44	9	69	14
2004	440	121	28	58	13	49	11	37	8
2005	495	132	27	50	10	52	11	46	9
2006	486	127	26	54	11	51	10	45	9

Distribution of fatal occupational injuries in U.S. by selected event, 1992-2006

Year	Total fatalities	Highway crashes		Falls to lower level		Struck by object		Homicides	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1992	6,217	1,158	19	507	8	557	9	1,044	17
1993	6,331	1,242	20	534	8	565	9	1,074	17
1994	6,632	1,343	20	580	9	591	9	1,080	16
1995	6,275	1,346	21	578	9	547	9	1,036	17
1996	6,202	1,346	22	610	10	582	9	927	15
1997	6,238	1,393	22	653	10	579	9	860	14
1998	6,055	1,442	24	625	10	520	9	714	12
1999	6,054	1,496	25	634	10	585	10	651	11
2000	5,920	1,365	23	659	11	571	10	677	11
2000 ¹	5,915	1,409	24	700	12	553	9	643	11
2002	5,534	1,373	25	638	12	505	9	609	11
2003	5,575	1,353	24	604	11	531	10	632	11
2004	5,764	1,398	24	738	13	602	10	559	10
2005 ²	5,734	1,437	25	664	12	607	11	567	10
2006	5,703	1,329	23	728	13	583	10	516	9

¹ Total for 2001 exclude fatalities due to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.
² The BLS news release issued August 10, 2006 reported a total of 5,702 fatal work injuries for calendar year 2005. Since then, an additional 32 job-related fatalities were identified, bringing the total job-related fatality count for 2005 to 5,734.

“The most frequent events leading to workplace fatalities in Texas in 2006 were highway crashes (127), falls to a lower level (54), being struck by an object (51), and homicides (45).”

Nationwide, a total of 5,703 fatal work injuries were reported in 2006, down slightly from the revised total of 5,734 fatalities reported for 2005. The 2006 U.S. total was the third lowest level recorded by the fatality census since its inception in 1992. Although fatal highway incidents were down from a year ago, these events continued to be the leading cause of on-the-job fatalities nationally. Deaths from such incidents totaled 1,329 in 2006, representing almost one out of every four fatal work injuries. Fatalities caused by falls to a lower level increased by 10 percent to a total of 728, the second highest level for this category. On-the-job deaths resulting from being struck by an object totaled 583 in 2006, down from a record high of 607 in 2005. The number of workplace homicides recorded in the United States in 2006, 516, dropped nine percent from the previous year's total and reached its lowest annual total yet recorded by the fatality census. Overall, workplace homicides have decreased more than 50 percent from the high of 1,080 recorded in 1994 (excluding the fatalities resulting from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001).

Key Characteristics of Fatal Work Injuries in Texas

Men accounted for 94 percent (457) of the work-related fatalities in Texas. Transportation incidents, which include highway, non-highway, pedestrian, air, water, and rail fatalities, accounted for 41 percent of these deaths, and contact with objects and equipment made up 19 percent. Twenty-nine women were fatally injured on-the-job, primarily as a result of assaults and violent acts and transportation incidents. Combined, these two events accounted for 83 percent of all worker fatalities among females.

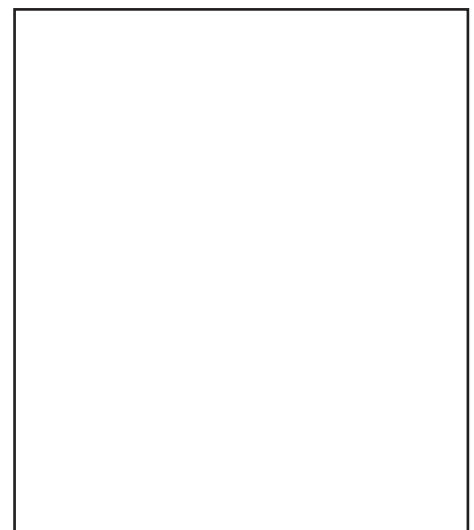
In Texas, 53 percent of those who died from a workplace injury were non-Hispanic whites; 35 percent were Hispanics or Latinos; eight percent were non-Hispanic blacks; and four percent were Asians. The most frequent cause of death among each of these worker groups, except Asians, was transportation incidents. For Asians, the primary cause of death was assaults and violent acts, which accounted for 12 of the 18 total fatalities.

Workers 25-54 years old – the prime working age group – made up slightly more than two-thirds (332) of the State's on-the-job fatalities in 2006.

Eighty percent of workers killed on-the-job in Texas worked for wages and salaries and the remaining 20 percent were self-employed.

Two industry sectors made up 41 percent of the workplace fatalities in the State – construction, with 131 deaths, and transportation; and warehousing, with 66. Transportation incidents and falls each accounted for a little more than one-fourth of the construction industry fatalities. Exposure to harmful substances or environments accounted for slightly more than one-fifth of work-related deaths in construction. In the transportation and warehousing industry, transportation incidents were the most prevalent cause of workplace deaths, accounting for more than two-thirds of all fatal injuries.

Construction and extraction jobs and transportation and material moving jobs led all other occupational groups with 140 and 123 worker fatalities, respectively. Combined, these two occupational groups accounted for 54 percent of all fatal work



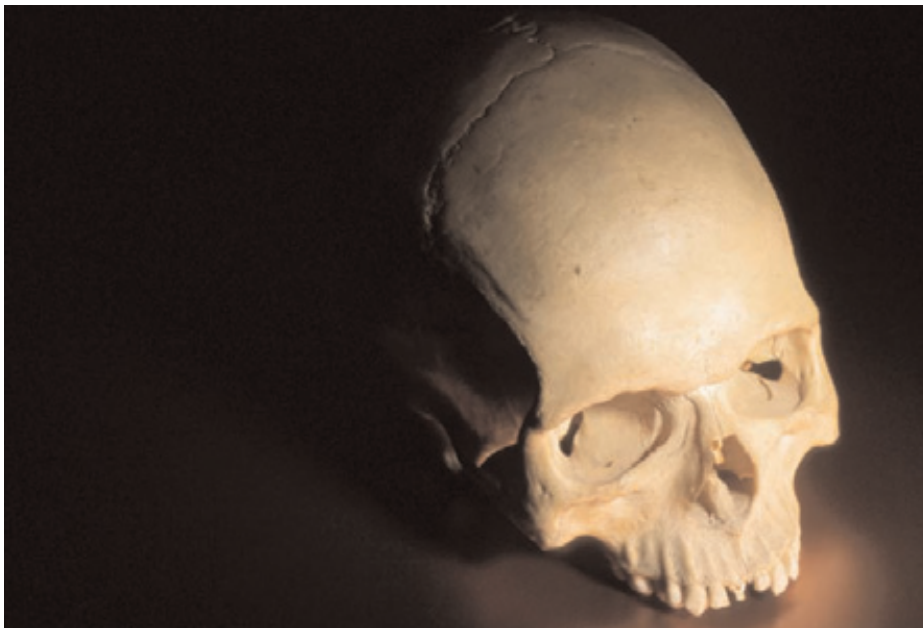
injuries in Texas. Among construction and extraction workers, transportation incidents (40), falls (34), exposure to harmful substances or environments (29), and contact with objects and equipment (27) were the most frequent events leading to on-the-job fatalities. Within transportation and material moving occupations, transportation incidents (86) accounted for 70 percent of all fatal injuries; contact with objects and equipment (20) accounted for 16 percent.

For a fatality to be included in the census, the decedent must have been employed (that is, working for pay, compensation, or profit) at the time of the event, engaged in a legal work activity, or present at the site of the incident as a requirement of his or her job. Fatalities to volunteer and unpaid family workers who perform the same duties and functions as paid workers are also included in the counts. These criteria are generally broader than those used by Federal and State agencies administering specific laws and regulations. (Fatalities that occur during a person's normal commute to or from work are excluded from the census counts.)

Data presented includes deaths occurring in 2006 that resulted from traumatic occupational injuries. An injury is defined as any wound or damage to the body resulting from acute exposure to energy, such as heat, electricity, or impact from a crash or fall, or from the absence of such essentials as heat or oxygen caused by a specific event or incident within a single workday or shift. Included are open wounds, intracranial and internal injuries, heatstroke, hypothermia, asphyxiation, acute poisonings resulting from short-term exposures limited to the worker's shift, suicides and homicides, and work injuries listed as underlying or contributory causes of death.

Information on work-related fatal illnesses is not reported in the BLS census and is excluded from the tables because the latency period of many occupational illnesses and the difficulty of linking illnesses to work exposures make identification of a universe problematic.

Fatalities occurring among several other groups of workers are generally not covered by any Federal or State agencies. These groups include self-employed and unpaid family workers, which accounted for about 18 percent of the fatalities; laborers on small farms, accounting for about one percent of the fatalities; and State and local government employees in states without OSHA-approved safety programs, which accounted for about four percent. (Approximately one-half of the states have approved OSHA safety programs, which cover state and local government employees.) **N**



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