

What's News In Insurance

U.S. Report: Fewer Work Days Being Lost Due to Injuries, Illnesses

Both the rate and the number of occupational injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work decreased from 2005 to 2006, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

The 2006 rate was 128 per 10,000 workers, a decrease of 6 percent from 2005. There were 1.2 million cases requiring days away from work in private industry, which represented a decrease of 51,180 cases (or 4 percent). Median days away from work—a key measure of the severity of the injury or illness—was 7 days in 2006, the same as the prior two years.

Nursing aides lose the most work days due to injuries or illnesses, according to the report. The most common injury across all industries is strains and sprains.

Key findings for 2006 nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work:

Nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants had 49,480 days away from work cases and a rate of 526 per 10,000 workers, which was more than four times the total for all occupations.

Three other occupations with more than 40,000 cases had rates above 400 per 10,000 workers: construction laborers (488); laborers and freight, stock, and material movers (466); and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (411).

Musculoskeletal disorders accounted for 30 percent of the injuries and illnesses with days away from work, the same percentage as in 2005.

Sprains and strains was the leading nature of injury and illness in every major industry sector. These injuries decreased by 6 percent for total private industry in 2006 and for both goods-producing and service-providing industries. Trade, transportation and utilities reported 157,380 sprains and strains, 33 percent of the total.

Workers on the job 5 years or more had a decrease of 27 percent for these kinds of illnesses.

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