



# Safety Connection

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## SAFETY RESEARCH

- Transitioning from Hard Hats to Safety Helmets.** A new Job-Site Safety Institute (JSI) [case study](#) conducted by North Carolina State University examined small construction firms transitioning from traditional Type I hard hats to newer, more protective Type II safety helmets. Head injuries account for 25% of all construction fatalities and construction workers are at higher risk because of their work in dynamic environments where they can fall from elevation or be struck by falling objects. The research shows construction workers and employers are willing to make the change to using more protective helmets once the benefits are demonstrated. However, the study revealed several barriers that could impede implementation, which include concerns about the additional cost of Type II helmets, a lack of worker-level influence over employer purchasing decisions, and social factors such as prevailing norms and practices within their work environments.
- Heat-Related Injuries and Barriers to Heat Program Implementation.** A new CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training [study](#) examined the association between temperature and traumatic injury risk among construction workers in Colorado, as well as current workplace heat safety programs. A key finding was increased weekly average temperatures were associated with increased risk of traumatic injury among construction workers, however higher temperatures were not significantly associated with increased workers' compensation claim costs.

## CONSTRUCTION SAFETY TRENDS

- Workers Comp Frequency Declining, Injured Workers Recovery Times Rising.** According to the Travelers [2025 Injury Impact Report](#), the frequency of workers' compensation claims is on a downward trend, although injured workers' recovery times are increasing. Findings include: construction workers compensation claims were the most expensive – almost double the all-industries average; 44% of all construction injuries involved first-year workers; the most common causes of large losses over \$250,000 were slips/trips/falls, overexertion, motor vehicle accidents, and being struck-by objects/caught-in hazards; and the average number of lost workdays in construction was 115 days, with injured workers aged 60+ missing an average of 12 additional days compared to the construction industry average.
- Serious injuries and fatalities in construction decline.** In a recent [report](#) by consulting firm ISN, the number of serious injuries and fatalities declined, however the overall fatality rate in construction has stagnated in the last decade. Smaller and mid-sized companies experience greater variability in safety performance, due to resource limitations, workforce turnover, and exposure to high-risk activities.
- Distracted Driving Fell 8.6% in 2024.** A [report](#) earlier this year from Cambridge Mobile Telematics analyzed data that showed distracted driving—when drivers text, use apps, and interact with their phones—dropped 8.6% in 2024, marking the second consecutive year of improvement. The reduction in distracted driving is driven by increased enrollment in usage-based insurance (UBI) programs, expanded hands-free laws, greater public awareness, and the adoption of new in-vehicle technology.
- NHTSA Estimates 39,345 Traffic Fatalities in 2024.** The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released its early [estimates of traffic fatalities for 2024](#), which shows a 3.8% decrease in fatalities from the previous year. Preliminary data also shows vehicle miles traveled increased by 1%, while the fatality rate for 2024 decreased to 1.20 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled – the lowest since 2019.
- Construction Worker Injuries, Overdoses, and Suicides.** A CPWR [data bulletin](#) examined fatal and nonfatal on-the-job injuries, as well as mortalities by cause of death among U.S. construction workers. A key finding from 2012 to 2023 was that the *number* of fatal injuries in construction increased 29.4%, while the *rate* of fatal injuries per 100,000 full-time equivalents (FTEs) declined 5.4%. The study also found the number of suicides among construction workers aged 16 to 64 years old decreased between 2022 to 2023 and there were 15.9K overdose deaths among construction workers, with synthetic opioids involved in three out of four overdoses.