# Painter Safety Stats and Facts



## FACTS

**Painters face health and safety hazards**

1. Repetitive stress – Painters often perform the same movements throughout the day – picking up and putting down heavy materials and reaching to paint areas. These repetitive motions can cause overuse injuries over time. In particular, the rotator cuffs and muscles of the shoulder and neck are often strained while a painter works. Long-term use can cause minor tears that can take weeks to recover, while a sudden fall can cause injuries that require surgery.
2. Exposure to toxic fumes: Many paints, varnishes and solvents have high levels of VOCs (volatile organic compounds). Inhaling these toxic fumes can lead to neurological problems (such as “painter’s dementia”), asthma, cancer, fertility problems and other health issues.
3. Dust inhalation: Painters who work in construction sites may be exposed to dust from sanding, drywall installation and other work, which can lead to asthma as well as respiratory and sinus problems.
4. Cancer: According to recent research, professional painters have a 20 percent higher overall risk of cancer and a 30 percent higher risk of bladder cancer.
5. Back and neck injuries: Painting involves kneeling, bending, reaching and lifting. Such tiring work can lead to chronic injuries, especially in the back and neck.
6. Accidents: Painters often work on scaffolding and ladders, which means a higher risk of falls. Additionally, they face the same hazards as other construction workers, such as exposure to damaging noise levels and dangerous machinery.

## STATS

- Professional painters have a 20 % higher overall risk of cancer and a 30 % higher risk of bladder cancer.
- Records from (OSHA) in construction painting showed only 31% of the deaths occurred at firms covered by a union contract. Risk of fatal injury was the highest for small firms with fewer than 10 employees.
- Roofers and painters were the most at risk to suffer nonfatal falls to a

lower level. The rate for roofers was 86.9 cases per 10,000 full-time workers; the rate for painters was 75.0 cases per 10,000 full-time workers.

- Diseases resulting from workplaces—like lung cancer linked to inhaling carcinogenic substances on the job—account for around 86% of all premature death.
- Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that 20 fatalities for painters occurred due to slips and falls.
- Statistics indicate that some 4,000 people are taken to hospital due to injuries that involve slipping on wet paint or tripping over painting tools.