Road Construction Stats & Facts



DID YOU KNOW?

Road construction risks the lives of both drivers and workers on a daily basis. Our law firm has compiled the following statistics to bring awareness to the dangers of work zones and to encourage increased safety.

If you've been the victim of an accident caused by an unsafe work zone or any other type of road construction, our experienced car accident attorneys can help. The sooner you contact our law firm, the sooner we can start collecting evidence to prove your case.

Get in touch with us today by taking advantage of our free legal consultation.

The construction industry is known for being one of the most dangerous fields to work in. Out of every 5,000 private-industry worker fatalities, 20 percent are in construction. That means one out of every five worker deaths is construction-related!

Construction also results in many non-fatal injuries that cost companies millions of dollars per year. This makes safety paramount in the industry. While safety measures and precautions, like those outlined by OSHA, can be costly upfront, their ROI can be massive.

A successful construction business will maintain effective safety programs, stay updated on OSHA regulations and pay the expenses involved even when business is slow. Not only because OSHA violations can range anywhere from a warning to $70K per incident, but because they care about their employees.

Federal OSHA is a small agency; with our state partners we have approximately 2,100 inspectors responsible for the health and safety of 130 million workers, employed at more than 8 million worksites around the nation – which translates to about one compliance officer for every 59,000 workers.

Worker fatalities

5,250 workers died on the job in 2018 (3.5 per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers) – on average, more than 100 a week or more than 14 deaths every day.

Construction’s “Fatal Four”

Out of 4,779 worker fatalities in private industry in calendar year 2018, 1,008 or 21.1% were in construction – that is, one in five worker deaths last year were in construction. The leading causes of private sector worker deaths (excluding highway collisions) in the construction industry were falls, followed by struck by object, electrocution, and caught-in/between. These “Fatal Four” were responsible for more than half (58.6%) the construction worker deaths in 2018, BLS reports. Eliminating the Fatal Four would save 591 workers’ lives in America every year.

- Falls – 338 out of 1,008 total deaths in construction in CY 2018 (33.5%)
- Struck by Object – 112 (11.1%)
- Electrocutions – 86 (8.5%)
- Caught-in/between* – 55 (5.5%)

Federal, state and local governments remain the major contributor of highway construction funding, but the number of public-private partnerships (P3s) is on the increase. Under a P3, private firms either receive money from the government in order to build, operate or maintain parts of the road network, or these firms acquire the right to generate revenue in exchange for a fee paid to the government. A significant amount of the funding for constructing and maintaining highways originates from the United States Highway Trust Fund. This financial instrument derives most of its revenue streams from sources such as fuel and vehicle taxes. The fund was initially established in the late 1950s to finance the United States Interstate Highway System and other transportation projects. However, the Highway Trust Fund has been unable to meet obligations for highway and transit spending for over three years, and several billion U.S. dollars had to be incurred from the U.S. Treasury’s general fund. In 2018, the public sector spent about 92.5 billion U.S. dollars on highway construction. Highway and road construction put in place in the United States is projected to grow to about 103 billion U.S. dollars by 2022. Highway and bridge construction is expected to vary across the United States, growing in about 20 states but remaining in stable in others. Some states have increased investment into transportation construction in recent years; since 2013, 15 states that have raised gas taxes for increased investments.

U.S. gross output originating from highway and street construction – including reconstruction, repairs and maintenance – amounted to around 70.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2017. The leading companies in the field of highway construction include Kiewit, Colas and Lane Construction. The highway construction industry has been recently limited by budgetary constraints and a lack of investment into transport infrastructure which has trickled through since the recession.

While the construction industry is inherently risky, proper safety and health training, as well as regular inspections and updated equipment, can mitigate some of these risks. Working to eliminate safety hazards associated with falls, falling objects and electrocution can save companies thousands per year.

Cost savings to the company are secondary to the obvious benefits of keeping workers safe. A safe workplace can also result in indirect benefits like a positive company reputation, the ability to recruit the best talent and improved employee morale.

Regardless of why a company decides to focus on workplace safety, it should be viewed as an essential task. It’s important that every construction crew member, even seasoned veterans, attend training and regular safety meetings. Even using simple methods, like using three points of contact approach of climbing on and off heavy machinery should be relearned.

When construction companies make safety a priority, everyone wins. And if you’re not in construction, staying aware and practicing things like road construction safety will help keep everyone safe.