



Carpenters and Occupational Hand and Finger Injuries

Work-related injuries involving a hand or fingers among union carpenters in Washington state, 1989 to 2008

Hester Lipscomb, Ashley Schoenfisch, Wilfrid Cameron. Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, July 2013.

Overview

Researchers evaluated work-related injuries involving a hand or fingers – and their associated costs – among a cohort of 24,830 carpenters between 1989 and 2008. Over 20 years, reported injury rates declined substantially. Younger carpenters, and those with fewer years in the union (and probably less experience in the trade overall), suffered higher injury rates. Older carpenters had proportionately more amputations, fractures, and multiple injuries, but did not suffer these more severe injuries at higher rates than younger carpenters. Older carpenters' higher proportion of serious injuries in the absence of higher rates likely reflects age-related reporting differences.

Key Findings

- Hand injuries accounted for 21.1% of reported injuries and 9.5% of paid lost time injuries.
- In a typical year, one out of every 200 workers in the cohort suffered a hand injury serious enough to support a claim for paid leave time.
- Direct costs associated with hand and finger injuries exceeded \$21 million, a cost burden of \$0.11 per hour worked.
- Over 20 years, injury rates declined substantially. The more marked decline in injuries resulting in paid leave time than those resulting in paid leave time AND medical care may represent greater progress toward reducing more serious events or more rapid return to work after injury.

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See full report:

<http://bit.ly/1u0Hiwf>

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