Workplace Injury, Illness, and Fatality Summary, 2013
Adam Garcia, Economist

Every year the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) compiles statistics on the incidences of workplace injuries, illnesses, and fatalities (IIF). The IIF program provides information on the description, rate, and number of these work-related harms and how these statistics vary by different characteristics. The BLS report draws on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) data for consistent measurement techniques across all states. Data is collected via two methods—the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses and the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI). The Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses is a federal/state program in which employers’ reports are collected annually from about 176,000 private industry establishments and processed by state agencies cooperating with BLS. Summary information on the number of injuries and illnesses is copied by these employers directly from their recordkeeping logs to the survey questionnaire. CFOI is also a federal-state cooperative program that has been implemented in all 50 states and the District of Columbia since 1992. The census uses multiple sources to identify, verify, and profile fatal worker injuries. Information about each workplace fatal injury is obtained by cross-referencing the source records, such as death certificates, workers’ compensation reports, and federal and state agency administrative reports.

The 2013 annual reports were released in September and December of 2014 for the CFOI and the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, respectively. For copies of these reports and more information on the IIF, visit www.bls.gov/iif/.

Non-Fatal Injuries and Illnesses

Non-fatal injuries and illnesses are reported using a defined incidence rate, representing the number of workers experiencing a non-fatal injury or illness per every 100 workers. In 2013, the U.S. incident rate for the public and private sectors combined was 3.5. Chart 1 shows the U.S. incidence rate dropped from 3.8 in 2011. New Mexico also saw a drop in incidence rates over the three-year period, from 4.6 in 2011 to 3.5 in 2013.

When analyzing the private sector alone, slightly more than 3 million non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses were reported by private-industry employers, nationwide, as of 2013, resulting in an incidence rate of 3.3. Of these incidents, 94.9 percent were injuries, and only 5.1 percent were illnesses. New Mexico’s private-sector incidence rate of 3.2 was slightly lower than that of the nation. New Mexico fell amongst the
lower injury and illness incidence rates when looking at all U.S. states. Chart 2 shows that New Mexico was ranked twenty-sixth out of 42 reporting states, although the state’s incidence rate was not statistically different from the national rate.

The top injury- and illness-prone industry in New Mexico for 2013 was arts, entertainment, and recreation, with a rate of 5.4. The retail trade and health care and social assistance sectors followed, with a rate of 4.5 each. The injury and illness rates for all major industry sectors are shown in Chart 3.

The most common nature of injury for New Mexico was sprains, strains, or tears, which represented 56 percent of total injury/illness cases requiring days away from work in all industries and sectors. The back remained the most common body area for this kind of injury, specifically the lumbar region. (Source: New Mexico Workers Compensation Administration)

**Fatalities**

There were 4,405 workplace fatalities in the U.S. in 2013, representing an incidence rate of 3.3 (per 100,000 workers). (Note that 2013 data is preliminary.) U.S. fatalities dropped from 4,693 in 2011 and 4,628 in 2012. (See Chart 4.) There were 54 workplace fatalities in New Mexico in 2013, representing a rate of 6.7 (per 100,000 workers). New Mexico saw a decrease of 13 fatalities from 2011 to 2012 but an increase of 15 in 2013.

Within New Mexico, the goods-producing industries accounted for 22 (41 percent) of the fatal work injuries, while private service-providing industries accounted for 25 (46 percent), and government accounted for 7 (13 percent). In the goods-producing industries, there were 13 natural resource and mining fatalities and nine construction fatalities. In the service-providing industries, there were 17 trade, transportation, and utilities fatalities, five professional and business services fatalities, and one fatality that was not disclosed. By occupation, natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations saw the most fatalities (24), followed by production, transportation, and material moving occupations (21).

Chart 5 shows the total workplace fatalities broken down into selected fatal incidents in New Mexico from 2011 to 2013. Transportation incidents were the most frequent type of fatality, increasing from 20 in 2012 to 36 in 2013 and accounting for two-thirds of workplace fatalities in New Mexico. While most other fatality types increased between 2012 and 2013, the number of fatalities caused by exposure to harmful substances or environments decreased from five in 2012 to three in 2013.

**Industries with Highest Number of Fatalities, New Mexico, 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Natural Resources and Mining</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Construction</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Government</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Private ownership, industry supersectors