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## **Nonfatal workplace injuries decreasing**

*Survey highlights 10 percent drop in injuries, fewer days away from work*

TOPEKA — Kansas workplaces are getting safer according to the 2009 Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, which shows a nearly 10 percent decrease in non fatal accidents in private industries in the state from 2007 to 2008. The report, produced by the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, also shows a 6 percent drop in the number of accidents resulting in days away from work over the same time period.

The report is based on a survey of 3,500 randomly selected Kansas private and public employers and includes information on annual counts and incident rates for nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses in the private sector during 2008.

"While collected differently, the information in this report and the information gathered by our division of Workers Compensation reflect significant decreases in injuries over the year. That tells us we're heading in the right direction," said Kansas Labor Secretary Jim Garner. "Our focus now must be on continuing to drive down the rate of injuries on the job."

KDOL provides a variety of services to assist in achieving that goal. Among them are free, confidential consultations for businesses that include:

- one-on-one meetings with employers
- a walk-through safety evaluation
- a written report with findings and suggested solutions
- a follow-up visit to ensure any serious hazards were corrected and to give additional suggestions for improvement

Using KDOL's free consultation program, employers can identify potential hazards at their work sites, improve safety and health management practices and qualify for exemptions from routine Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) inspections.

Other findings of the 2009 survey include:

- An estimated 43,400 nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses occurred among private industry workers in 2008.
- Approximately 9,710 of the 2008 workplace injuries and illnesses required days away from work, with an average of seven days off the job.
- Strains and sprains were the number one cause of injuries, representing more than one-third of the injuries involving days away from work.
- Men accounted for 69.1 percent of all cases requiring days away from work.
- Workers 35 to 44 years of age accounted for 23.3 percent of injured or ill workers. The 45- to 54-year-old age group and the 25- to 34-year-old age group accounted for 20.8 percent of injuries and illnesses each.
- Injuries resulting in amputations accounted for the longest absences from work, with an average of 42 days, however these injuries made up just 1 percent of all

workplace injuries that involve days away from work among private industries in 2008.

- Truck drivers of heavy trucks and tractor trailers had the highest number of days away from work with 690 cases. They were followed closely by laborers who move freight, stock and materials by hand with 550 cases and construction laborers with 530 cases.

For more information regarding this survey, please visit [www.bls.gov/iif](http://www.bls.gov/iif) or view findings on the KDOL [website](#). You can also call the Labor Market Information Services at (785) 296-5000. To find out more about the free workplace safety consultation, go to [www.dol.ks.gov](http://www.dol.ks.gov) or call KDOL's Industrial Safety and Health Division at (785) 296-4386.

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