

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

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Promoting productive workplaces through safety and health research



eNews: Volume 20, Number 4 (August 2022)

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Volume 20, Number 4 (August 2022)

From the Director's Desk

John Howard, M.D. Director, NIOSH

Best Practices for Protecting Temporary Workers

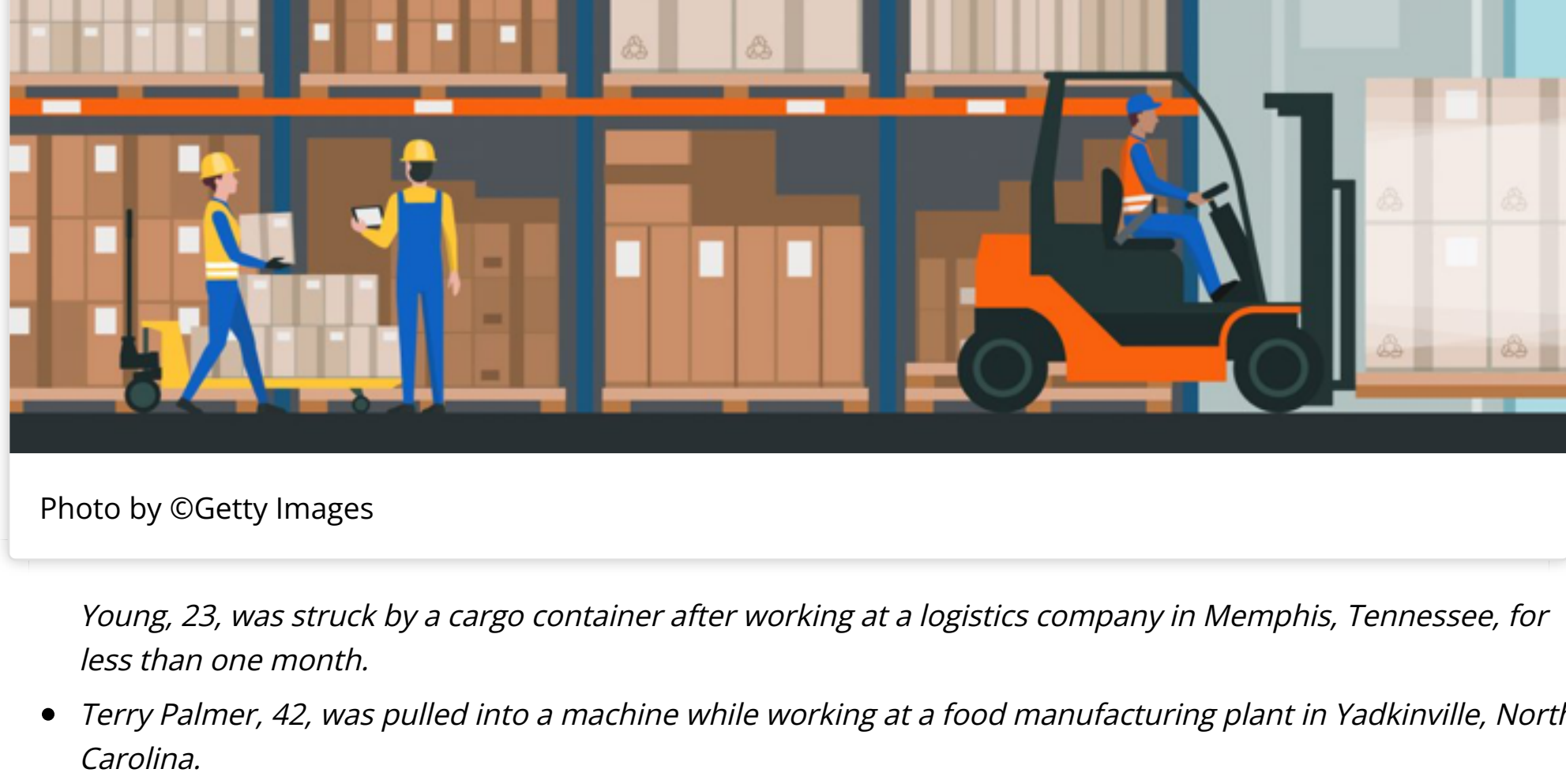


Photo by ©Getty Images

Young, 23, was struck by a cargo container after working at a logistics company in Memphis, Tennessee, for less than one month.

- Terry Palmer, 42, was pulled into a machine while working at a food manufacturing plant in Yadkinville, North Carolina.
- Lawrence Daquan "Day" Davis, 21, was crushed by a palletizer his first day on the job at a bottling plant in Jacksonville, Florida.

These are a few examples of preventable deaths of temporary workers, a group that a growing amount of data show experience higher rates of nonfatal occupational injuries in the United States [1-3].

Temporary workers are those who are paid by a staffing company and assigned to work for a host employer, including both short- and long-term assignments. This dual employment arrangement presents unique occupational safety and health (OSHA) challenges. According to a 2014 document issued by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and NIOSH, staffing companies and host employers "are joint employers of temporary workers and, therefore, both are responsible for providing and maintaining a safe work environment for those workers." However, host employers may be unsure about their OSH responsibilities and what they can do to best protect and promote workplace health and safety. Temporary workers may be inexperienced with the work tasks, unfamiliar with the job site, unsure of how to do the job safely, and reluctant to speak up if they have a safety concern.

In order to help host employers navigate these challenges and develop a comprehensive OSH program, NIOSH recently released the document *Protecting Temporary Workers: Best Practices for Host Employers*. This document provides detailed best practices for host employers, applicable across industries and occupations, organized into three areas:

- Evaluating and addressing workplace safety and health in a written contract
- Training for temporary workers and their worksite supervisors
- Reporting, responding, and recordkeeping of injuries and illnesses

The document includes checklists, which can be printed or completed electronically, and real-life scenarios of how host employers might implement these best practices. Also included is a complementary slide deck; staffing companies can use to educate their host employer clients about the best practices.

The OSHA Temporary Worker Initiative has issued numerous guidance documents outlining the joint safety and health responsibilities of staffing companies and host employers. The Best Practices document builds on these resources by providing an in-depth set of best practices for host employers to follow.

This document was developed through a joint effort with the National Occupational Research Agenda (NORA) Safety Sector Council, the American Society of Safety Professionals, the American Staffing Association, and the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention program within Washington State's Department of Labor and Industries. Host employers, staffing companies, and worker organizations also gave input. NIOSH and partners plan on developing a similar set of best practices for staffing companies.

On Tuesday, August 30, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. (EDT), NIOSH and partners will host a webinar that will provide an overview of the best practices outlined in this new resource. Please register if you would like to attend.

Amidst a pandemic, the importance of keeping workers safe and healthy has never been more important. By following the Best Practices, host employers can do their part to optimize the safety and health of temporary workers.

References

- Al-Tarawneh IS, Wurzbacher SJ, Bertke SJ [2020]. Comparative analysis of workers' compensation claims of injury among temporary and permanent employed workers in Ohio. *Am J Ind Med* 63(1):3-22.
- Foley M [2017]. Factors underlying observed injury rate differences between temporary workers and permanent peers. *Am J Ind Med* 60(10):841-851.
- Howard J [2017]. Nonstandard work arrangements and worker health and safety. *Am J Ind Med* 60(1):1-10.

Research Rounds

Racial Disparities Linked to Less Teleworking During the COVID-19 Pandemic
Fewer Black and Hispanic workers than Asian and White workers teleworked during the COVID-19 pandemic, potentially because of racial disparities in education and occupation, according to research recently published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

Teleworking has many benefits, including better work-life balance, increased productivity, and greater overall well-being. During the early days of the pandemic, it could also have meant the difference between contracting COVID-19 or avoiding illness, even death. Unlike many office workers, essential workers in healthcare, food delivery, grocery stores, and other occupations were unable to telework because of the nature of their jobs. A critical question is whether racial inequality in education and occupation played a role in the likelihood of teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic.

NIOSH researchers addressed this question by comparing teleworking between workers of different races from May 2020 through July 2021, when many businesses allowed workers to work from home during the pandemic. Using employment and other demographic information from the nationwide Current Population Survey, sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, they calculated how many workers, by race, teleworked. They then calculated the effects on teleworking of four-year college education and occupation by controlling for other factors such as sex and age.

Compared with White workers, Black workers were 35% less likely to telework, and Hispanic workers were 55% less likely to telework during the period studied. Importantly, more than 90% of the lower likelihood of teleworking among Black and Hispanic workers stemmed from disparities in four-year college education and occupation. In contrast, Asian workers were 44% more likely than White workers to telework, controlling for college education, occupation, and other factors. These results highlight the necessity of reducing racial disparities in teleworking by addressing racial inequality in college education and occupation.

More information is available: [NIOSH | Occupational Health Equity](#)

Monitoring of Work-related Asthma Cases Is Critical to Prevention

Hundreds of workplace substances are known or suspected to trigger work-related asthma. A critical part of prevention is understanding where and how exposure to these substances occurs through monitoring or surveillance. Nationwide, NIOSH supports 22 state surveillance programs that monitor local work-related illnesses and injuries.

In this study, NIOSH-funded researchers with the Washington Occupational Injury and Illness Surveillance Program used workers' compensation records to identify the industries and substances affecting workers with work-related asthma. They defined work-related asthma as work-aggravated or new-onset, including occupational asthma and reactive airways dysfunction syndrome, which is the sudden development of asthma after a high-dose exposure in a person without preexisting asthma.

Overall, they identified 784 cases of work-related asthma from 2009 through 2016, according to the research recently published in the *Journal of Asthma*. The most common type was work-aggravated asthma with 529 cases, followed by occupational asthma with 127 cases. Reactive airways dysfunction syndrome accounted for the remaining 12 cases. By industry, Health Care and Social Assistance had the most cases of work-related asthma with 170 cases documented during the study. The highest percentages of work-related asthma were new-onset in these industries: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (33%); Manufacturing (31%); and Construction (30%).

In all industries, five main substances caused most of the new-onset asthma cases. These substances were hop plant dust, wood and cedar dust, mineral and inorganic dust, mold, and cleaning materials. Cannabis also emerged as a cause of work-related asthma, with 10 cases identified from 2002 through 2019. Of these cases, seven occurred among workers employed in the legalized cannabis industry. Together, these results underscore the importance of continued monitoring of workplaces at risk for substances that cause work-related asthma.

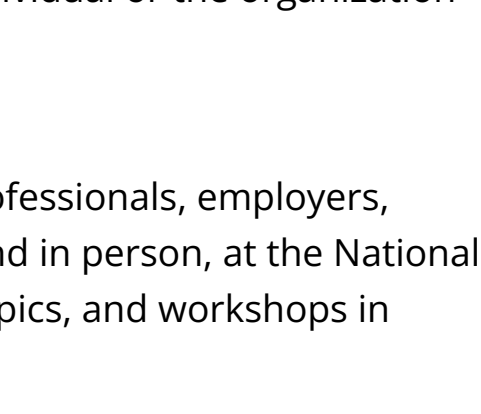
More information is available: [NIOSH | Work-related Asthma](#)

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Highlights

It's Here! Join Us for Safe + Sound Week

Please join NIOSH and partners as we recognize Safe + Sound Week August 15-21. Safe + Sound Week is a nationwide event held each August that recognizes the successes of workplace health and safety programs and offers information and ideas on how to keep America's workers safe. Participating in Safe + Sound Week can help get your program started, energize an existing one, or provide a chance to recognize your safety success. [Learn more and sign up!](#)



Save the Date: NIOSH to Host Workshop on Personal Protective Equipment for Workers

On November 8 and 9, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (ET) NIOSH will host a virtual workshop to highlight ongoing activities and discuss prominent issues about equitable personal protective equipment protections of all U.S. workers. To submit a nomination please send a letter of intent describing why the nominated individual or the organization deserves the award to nominations@safesound.us by August 15. Additional information is available on the [award website](#).

Nomination Deadline Extended for Safe-In-Sound Hearing Loss Prevention Award

NIOSH, the National Hearing Conservation Association, and the Council for Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation are still accepting nominations for the 2023 Safe-In-Sound Excellence in Hearing Loss Prevention Award. To submit a nomination please send a letter of intent describing why the nominated individual or the organization deserves the award to nominations@safesound.us by August 15. Additional information is available on the [award website](#).

Last Call for Early Bird Pricing for the International Symposium to Advance Total Worker Health®

Don't miss your chance to attend the International Symposium to Advance Total Worker Health®. The event will bring together safety and health professionals, employers, researchers, policymakers, labor representatives, and members of the academic community. The symposium will be held October 11-14, virtually and in person, at the National Institutes of Health headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland. The virtual and in-person agendas are available to see the keynote speakers, session topics, and workshops in store. Early bird pricing ends August 31. [Learn more and register.](#)

National Advisory Committee on OSH Seeks Nominations for New Members

Four membership vacancies are open on the National Advisory Committee on Occupational Safety and Health. The 12-member group advises the Secretary of Labor and Secretary of Health and Human Services on matters related to the administration of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Committee members generally serve two-year staggered terms, unless a member becomes unable to serve, resigns, ceases to be qualified to serve, or is removed by the Secretary. Read the [Federal Register notice](#) for more information or submit nominations to the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#), Docket Number OSHA-2022-0002. Nominations are due August 31.

New Report: Federal Agencies Release Joint Study on Workplace Violence

NIOSH and the Bureau of Justice Statistics and Labor Statistics recently released a new report *Indicators of Workplace Violence, 2019*. This joint publication provides findings on fatal and nonfatal crimes that occurred in the workplace or away from work but over work-related issues. Findings are presented for 13 indicators of workplace violence, using data from five federal data collections. Learn more about NIOSH research and resources related to [workplace violence](#).

NIOSH Electronic Health Records Project Reaches Important Milestone

The recently released latest version of the *United States Core Data for Interoperability (USCDI)* now includes the data elements "Occupation" and "Occupation Industry." The USCDI is a standardized set of health data classes and constituent data elements for nationwide, interoperable health information exchange. This is an important milestone for the *NIOSH Electronic Health Records (EHR) project*. Including these data elements in USCDI sets the stage for them to become standard fields in EHRs and provides support for NIOSH-led efforts to include them in key data sharing standards, implement pilots demonstrating their collection and value, and more.

Research to Practice Updates

- NIOSH, OSHA, and the National STEPS Network recently signed an Ambassador Agreement.** Through this agreement the groups plan to build upon previous outreach and communication activities, develop additional educational materials, and raise awareness of OSHA's rulemaking and enforcement activities. [Read the full NIOSH update](#) to learn more.
- NIOSH and CareerSafe recently renewed their partnership** focused on promoting and advancing occupational safety and health practices among young workers through the NIOSH Safe + Skilled + Ready Workforce Program. CareerSafe is an active partner in promoting NIOSH young worker research and outreach activities. For more information about the NIOSH Safe + Skilled + Ready Workforce Program and related partnering opportunities, contact [Devin Baker](mailto:Devin.Baker@nihs.gov).

Call for Abstracts and Workshop Ideas: 2023 Toxicology and Risk Assessment Conference:

The 2023 Toxicology and Risk Assessment Conference planning committee is accepting abstract submissions for 15-minute platform presentations and full- and half-day workshop suggestions. Submissions are due by 11:59 p.m. (ET), August 19, via email to trac@cdc.gov. Additional information can be found on the [TRAC website](#). The conference, cosponsored by NIOSH, is scheduled for April 24-27, 2023, in Dayton, Ohio.

Call for Proposals: Special Issue of Chronic Health Conditions in the Workplace

Abstracts are being accepted for a special issue in *Occupational Health Science* addressing issues related to chronic health conditions and implications of work design, work organization, and organizational practices. Abstracts should be about 750 words and are due September 1. For more information on the call for proposals, contact TWH@cdc.gov, or for questions about abstract content and suitability or to submit an abstract, contact Alysa McGonagle at amcgonag@nihs.gov.

Former NIOSH Deputy Director Dr. John Froines Dies at 83

Longtime occupational safety and health scientist, activist, and former NIOSH Deputy Director Dr. John Froines passed away on July 13. Dr. Froines served as NIOSH Deputy Director from 1979-1981. Much of Dr. Froines' research focused on increasing understanding of the health impacts of toxic chemicals on the health of workers and communities. After leaving NIOSH, he continued his work on the qualitative and quantitative characterization of risk factors in environmental and occupational health. Read more about Dr. Froines and his career in his [obituary](#).

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Monthly Features

New Communication Products & Reports

FACE Reports

- [Orchard Worker Driving Overloaded ATV Struck on Highway, Washington Fatality Narrative](#)
- [Orchard Worker Driving UTV Struck By Car, Washington Fatality Narrative](#)
- [Oregon FACE—2020 Annual Report](#)

Fire Fighter Fatality Investigation and Prevention Program Reports

- [42-Year-Career Firefighter-Paramedic Died at Home After Leaving Work Following Transient Chest Pain—Missouri](#)
- [30-Year-Old Lieutenant Dies in Sleep Following Department Training—Vermont](#)

Infographics

- [FACE IT: Worker Safety Matters When Working Near Power Lines](#)
- [Infographics for the National Campaign to Prevent Construction Falls](#)

Program Performance One-Pagers (PPOPs)

- [Center for Motor Vehicle Safety](#)
- [Center for Occupational Robotics Research](#)
- [Center for Work and Fatigue Research](#)
- [Exposure Assessment Program \(EXAP\)](#)
- [Nanotechnology Research Center \(NTRC\)](#)
- [Traumatic Injury Prevention Program](#)
- [Wholesale and Retail Trade Program](#)

Reports

- [Indicators of Workplace Violence, 2019](#)
- [Protecting Temporary Workers: Best Practices for Host Employers](#)

Skin Notation Profiles

- [beta-Chloroprene](#)
- [Chlorodiphenyl \(54% chlorine\)](#)
- [Diacetyl and 2,3-Pentanedione](#)
- [Dioxane](#)
- [2,4-Toluene Diisocyanate, 2,6-Toluene Diisocyanate, 2,4- & 2,6-Toluene Diisocyanate Mixture Heat](#)

NIOSH Science Blog

Sign up to have notifications about new NIOSH Science Blogs delivered directly to your inbox!

- [Fireworks](#)
- [What Measures Can Companies Use to Evaluate Safety Management Practices and Identify Opportunities for Improvement?](#)
- [ERCS Partner to Offer Webinar Series on Human Factors and Ergonomics and Industrial Hygiene](#)
- [Education and Training Concerning Masks and Respirators for Construction Workers](#)
- [Exposure Assessment of Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons in Refined Coal Tar Sealant Applications](#)
- [National Marble Day: A Look at the Manufacturing of Glass Marbles](#)
- [Demonstrating the Ability to Protect Healthcare Personnel From COVID-19 in High-risk Settings](#)
- [Dia Mundial contra el Cáncer 2020. Reflexiones acerca de una década de investigación de NIOSH sobre el cáncer. \(translation of 2020 Blog - World Cancer Day 2020. Reflections on a Decade of NIOSH Cancer Research\)](#)

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Federal Register Notice

Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (ABRWH), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

The [notice](#) was posted on July 1. A comment session will be held on August 17 and 18.

Draft National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Healthcare Personal Protective Technology (PPT) Targets for 2020 to 2030; Request for Comment

The [notice](#) was posted on July 14. Comments must be received by August 31.

Proposed Data Collection Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations: Field Testing of Spanish-language Toolbox Talks for Spanish-speaking Construction Workers.

The [notice](#) was posted on July 22. Comments must be received by September 20.

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NORA

NORA Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Sector Council Contributes to Wikipedia

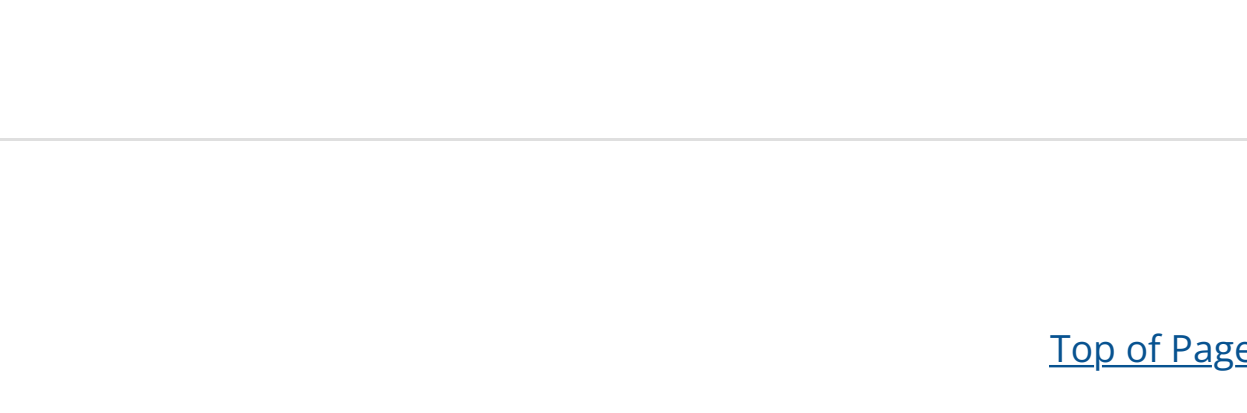
The NORA Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing Sector Council recently posted a Wikipedia article on [Mental Health in United States Agricultural Workers](#). This new article details the risk factors, diverse subpopulations, coping strategies, and history of mental health in the industry. It also highlights how agriculture ranks as one of the most stressful occupations and with high rates of suicide.

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News from Our Partners

On the 32nd Anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act

October 6-7 and is hybrid (in-person and online). Presentation topics will include workplace culture, peer support, mental health communication, and burnout. The event is hosted by the Johns Hopkins Psychosocial, Organizational, Environmental Total Worker Health® (TWH) Center in mental health (one of 10 Centers of Excellence for TWH) and the Johns Hopkins Education and Research Center (one of 18 centers) funded by NIOSH to provide interdisciplinary training for the next generation of occupational safety and health practitioners and researchers.



Conferences, Meetings, Webinars, & Events

This page provides a list of publicly available occupational safety and health-related conferences, meetings, webinars, and events sponsored by NIOSH as well as other government agencies, and nongovernment agencies, such as universities, professional societies, and organizations.

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