

The 10 Most Common Workplace Accidents - Stewart Law Offices

You face the possibility of getting into an accident in virtually any work environment in South Carolina or North Carolina. The conditions of your workplace and the type of work that you do create those risks. Of course, the chance of getting into an accident tends to be much greater in certain workplaces than in others.

The construction industry, for instance, accounts for roughly one out of every five work-related deaths in private industry in our country, according to the [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\)](#). This is because construction workers face heavy exposure to what OSHA calls the “Fatal Four” [accident risks](#) – falls, getting struck by an object, electrocution and getting caught in or between objects.

However, even a seemingly safe environment like an office presents a risk of injury. For example, you could be a secretary who types eight hours a day. The repetitive motion could lead to a debilitating condition such as [carpal tunnel syndrome](#), or constant sitting could cause chronic lower-back problems.

Here, we present the 10 most reported workplace accidents in our country, according to the [National Safety Council](#), [OSHA](#), and data compiled annually by [Liberty Mutual Insurance](#) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the National Academy of Social Insurance.

Remember: If you suffer injury in any type of on-the-job accident, you should seek help immediately from an experienced [workers' compensation lawyer](#). At [Stewart Law Offices](#). We will take immediate steps to protect your rights and pursue all [benefits and other compensation](#) you are due.

1. Motor Vehicle Accidents



People who drive as part of their jobs are exposed to negligent drivers, inclement weather and faulty automotive equipment. All of those factors can cause [car and truck accidents](#). Workers who spend their days around moving vehicles also face a high risk of getting hurt in a collision. For instance, a worker at a [construction site](#) could get hit by a tractor, or a worker in a factory or warehouse could collide with a forklift.

Businesses should stress safe driving policies, with an emphasis on defensive

driving and a strict, enforced ban on [distracted driving](#). However, in some cases, a motor vehicle accident results from the negligence of someone besides a co-worker or employer. If that occurs, you may be able to pursue a [third-party claim](#). This type of claim may lead to compensation that goes well beyond what workers' compensation benefits provide.

2. Slip and Falls

Many different factors in a workplace can cause a [slip and fall including wet floors](#) or icy surfaces scattered debris and cords uneven or unstable walking surfaces and poor lighting. A fall can lead to severe injuries, including broken bones, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and soft tissue damage such as a torn or strained ligament.

Many [slip and fall](#) are preventable. Employers should train and equip staff to promptly clean up spills, debris and tracked-in rain or slush. Facility managers should mark uneven decks, flooring and other hazards that cannot be promptly addressed. Also, companies should put non-slip mats in doorways and other areas where the surface could become slick.

3. Falls from Heights



[Falls are a leading cause](#) of worker deaths in the construction industry. Every day, construction workers face the risk of falling from roofs, ladders, scaffolding, platforms, stairways and other raised or elevated surfaces. These falls often are the products of poorly built structures and inadequate or improperly used safety equipment.

To prevent these accidents, OSHA requires fall protection for workers at who operate at certain heights or above certain types of dangerous equipment and machinery. Safety training and employee diligence can also reduce fall-related injuries.

4. Electrocution

Workers can suffer electrocution-related injuries from working around exposed cords or wires. Faulty electrical outlets can also cause harm. In some cases, workers suffer electrocution from working around power lines or hitting underground cables as they dig. Employers should make sure that all electrical hazards are identified and give their workers proper warnings.

5. Overexertion



Pulling, lifting, pushing, holding, carrying and throwing activities are the most common causes of job-related injuries. Overexertion injuries may occur in a single incident. They can also be cumulative, or the result of years of engaging in the same strenuous activity on a daily basis. A worker who slips or trips without falling can also injure muscles, tendons or ligaments.

Overexertion can lead to lasting physical harm, ranging from lower-back injuries to chronic joint pain caused by wear and tear. To avoid overexertion, employers should train workers on how to properly perform physical tasks like heavy lifting. They should also provide assistive equipment and give workers ample break time.

As with external overexertion hazards, workers should be trained, provided assistive and protective gear and allowed breaks. Hazards like slippery, cluttered or uneven surfaces should be promptly cleaned and/or labeled.

6. Struck by Objects

Being hit by an object that has fallen from above or thrown by a person or machinery can cause serious injury. **Falling, flying, rolling or swinging objects can cause blunt-force trauma such as fractures, internal organ injuries, eye injuries, cuts and bruises.** The most common injury from a fallen object is a head injury.

Struck-by injuries can be prevented by storing or stacking materials safely and by posting warning signs where falling debris is likely. Management should also ensure that employees use appropriate protective equipment such as hard hats and eye protection.

7. Struck Against



A worker who unintentionally runs into or gets pushed into a wall, door, cabinet, window, machinery or a vehicle may suffer head, knee, neck or foot injury. Sometimes, these accidents happen because workers simply fail to pay attention

to where they are going. For instance, over the past 15 years, the use of cell phones has increased eight-fold in the U.S., and instances of walking into walls and other motionless objects has increased correspondingly, according to the National Safety Council.

To reduce the risk of these accidents, companies should require workers to maintain a work environment that is free of clutter and where hazards and obstacles are clearly marked. Additionally, companies should have policies in place that prohibit workers from talking or texting on phones while engaged in work activity.

8. Entanglement

Gears, rollers and other parts of heavy machinery can entrap workers and cause a variety of tearing and crushing injuries. In the worst cases, a worker may suffer a loss of limb or die from his or her injuries. Typically, loose clothing, shoes, jewelry, fingers or unbound hair getting caught in machinery causes this type of accident.

Employer should train workers to recognize and address potential entanglement hazards. The should also provide their employees with protective equipment and put up appropriate signs and barriers around potentially dangerous machinery.

9. Repetitive Motion



Repetitive motion injuries are a type of cumulative trauma. They are caused by excessive repetition of small-range or micro tasks such as working on an assembly line or typing or using a mouse at a computer. Carpal tunnel syndrome is a form of nerve damage caused by repetitive motion. Employees should be trained in proper ergonomic work technics and provided ergonomically correct equipment, as well as break time, in order to prevent these injuries from happening.

10. Violence

Violence can erupt from disputes that arise on the job between co-workers. A worker may also bring a domestic violence issue to the workplace. Workers who deal with the public, including delivery personnel, may face assaults from customers or others as well as attacks by dogs. Employers should provide violence training to their workforce, create communication channels for reporting suspicious activity and encourage such communications.

Hurt on the Job in South Carolina or North