

Utilizing Oregon Workers' Compensation Claims to Understand Injuries among Seafood Processing and Production Workers

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PRESENTATION FORMAT: 15 minute oral presentation

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Occupational Safety and Health

ABSTRACT: Background: In the U.S., only five occupational health studies have addressed the seafood processing industry. They have shown high rates of musculoskeletal disorders and traumatic injuries. No study has previously been conducted in Oregon. This study utilizes Oregon workers' compensation data to describe injuries among Oregon seafood processing and production workers.

Methods: Oregon workers' compensation accepted disabling claims data were analyzed. Injury characteristics and circumstances were coded using the Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System.

Results: During 2007 to 2013, there were 101 accepted disabling claims among seafood processing and production workers. The most frequent injury characteristics and circumstances were: by nature - traumatic injuries to muscles, tendons, ligaments, and joints (n=44); by body part - upper extremities (n=49); by source = bodily motion or position (n=29); and by event = overexertion and bodily reaction (n=49). Disabling claims data fail to capture workers' race/ethnicity and the work processes during which incidents occur. They cover only the most severe injuries reported for compensation, therefore underrepresenting the true injury burden.

Conclusions: Analyzing workers' compensation disabling claims data, though limited, provides important information for understanding workplace hazards and developing injury prevention strategies. For Oregon seafood processors, reducing musculoskeletal injury risk is paramount.

OBJECTIVE(S): Discuss the utility of workers' compensation disabling claims data for informing occupational injury and illness prevention efforts.

Describe injury characteristics for workers' compensation disabling claims among Oregon seafood processing and production workers.

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