

Indicator 18: OSHA Enforcement Activities

Significance

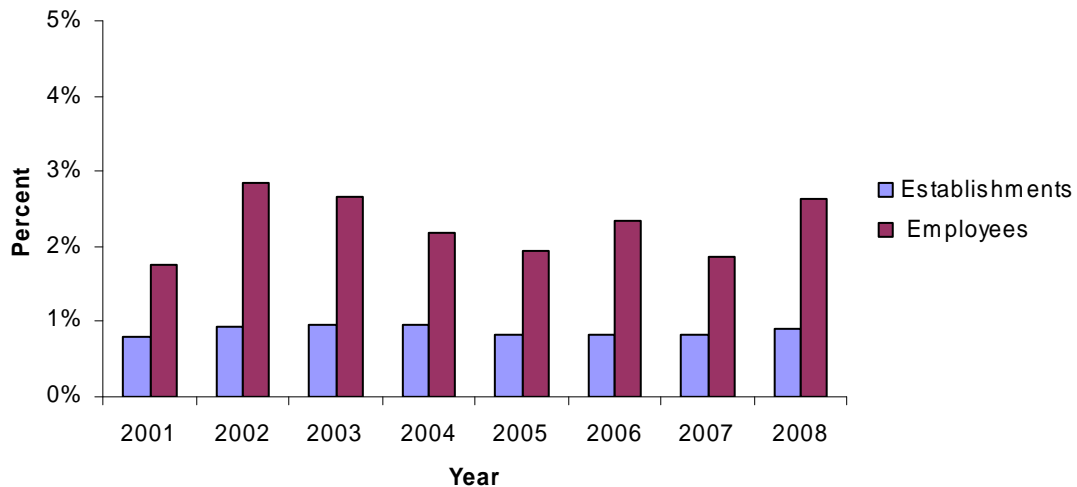
The United States Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), conducts investigations and inspections at worksites to ensure employee safety and health compliance. Investigations and inspections typically occur at worksites in the event of work-related fatal and non-fatal injuries, hospitalizations, employee complaints and outside referrals. Random inspections are also conducted at high-risk worksites. OSHA jurisdiction in Colorado includes private and federal employers and employees.

Methods

The Denver area OSHA office provides Colorado OSHA inspection data based on OSHA annual reports. Included are enforcement activities in OSHA covered establishments under OSHA jurisdiction in Colorado (excluding mines and farms). Denominator data were obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) on Covered Employers and Wages (ES-202/CEW).

Results

Figure 18.1 Percent of establishments under OSHA jurisdiction inspected and employees whose work areas were inspected by OSHA, CO, 2001-2008



Source: OSHA annual reports of total inspections conducted and the number of workers covered by these inspections (numerators); BLS on Covered Employers and Wages (denominators)

Table 18.1 Percent of Establishments Under OSHA Jurisdiction Inspected and Employees Whose Work Areas Were Inspected by OSHA, Colorado 2000-2008

Year	Number of Establishments Under OSHA Jurisdiction	Number and Percent of Establishments Inspected By OSHA, n (%)	Number of Covered Employees Eligible For Inspection By OSHA	Number and Percent of Employees Inspected By OSHA, n (%)
2001	150,319	1,200 (0.8%)	1,904,182	33,561 (1.8%)
2002	153,099	1,420 (0.9%)	1,846,285	52,301 (2.8%)
2003	156,264	1,486 (1.0%)	1,809,416	48,046 (2.7%)
2004	159,346	1,537 (1.0%)	1,831,325	39,811 (2.2%)
2005	165,706	1,345 (0.8%)	1,871,536	36,215 (1.9%)
2006	170,744	1,409 (0.8%)	1,915,522	44,693 (2.3%)
2007	174,663	1,426(0.8%)	1,956,618	36,328 (1.9%)
2008	174,531	1,572 (0.9%)	1,963,490	51,642 (2.6%)
Average	163,084	1,424 (0.9%)	1,887,297	42,825 (2.3%)

Source: OSHA annual reports of total inspections conducted and the number of workers covered by these inspections (numerators); BLS on Covered Employers and Wages (denominators)

- On average, between 2001-2008, over 160,000 Colorado establishments were eligible for an OSHA inspection and of these, less than 1% (1,424) were inspected by OSHA. (Table 18.1 and Figure 18.1)
- Between 2001-2008 in Colorado, facilities employing an average of 1.9 million workers were eligible for an OSHA inspection each year, and of these workers, 2.3% (42,825) were employed in an establishment inspected by OSHA. (Table 18.1 and Figure 18.1)

Data Sources

- OSHA annual reports of total inspections conducted and the number of workers covered by these inspections in Colorado (numerators)
- BLS Covered Employers and Wages data (ES-202/CEW) (denominators)

Limitations

- The percent of worksites inspected may be overestimated since multiple inspections may occur at the same worksite in the same year.
- Only enforcement activities are measured.
- Employers participating in an OSHA Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) or the Safety and Health Achievement and Recognition Program (SHARP) are exempted from routine inspections. Excluding workers from these programs will reduce the numerator, resulting in an underestimate of the protective function.
- In the BLS ES-202/CEW data, individuals holding more than one job are counted multiple times.

Recommendations

- Report details of enforcement activities.
- Increase the number of inspections for better enforcement to prevent future work-related injuries and illnesses.