

National Safety Council Congress

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The National Safety Council, the Nation's leading safety and health membership organization, held its annual Congress and Expo in early September, in Chicago, Illinois. A retrospective of old public service announcements--from Gracie Allen to "Buckle Up for Safety" to Wil E Coyote--was a good starting point to the session on workplace safety. Keynote speakers John Henshaw, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health, and Dave Lauriski, Assistant Secretary for Mine Safety and Health, stressed the goals of reducing workplace injuries, illnesses, and fatalities, and referenced the important role of BLS data in monitoring these events.

The availability and use of BLS data were the subject of two technical sessions known as "Science@Work." These sessions are designed to provide safety practitioners with "useful ideas and tools to improve [their] organization's safety and health performance, and impress those who are skeptical about investing in safety and health." BLS economist Jim Barnhardt provided an in-depth view of the safety and health statistics available on the BLS website. The audience got many practical lessons on how to navigate the website and where to find answers to their safety and health questions.

In a session called "Fatal Injuries on the Job," Kate Newman, Scott Richardson, Kathy Loh, and Janice Windau, all from BLS, examined trends in occupational fatalities in recent years. Detailed data were provided on deaths among Hispanic workers, deaths due to falls--which have been on the rise in recent years--and deaths due to violence in the workplace. Most of the data presented were from the [BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries](#).¹

The large exhibit hall at Chicago's McCormick Place was filled with more than 700 exhibitors, including a booth sponsored by BLS. The booth provided another opportunity to showcase BLS safety and health data; many attendees who had heard the technical sessions given by Jim Barnhardt and others later visited the information booth.

Notes

¹ *National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2002*, USDL 03-488 (U.S. Department of Labor), September 17, 2003. For more information, visit the BLS [Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries](#) home page, at <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfoi1.htm>.