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Kentucky Labor Cabinet announces deadliest jobs in state

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On April 28th, in recognition of Workers' Memorial Day, the Kentucky Labor Cabinet announced the deadliest jobs in Kentucky. The announcement said that the Labor Cabinet reviewed workplace deaths from 2011 to the present and found that construction workers have the deadliest job in the Commonwealth.

The Labor Cabinet also identified the causes of the deaths, including the top "fatal four."

From 2011 to present, 90 deaths from workplace hazards occurred in Kentucky. Not included in that total were seven other deaths from transportation crashes while workers were on the clock, six workplace homicides, and six workplace suicides.

There were also 73 heart disease related workplace deaths and four other deaths at work that resulted from natural causes.

Fatalities from crashes were included as workplace hazards for workers whose normal duties include driving, such as truck drivers, delivery drivers, and law enforcement officers. Homicides were also included for law enforcement officers, as their normal duties include dealing with criminal activity.

Other workplace deaths occurred in Kentucky, but were not included because the employers were not under the jurisdiction of the Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health (Kentucky OSH) Program, or were under federal agencies, such as the Mine Safety and Health Administration or the Federal Railroad Administration.

Here is the Labor Cabinet's list of deadliest jobs, 2011 to present:

1. Construction worker (21 deaths).
2. Landscaping/tree services worker (16 deaths).
3. (tie) Truck driver (7 deaths).
4. (tie) Maintenance/repair worker (7 deaths).
5. Mechanic (6 deaths).

Other jobs that included workplace fatalities in Kentucky from 2011 to present include:

- heavy equipment operator (4 deaths),
- chemical worker (4 deaths),
- law enforcement officer (3 deaths),
- delivery driver (3 deaths),
- medical flight member (3 deaths),
- contract worker (defined as a worker employed by one firm but working at the behest of another firm that exercises overall responsibility for the operations at the site) (2 deaths),
- farmworker (2 deaths),
- office worker (2 deaths), and
- one death each for farm equipment worker, home caregiver, paper mill worker, photographer, sales representative, lathe operator, utility worker, baking company worker, recycling worker, and assembly worker.

Leading causes of death on the job in Kentucky —

1. Struck by object
2. Fall
3. Caught-in/between
4. Electrocutions

The four leading causes of the 90 fatalities in Kentucky were (1) struck by object (42), (2) falls (15), (3) caught-in/between (10) and (4) electrocution (5).

These four causes were involved in 80 percent of the Kentucky OSH workplace death investigations. Three deaths resulted from hyperthermia, and there was one death each from carbon monoxide poisoning, suffocation, and homicide.

There were 12 work-related crash deaths. The Labor Cabinet attached a chart to its announcement, showing all this information.