

SIC/Industry

2001 Indemnity Claims

Public Administration

91 Executive/Legislative/General Administration	220
92 Justice and Safety	155

Executive/Legislative/General Administration

Analysis

Both this industry group and Justice and Safety are broken into State and Local Government categories. Major Group 91 includes offices of executives, legislative bodies and general government offices except finance. Executive offices consist of advisory commissions, city and town managers' offices, county supervisors' offices, mayors' offices and the State of New Mexico Governor's office. Legislative bodies include the New Mexico State Legislature, advisory and study commissions, boards of supervisors, county commissioners and city and town councils. General administration is made up of government civil rights commissions, civil service commissions, general accounting offices, general service departments, personnel agencies and purchasing and supplies agencies.

State government experienced a total of 26 claims including six involving bodily reaction; five each from falls on the same level and overexertion, lifting objects; four from falls from elevation and three from motor vehicle accidents. Parts of body included eight with multiple injuries; five shoulder injuries, four with unspecified upper extremity injuries and two back injuries. Local government had 194 claims which included 29 each from overexertion, lifting objects and falls on the same level; 25 from falls from elevation; 22 from bodily reaction; 14 each from being struck by objects, overexertion and motor vehicle accidents. There were 10 each from being caught in, under or between objects and overexertion, pulling or pushing objects. Nine claims involved being rubbed or abraded and six came from being struck against objects. Parts of body included 41 back injuries, 38 multiple injuries, 25 knee injuries and 11 hand injuries. There were ten each involving shoulders and legs, eight upper extremity injuries and seven each with elbow and finger injuries. There were six trunk injuries and five each with head, ankle and foot injuries.

In general, contributing factors to the accident/claims experience include the following:

- Inadequate funding to correct safety problems including providing adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) and properly maintaining vehicles, equipment and machinery.*
- Management/supervisor/employee assignment of responsibility and safety training is sometimes not provided.*
- Safety programs need to be in place, effective and consistent.*
- The workers' compensation annual safety inspection may or may not be conducted yearly. Some organizations need facility inspections on a frequent and recurring basis. The annual safety inspection must be conducted and documented.*
- In some cases, specifically required safety training is not provided. Examples include hazard communication, blood borne pathogens, accident investigation, etc.*
- Effective return to work programs may not be in place. We recommend these programs and encourage everyone's participation.*
- Claims need to be managed, analyzed and controlled. Problems and trends should be investigated and corrective measures should be implemented as necessary. We recommend that OSHA logs, E-1s and Notice of Accident forms be used as the basis for effective claims management.*
- Follow-up activities to ensure correction of hazards and adequate funding are necessary. Long-range planning is useful in this process.*

This checklist is intended to enhance knowledge and assist in preventing injuries within this industry. Please use the information to coordinate efforts and direct attention to your specific areas of concern. The Internet can be used in conjunction with the checklist by searching for a specific safety topic.

Fall Prevention

*Floor openings are covered or guarded
Stairs and walkways are clear and debris removed
Lighting is adequate
Floors are kept clean and dry
Spills are cleaned up immediately
Employee footwear is adequate for the job
All stairs have handrails on both sides
Tripping hazards are identified, highlighted
And controlled or eliminated
Housekeeping is monitored for effectiveness*

Fall Protection

*At elevations above six feet, employees are
Protected by guardrails, safety net systems
Or personal fall arrest systems
Employees use appropriate footwear for the
Walking/working surface
All ladders, locking stepladders and stools are
Checked for condition prior to use
Defective equipment is disposed of
Trained employees use the equipment properly
Special precautions are used during wet or icy
Conditions
Floor holes and skylights are covered or guarded
Skylight screens are constructed so that they can
Withstand a 200- pound load*

Scaffolding

*Sound footing is in use for all scaffolds as
Recommended by the competent person
Proper platform is in use and able to handle
Four times the intended load
Safe access is provided to all working levels
Scaffolds are equipped with guardrails,
Mid rails and toe boards*

*Hard hats are required where workers work or
Pass under in-use scaffolding
Platforms are clear of tools, materials and debris
All scaffold-specific rules are followed
Scaffolds are inspected daily to identify defects
And verify proper installation*

YES / NO / N/A

Ladders

*Are in good condition and can be properly
Extended and secured
Portable ladders extend at least 3 feet
Above roofs or platforms
A competent person trains workers
Damaged ladders are removed from the job site
Contact with electrical lines is avoided*

Back Injury Prevention

*Employees ask for help from others to lift heavy objects
Employees are made aware of the dangers of lifting
Through training, employees know how to lift
Management has minimized lifting tasks by providing
Lifting equipment and mechanical devices
Repetitive motion injuries are prevented by stretch
Breaks and exercises
Loading docks are visible and well maintained
New employees are given special attention and
Supervision to ensure that lifting is done properly
If used, back support belts are worn properly and
Are used only for lifting*

Struck by or Against Objects are types of indemnity
Claims that are the second leading cause of death
At work in New Mexico. The industry had 20 of these
Claims in 2001 from moving, stationary, falling and
Flying objects and striking against objects.

Bodily Reaction is a type of indemnity claim which
Refers to body motions that cause physical
Stress or strain. An example is a shoulder strain
Injury resulting from an overextended reach. The
Industry had 28 of these claims in 2001.

Being Caught In, Under or Between Objects are types
Of indemnity claims most often associated with
Machines and operating equipment. The industry (Local
Government) had 10 of these claims in 2001.

*Situational awareness and knowledge of our
Individual limitations are the key elements in
Preventing these injuries*

Personal Protective Equipment

YES / NO / N/A

*Protective equipment has been issued and is used
As needed by trained employees. Examples include
The following:*

Hard hats/bump caps

Protective glasses or goggles

Face shields

Respirators/self-contained breathing devices

Steel-toed work shoes or boots

Slip-resistant footwear

Personal fall arrest systems

Fall restraint systems

Protective clothing, gloves and aprons

Air monitors

Hearing protection

Hepatitis B immunizations for employees

Who may be exposed to blood or body

Fluids as a part of their normal duties

Traffic vests
First-aid kits
Fire extinguishers
Communications capabilities

YES / NO / N/A

Other equipment that may be required
To perform specific tasks

Emergency Preparation

The location of the nearest healthcare facility is
Known to all
First aid kits are adequate, accessible and are
Refilled as necessary
At least one worker per shift has been trained
In first aid and CPR
Heat stress symptoms are known to all
911 or emergency numbers are posted

Hazardous Materials

Chemicals are stored properly
Chemical containers are clearly labeled
Chemical spill control supplies are readily
Available
The list of all chemicals is available
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are
Accessible to employees who need them
Employees can understand MSDS
Pesticides are carefully chosen and used to ensure
The lowest possible toxicity and risk for
Unwanted exposure
Personal protective equipment is used
Fire extinguishers are available
Eye wash stations are accessible
Contaminated clothing is properly cleaned or
Disposed of promptly
Hazardous material signs are posted as required

Fire Safety

YES / NO N/A

All exits are unobstructed and lighted

Exit lights are lit

Fire extinguishers are provided and employees

Are trained in their use

Fire extinguisher inspections are up-to-date

Fire evacuation routes are posted

Emergency procedures are posted

Stairwells are completely free of storage

Emergency telephone numbers are posted

Flammable materials are stored

Separately and properly using approved

Containers or cabinets

Fire drills are conducted and documented.

General Requirements for all Machines

Mechanical hazards exist wherever a worker can strike against or be struck by moving parts of a machine or the material being processed; wherever a worker could be caught between in-running nip points or pinch points of the machine and the work materials.

Any moving part of a machine must be safeguarded.

Machines must be securely anchored to prevent them from moving during operation. Power and operating controls must be designed and located for convenience: to make it unnecessary for the operator to reach over dangerous moving parts of a machine and to allow the operator to cut off the power to the equipment quickly in an emergency.

A machine that is tripped with a foot pedal must have the pedal shielded to prevent it from being tripped accidentally.

During repairs or adjustments, the power source must be disconnected and locked out so that no one can start the equipment while the work is being done. Only authorized personnel should do repairs.

The power switch for electric motors must be designed to keep the machine from automatically restarting after an electrical failure. It must be necessary to reset the switch by hand.

All electrical equipment must be grounded.

The best way to protect workers from any mechanical motion is to make it impossible to contact a moving part.

Facility Machine Inspection

YES / NO / N/A

*Each of the items above were checked for
Every machine
Discrepancies were noted and corrective
Measures are in work
No employee is able to contact a moving
Part of any machine*

*For more detailed and important information,
See the Occupational Safety and Health
Standards for General Industry
(29 CFR PART 1910), Section 1910.212.*

Compressed Gases

*Storage areas are well ventilated, fireproof and dry
Cylinders are clearly labeled
Cylinders (both full and empty) are secured and
Separated by type
The valve protection cap is not removed until
The cylinder is secure and ready for use
Empty cylinders are never stored with or near
Full ones
Flammable and nonflammable gases are stored
Separately and properly
Smoking is prohibited
Employees are trained and knowledgeable*

Electrical

YES / NO / N/A

*All electrical equipment is properly grounded
All power tools are approved and double insulated
Ground fault circuit interrupters are in use
Extension cords are for temporary use only, are in
 Good condition and are inspected before each shift
Overhead power lines are marked and avoided
Lockout/tag out procedures are used by employees
 And service/repair personnel*

Shop Areas

*Tools are in good condition
All electrical equipment is grounded
All machine guards are in place
Fire extinguishers are accessible
Flammables are properly contained
First aid kits and personal protective equipment (PPE)
 Are accessible
Spray painting booth has explosion-
 Proof fixtures and is well ventilated
Smoking is prohibited*

Power and Hand Tools

*Only the proper tools are used for the job
Guards and safety devices are operable and in place
Pinch and shear points are guarded
Employees are trained and knowledgeable
All power tools are grounded
No tool is stored in an overhead location
All tools are inspected frequently and are well
 Maintained
Electrical cords are in good condition
Employees use appropriate PPE for the job*

Material Storage and Handling

YES / NO / N/A

Materials are properly stacked, blocked and Secured

Fire extinguishers are adequate and accessible

Flammable liquids are stored in approved containers

Workers handle loads properly and seek help As needed

Security, including fencing and lighting, is adequate

Welding and Cutting

Operators are trained and well qualified

Personal protective equipment is in use

Cylinders are secured

Fire extinguishers are accessible

All fittings are free of oil and grease

Specified gauge settings are maintained

All hoses and cords are well maintained

Smoking is prohibited

Offices

Ergonomic principles are understood

Offices accommodate workers

Safe practices and procedures are in place

Workers are trained to identify hazards

Hazard reporting, elimination and controls Are understood

Notice of Accident procedures are in place And understood by all

Emergency procedures are adequate and Known by all

The numbers and locations of fire extinguishers Are adequate

Fire drills are conducted and documented

The location of the nearest Emergency Room Or Health Care Provider is known by all

The means of emergency transportation are known

Motor Vehicle Accident Prevention

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death at work in New Mexico. Motor vehicle accidents tend to result in more serious injuries than other types of accidents – almost 30 percent of all compensable fatalities are of this type.

Causes

*Failure to wear seat belts
Lack of attention while driving
Excessive speed
Violations of state law and company policy
Driving under the influence
Failure to drive with regard to road conditions*

Ideas for Employers

*Develop a company policy that covers driving while at work.
Consider including the following:
The use of seat belts in company vehicles is mandatory
Only specifically authorized employees with valid and company
Verified licenses may operate company vehicles or
Personally owned vehicles on company business
Prohibit alcohol and drug use in company vehicles
Offer Defensive Driving courses to employees
Develop a vehicle safety inspection and maintenance program
Establish a safety awards program to recognize good drivers*

Ideas for Employees

*Wear seat belts and ensure your passengers do the same
Never drink and drive
Obey all traffic laws
Inspect your vehicle before driving and report defects to a
Supervisor
Do not drive the vehicle if safety problems are not corrected
Be alert to changing road conditions and drive defensively*

Employee Security at Work

Workplace violence is violence or the threat of violence against workers. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide, one of the leading causes of job-related deaths.

No one is immune from the danger presented by violence. It can strike anyone at anytime. Workers in Public Administration are exposed to increased risk due to the nature of the jobs involved, the occupational settings and visibility. Awareness is the key to prevention.

Ideas for Employers

Establish a workplace violence prevention program or include it in the existing safety program

Make it clear that violence will not be tolerated and that any incidents will be investigated and promptly remedied

Provide safety education for employees so that they know what to do if they witness or are subjected to violence, and how to protect themselves

Wherever possible, secure the workplace. Make it a hard target. Consider electronic and video surveillance, extra lighting, alarm systems and minimize access through use of photo ID cards and electronic keys

Post the workers' compensation Employee Security at Work Poster

Ideas for Employees

Be aware of your environment at all times. Never enter any location where you feel unsafe. Ask to be escorted in potentially dangerous situations or at night

Learn as much as you can to recognize, avoid or diffuse violent conditions

Alert supervisors to hazards or concerns regarding your safety

Avoid traveling alone into unfamiliar locations or situations whenever possible

Always trust yourself – if it doesn't feel safe, it probably isn't

Young Workers/New Employees

In 2001, workers in their first year of employment filed a large share of the indemnity claims with 46.9 percent of the total in New Mexico. Each year this statistic hovers around 50 percent. What follows is information specifically designed to address the needs of these workers.

Five Steps For A Safer Workplace

Start your workers out right

- *Welcome them*
- *Orient them*
- *Introduce them*
- *Train them*
- *Check them out on tools and equipment*
- *Observe and assist them*

Account for all accidents

- *Keep records of NOAs, E-1s, E-6s and OSHA logs*
- *Cost out the loss to the organization*
- *Assist supervisors with accountability*
- *Evaluate safety performance*

Managers plan safety

- *Plan safety into each job*
- *Use job planning/hazard analysis tools*
- *Make sure the workers know what to do*

Hold safety meetings

- *Choose specific topics (fall prevention)*
- *Use examples (Jane hurt her back when...)*
- *Keep it brief*

Reinforce safety performance/recognize good work

Administration

YES / NO /N/A

The Workers' Compensation Act Poster

*Is available, has been filled in with the name
Of the insurance company claims/representative
As required and the Notice of Accident Forms
Accompany the poster*

*Employees have been notified in writing of the
Designated Health Care Provider or
Medical Facility*

*The organization's Annual Safety Inspection
Has been done and is documented*

OSHA posters and logs are available

Department of Labor information is available

Organization Information

Inspector Information and Date

Internet Resources

*New Mexico Occupational Health and Safety Bureau
<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/ohsb>*

*National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/>*

*New Mexico State University-Master's of Public Administration
<http://www.nmsu.edu/~mpa/>*

*This site contains Research Links that can enable the user to visit
almost any area of interest in the field of Public Administration*

*American Society of Safety Engineers, NM Chapter
<http://www.asse.org/>*

