NIOSH Surveillance Program

May 2016

What are our priorities?

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Surveillance Program works with partners in industry, labor, trade associations, professional organizations, government agencies, and academia. The program focuses on these areas:

- Expanding awareness, knowledge and use of occupational safety and health surveillance data
- Building capacity for state-based occupational safety and health surveillance
- Integrating occupational safety and health variables into general health surveillance systems

What do we do?

- Provide new web-based tools and resources to make occupational safety and health (OSH) surveillance data easier to access and use.
- Use traditional and social media channels to increase awareness and promote use of OSH surveillance data tools and resources.
- Share OSH documents produced by States through the Occupational Health Clearinghouse.
- Increase the number of States that include industry and occupation questions in the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and support States in using the data.
- Increase States' capacity to conduct case-based surveillance of priority occupational traumatic injuries and illnesses (e.g., pesticide poisoning, lead poisoning, silicosis, work-related asthma).
- Continuously improve the National Industry and Occupational Computerized Coding System (NIOCCS) to increase the accuracy of coding industry and occupation in various types of health records.
- Sponsor OSH questions in national population-based surveys.
- Collaborate with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention programs (e.g., infectious disease, chronic disease) to include standard OSH variables in their surveillance systems.
- Promote inclusion of OSH variables into standards for electronic health records.
- Support use of novel sources of surveillance data such as audiometric service providers, cancer registries and poison control centers

What have we accomplished?

- Released the Work-Related Injury Statistics Query System (Work-RISQS), making data from the occupational supplement to the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS-Work) publicly available.
- Published result tables from the National Agricultural Workers Survey to the NIOSH Agricultural Safety webpage.
- Three of the six conditions included in the first ever MMWR surveillance summary Notifiable Noninfectious Conditions were occupational exposures (lead poisoning, pesticide poisoning, and silicosis).
- 25 States included optional industry and occupation module in BRFSS, which will allow researchers and others to uncover connections between occupations and risk factors
- Sponsored supplemental OSH questions in the 2015 National Health Interview Survey, which will provide needed information on work-related conditions and exposures.
- Demonstrated feasibility of collecting industry and occupation information into electronic health records through a pilot project with a healthcare organization in California.
- Awarded funding through a competitive process to two states to build capacity in using worker's compensation data for OSH surveillance.
- Revised the NIOSH surveillance definition of an elevated blood lead level to 5 mcg/dL.
- Published data that was used to justify the Occupational Safety and Health Administration silica standard and the Environmental Protection Agency worker protection standard.

What's next?

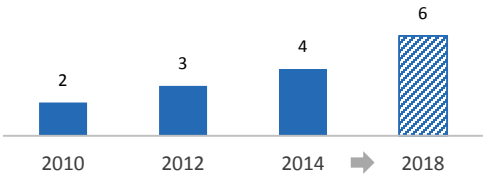
- Beta test a new web-based data visualization tool that will allow users to produce custom charts using various OSH surveillance datasets.
- Add data from the 2015 National Health Interview Survey Occupational Health Supplement to the NIOSH website and share results through social media.
- Twenty five states, including two newly funded in 2016 will produce Occupational Health Indicators.

DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2016-148

At-A-Glance

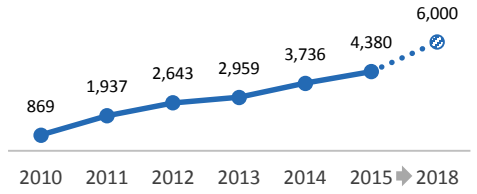
The Surveillance Program improves worker safety and health by identifying and tracking workplace injuries, illnesses, hazards, deaths and exposures in the United States. This snapshot shows recent accomplishments and upcoming work.

Number of NIOSH surveillance systems with publicly queriable data



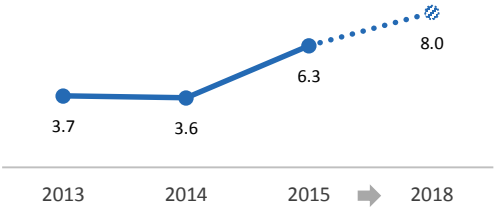
Source: NIOSH Program Records

Cumulative number of documents in the Occupational Health Clearinghouse



Source: NIOSH Program Records

Number of records submitted to NIOSH Industry and Occupational Computerized Coding System (NIOCCS), in millions



Source: NIOSH Program Records