

Workplace safety fixes should address older workers' injury risks

On behalf of Johnston, Moore & Thompson

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Sure, age is just a number. But when it comes to the realities regarding safety in the workplace, it looks like age is more than a number. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that workers ages 55 and up are at a higher risk of getting hurt in certain [workplace accidents](#).

That risk has apparently increased among the "older" age group over the past several years. Sources suggest that it's the growing number of workers ages 55 and up rejoining and staying in the workforce longer that has affected in increase in the rate of specific types of work injuries among the older working population.

Specifically, the older workers suffer injuries due to accidents involving slipping or falling while at work. Otherwise, sources report, the workers actually don't get injured more than their younger counterparts. It's just that they tend to be injured in falls more often than the younger workers.

Those accidents can lead to fractures and other injuries that can keep a worker from his or her job for some time. Such work accident victims should be able to get financial support and medical bill payments through their employers via workers' compensation claims. But that financial security is not necessarily a given. Vigilant legal action is sometimes necessary in order for injured workers to be compensated as deserved.

Beyond the financial aspect of this matter is the basic importance of workplace safety. A representative of the CDC's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health emphasizes how employers should do more to create safer work environments for their dedicated workers. For example, creating slip-resistant surfaces and addressing areas where tripping hazards exist will prevent injuries among all employees, young and old.

Workers should be able to feel like their safety is a top priority to their employers. So much of workers' time, thought and physical energy goes into their work every day. In return, they deserve to work in safe conditions.

Source

Bloomberg Businessweek: "[Injuries Among Older Worker on the Rise: CDC](#)," Steven Reinberg, 28 Apr. 2011