

Backgrounder

Wine Industry

How does the wine industry compare to other sectors?

The average injury rate (number of workers injured for every 100 person-years worked) for alcoholic beverage manufacturing from 1998 to 2002 is 11.9, approximately three times the provincial average rate of 3.8 for the same period.

The wine industry comprises approximately 35% of alcoholic beverage manufacturing but accounts for only about 20% of the claims.

The average injury rate for wineries during the period 1998 to 2002 is approximately 7, or not quite twice the provincial five year average rate of 3.8. The wine sector injury rate has been approximately constant over the last three years, and remains significantly higher than most industry sectors in the province.

In the year 2002, seven wine industry workers were injured for every 100 person-years worked, compared to the provincial average of 3.2.

What are the general claims and fatality statistics for the wine industry?

There were 268 accepted claims from 1998-2002, or an average of 54 per year. During the five year period there was one accepted fatality.

What types of workers are being injured in the wine industry?

Labourers in beverage processing are most frequently injured, representing 39%, followed by Machine Operators - processing (15%), process control and machine operators (8%) and Cellarmen (7%)

What kinds of accidents are the most common?

The three most common types of accidents among wine industry workers are MSI's (33%), being struck by an object (14%), and bodily reaction (9%).

What are the most common types of injuries?

Among wine industry workers, the most frequent injuries are sprains, strains and tears (46%), followed by cuts / lacerations (13%) and bruises / contusions (10%).

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What is the cost of wine industry claims?

Wine industry claims costs totaled \$217,000 in 2001, the latest year for which cost information is available. The average cost of a claim in 2001 was \$4,100.

Is business size a factor in wine industry injuries?

A majority of businesses are small in the wine industry (82%). Small businesses are defined as those with fewer than 20 workers. In the year 2001, small businesses employed seventeen percent of the workers in the wine industry and these workers accounted for twelve percent of claims, twenty percent of claims costs and eighteen percent of days lost. This indicates that the frequency and costs of injury in small business are approximately in line with the remainder of the wine industry.

How is the WCB addressing these issues?

WCB has entered into an agreement with the British Columbia Wine Institute to provide education to winery owners and workers in confined space identification. This program is being presented in the Okanagan and Fraser Valley areas, and will be provided on Vancouver Island in August 2003. Additionally, the WCB and the BCWI have signed a Memorandum of Understanding, creating a strategic partnership to reduce the incidence of workplace injury and occupational disease. Through this partnership, WCB and BCWI will provide educational programs addressing occupational health and safety issues in the British Columbia wine industry.

The development of programs such as Best Practices is particularly beneficial for small businesses, where the cost of developing such programs by individual employers may be prohibitive.

WCB is developing a new Safeguarding Machinery Standard Practice Manual, which will be published in 2003. When published it will be available on the manufacturing website, replacing the currently available OSHA safeguarding manual published in 1992.

What resources are available?

The Prevention Division maintains the Manufacturing website on the WCB's Health and Safety Centre (part of www.worksafebc.com). The site offers a broad range of resources, including hazard alerts, the OH&S Regulation and guidelines, statistics, information on upcoming safety courses and events, and ongoing WCB initiatives. The site also provides a variety of useful pamphlets, booklets, and other materials, designed to help prevent the most common injuries and illnesses in the wine industry.