



## Establishment Characteristics in Injury Underreporting

### Overview

The annual Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) is used to generate state and national estimates of the incidence of non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses. Past research suggests that employers underreport injuries to the SOII. Little is known about how underreporting differs by establishment characteristics.

The purpose of this study was to determine how well the SOII captures eligible workers' compensation claim injuries, and which types of establishments were most likely to fail to report workers' compensation claim injuries to the BLS. Nine years of Washington State workers' compensation data were linked to SOII data, using unemployment insurance data to improve linking accuracy.

Unreported workers' compensation claims to the BLS Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses: Establishment factors

*American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 2016*

Sara E. Wuellner, Darrin A. Adams, and David K. Bonauto

### Key Findings

- An estimated 70% of SOII-eligible workers' compensation claims were reported in the SOII.
- Claims among State and Local Government employees were most likely to be reported in the SOII.
- In general, claim reporting increased with establishment size – claims among larger establishments were more likely to be reported than claims among smaller establishments.
- When compared to large manufacturing firms, **unreported** claims were most common in:
  - Large Construction establishments
  - Small Educational Services establishments

### Impact

Injury underreporting to the BLS SOII by employers varies by establishment characteristics, making it difficult to identify and prioritize meaningful prevention efforts.

### Contact the author:

Sara.Wuellner@Lni.wa.gov

### Research for Safe Work

The SHARP Program at the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries partners with business and labor to develop sensible, effective solutions to identify and eliminate industry-wide hazards. Learn more at [www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/)

### Find the free article here:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ajim.22563/full>

This research was supported in part by a grant from the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.