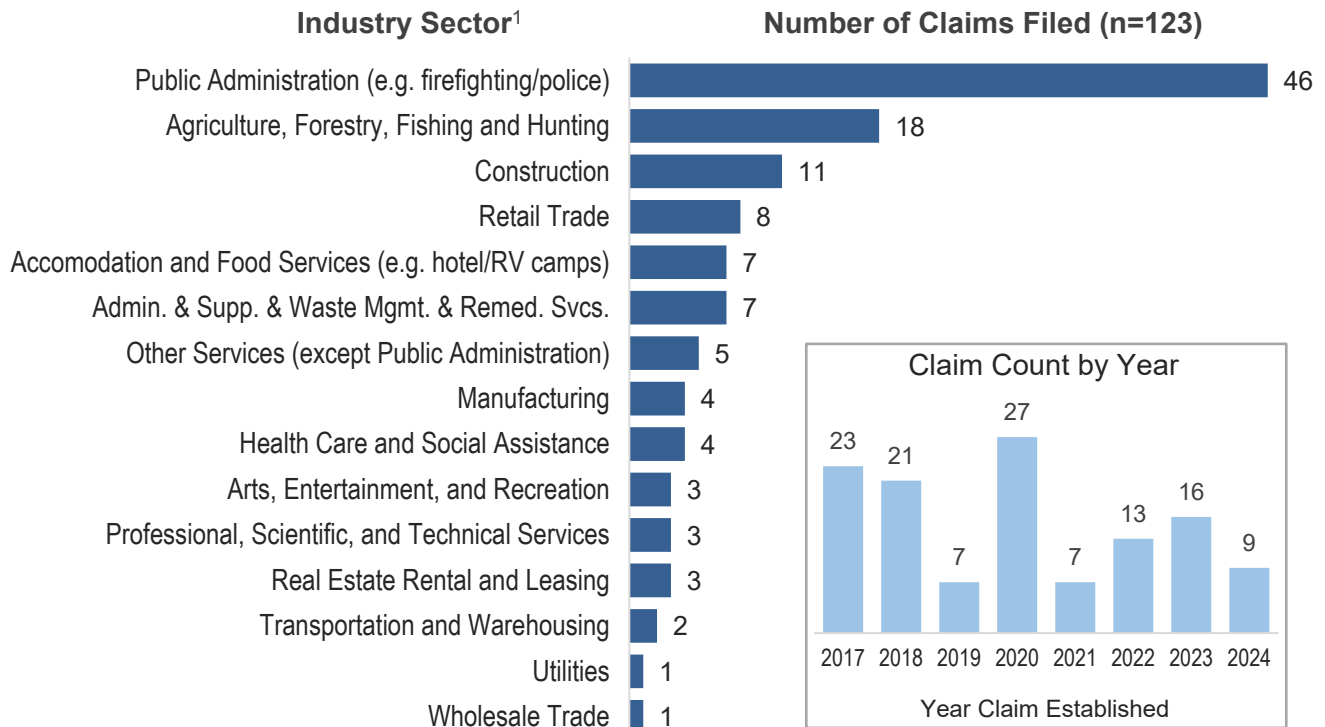


Toxic Inhalation of Smoke from Wildland Fires

Washington State Workers' Compensation Data, 2017–2024



SHARP's Toxic Inhalation Surveillance System identified 123 workers with inhalation exposure to wildland smoke from 2017–2024.² Cases were identified by an adverse respiratory event, however effects like cardio-pulmonary or heat-related illness may also be present.

- 27% of workers were engaged in wildland firefighting and support while 13% were farmworkers or in agricultural support.
- Workers from a range of industries are at risk, such as outdoor workers in construction and accommodation. Manufacturing and retail workers often report poor indoor air quality during wildfires. Exposure can occur during deliveries, errands and service calls.
- 27 workers were deemed to have work-related asthma, predominantly for exacerbations of pre-existing asthma.
- Nine claims were compensable including those with time loss or kept-on-salary.
- 68 claims (55%) were rejected. These workers often received emergency treatment for smoke inhalation and once stable, discharged home with no resulting illness or condition.

1. Industry Sectors are grouped using the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

2. [SHARP's Toxic Inhalation Surveillance Program](#), technical report # [64-30-2021](#) and appendix report # [64-32-2021](#) describe a range of inhalation exposures by industry, occupation and potential health effect.