



Mining Facts - 2001

1. In 2001, 14,623 **mining operations** reported employment statistics to the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). This was an increase of 210 mining operations compared to 2000. Almost half (49%) were sand and gravel mines, followed by stone (29%), coal (15%), nonmetal mines (5%), and metal mines (2%).
2. Mine operators reported 233,112 **employees** (or 238,921 full-time equivalent [FTE] workers¹) to MSHA.
 - A total of 19.0% of mine operator employees worked underground, and 81.0% worked in surface mines.
 - Among underground mine operator employees, the majority (80.4%) worked in coal mines.
 - The largest percentage of surface mine employees worked in stone mines (35.9%).
3. Of the 77,416 **contractor employees** (or 41,913 FTE contractor workers) reported to MSHA in 2001, 41.4% were coal contractor employees and 58.6% were metal/nonmetal contractor employees.
4. In 2001, there were 72 **fatalities**, compared to 84 in 2000.
 - The mine fatality rate was 25.6 per 100,000 FTE workers, compared to a fatality rate of 4.9 per 100,000 employees for all private industry.
 - Half the fatalities in 2001 (36) occurred among coal mine operator employees.
 - Forty (55.6%) fatalities occurred underground.
 - An underground mine explosion in a coal mine in Alabama claimed the lives of 13 miners in 2001.
 - The fatality rate among underground employees was 5.7 times greater than the rate for surface employees (79.8 per 100,000 FTE workers vs. 13.9 per 100,000 FTE workers).
 - Metal operator employees had the highest fatality rate (157.3 per 100,000 FTE workers) among underground employees. Among surface employees, the highest fatality rate occurred in metal/nonmetal contractor employees (40.3 per 100,000 FTE workers).
5. There were 9,949 **nonfatal lost-time injuries** reported to MSHA in 2001. These occurred at a rate of 3.5 injuries per 100 FTE workers and resulted in a total of 508,888 days lost from work.²
 - The highest percentage of nonfatal lost-time injuries was due to handling materials (35.8%), slips or fall of person (22.9%), and powered haulage (10.2%).
 - The underground injury rate was 2.6 times greater than the surface injury rate (7.1 vs. 2.8 per 100 FTE workers). Coal contractor employees had the highest nonfatal lost-time injury rate (12.3 per 100 FTE workers) among underground employees. The highest rate among surface employees was in stone operator employees (3.7 per 100 FTE workers).
 - The back continued to be the most frequently reported part of the body injured. It accounted for 2,158 injuries, 117,739 days lost from work, and 23.1% of all days lost.
6. In 2001, 798 **occupational illnesses** were reported to MSHA.³
 - Musculoskeletal disorders associated with repeated trauma accounted for 45.7% (or 365) of reported occupational illnesses.
 - There were 151 cases of hearing loss reported to MSHA (or 18.9% of all occupational illnesses reported).
 - Mining operations reported 86 cases of coal workers' pneumoconiosis ("black lung" disease) and 15 cases of silicosis to MSHA.

¹ FTEs are computed using reported employee hours (2,000 hours = 1 FTE); excludes office workers.

² Includes actual days away from work and/or days of restricted work activity; for permanently disabling injuries only, statutory days charged by MSHA were used if they exceeded the total lost workdays.

³ Because of the complexity of attributing disease causation to the workplace, it is well-accepted that occupational illnesses are underreported.



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