

1—Occupational Safety

for they include a very large number of non-manufacturing work deaths. Farm work, trades, services, and government accounted for more than half the accidental work deaths in recent years. The remaining 6900 deaths occurred in manufacturing, public utilities, transportation, construction, and the extractive industries (mining, quarrying, and gas and oil wells).

Overall frequency and severity rates for all industries since 1926 are not available, but figures on the experience of concerns reporting to the National Safety Council provide a dramatic summary of the progress of organized safety work in the nation, a 66 percent cut in the frequency of disabling injuries.

Though these figures represent only companies involved in the work of the organized safety movement, they cannot be dismissed as representing a handful of firms with an exceptionally high level of safety enthusiasm. The latest figures are based on reports from over 13,000 units. These units were principally manufacturing concerns, which accounted for more than one-fourth of the total number of manufacturing man-hours worked in America.

It would be fair, perhaps, to call these figures representative of large-plant experience in this country, since the Council receives the majority of its reports from large concerns and only a minority from small ones.

Safety professionals cannot afford to underestimate the significance of the statistical data on their past performance. It is abundantly clear that the bitter problem confronting the safety pioneers of 1913 has been attacked with measurable success.

The dollar values

It has been estimated that the annual cost of occupational accidents in the United States exceeds \$11.5 billion. If the 1912 accident rates had been left unchanged and if there had been no organized safety movement, this annual cost would have easily been two or three times as great.

Against such dollar savings, the relatively small expenditures for safety throughout America provide a striking contrast. Each dollar spent for safety by American industry is probably producing a clear profit of several hundred percent.

Industry and nonwork accidents

Directly and indirectly, industry is bearing a substantial part of the burden of the cost of nonwork accidents and their prevention. The National Safety Council is the creation of industry and largely supported by it. Statewide and local safety organizations play a major role in the fight against such accidents, and they, too, are largely industrial in origin and support. Thousands of safety professionals and their employers volunteer time and funds which are the mainstay of the National Safety Council's work.

Industry supports a large part of the job of informing the general public on these problems through the press, radio, and television.

The effectiveness of the nonwork accident-prevention campaign is shown by the fact that, from the time records were first kept in 1928, both home and public accident death rates (excluding motor vehicle accidents) have declined.

If industry has been a large contributor to this successful work, it has also been a heavy beneficiary of its fruits. Disruption of labor force, worry and hardship among employees, loss of purchasing power by consumers, and heavy tax burdens for the support of hospitals and relief agencies are all results of nonwork accidents which affect industry's pocketbook.

The safety movement's resources

Statistics measure what has been accomplished and also indicate the development of tools, methods, and knowledge which are the safety professional's capital and his resources for meeting future accident problems.

Know-how. A body of knowledge cannot be entirely translated into statistics, but it may be of use to note the outward signs of increased knowledge about industrial safety.

This Accident Prevention Manual is not a radical venture into new fields of knowledge. It is the cumulation of facts and opinions which have become a part of the safety movement's general heritage. Its purpose is to bring key points of specific, as well as general, value to safety workers.

Here are collected facts that took years to discover—years of searching and researching, of trial and error, of failure and success.

Today, an individual, whether an experi-