

The Union Safety Effect

Ontario construction unions and their contractor partners make workers safer, and create workplaces that reduce critical injuries and lost work days. This is according to the first ever scientific Canadian study to investigate the union safety effect in Ontario's industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) construction industry.

Fact

4,752

Ontario construction workers had to miss work in 2013 because of a job-related injury.

*Association of Workers Compensation Boards of Canada



Between 2006-2012, ICI Ontario construction unions:

Reported 23 per cent fewer injuries requiring time off work compared to non-union firms

23%

Experienced 17 per cent lower rate of musculoskeletal injuries

17%

Reported 29 per cent lower rate of critical injuries that put workers' lives in jeopardy

29%



This is based on **7 Years** of WSIB claims data



from **45,000** construction firms



employing **1.5 million** full-time workers.

Fact

An average of 20 workers are killed each year in Ontario's construction industry.

*Ministry of Labour report to Provincial Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee

What's causing the union safety effect?

\$40 Million

invested annually in specialized apprenticeship, upgrade and safety training for members

\$260 Million

investment in over 95 union-employer training centres and facilities

- Programs and practices that more effectively identify and reduce construction work hazards
- A safety net that allows union workers to report accidents without fear of repercussions
- Ongoing skills training programs that provide a foundation for safer skilled work throughout one's career
- More effective role in influencing government regulations designed to improve workplace health and safety

Investments in early apprenticeship training last a lifetime

Apprentices in unionized environments:



Are more likely to attend the technical in-school portion of apprenticeship training



Are more likely to complete their training



Begin their apprenticeships with higher than average levels of education



Are more satisfied with their employers and working environment

Fact

In 2013, \$528,802,470

in workers' compensation claims from the construction sector were paid to Ontarians for current and prior year injuries.

*Association of Workers Compensation Boards of Canada

Well-established reporting practices give unions a safety advantage



Construction unions reported 35 per cent more lost time claims than non-union firms



Unions protect workers from being intimidated into not reporting legitimate workplace injuries

“Unionized workers are encouraged to report injuries, including injuries that don't require time away from the job. At the same time, these reporting practices enable construction unions to better identify and proactively manage workplace hazards that lead to injury.”

— Dr. Ben Amick, Senior Scientist, Institute for Work & Health.