

Hazards of Temporary Work in Manufacturing and Warehouse Settings

OHIP 2015
Chicago Workers' Collaborative
&
Warehouse Workers for Justice

Tessa Bonney, MPH Health Policy and Administration Candidate at UIC
Samara Rivers, MS Biological Sciences Candidate at GSU

Background

- There are 900+ registered staffing agencies in Illinois.
- Employment in temporary help services is on the rise¹
- Illinois Day and Temporary Labor Services Act is designed to provide some protections to workers



1: Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015)

Background

- This year's project built on last year's OHIP project
- This year we partnered with two workers' centers in the Chicagoland area:
 - The Chicago Workers' Collaborative (CWC)
 - Warehouse Workers for Justice (WWJ)



Objectives

- Expand previous year's project to include warehouse workers
- Train CWC and WWJ members to recognize and respond to health and safety hazards in their workplaces.
- Interview workers in order to identify hazards encountered at work.

Objectives

- Help develop leadership skills of promoters within CWC and WWJ
- Determine which staffing agencies tend to send workers to hazardous workplaces.
- Help worker centers address dangers in the workplace by organizing survey information into OSHA complaints.

Methods

1. Modified temporary worker safety and health survey used by last year's interns
2. Trained Promoters to give the survey
3. Interviewed workers and audio recorded surveys
4. Organized the results in a database
5. Researched OSHA inspection history for workplaces cited by workers
6. Met with OSHA liaison



Methods

Results

Based on the results of the surveys:

- A total of 98 workers were surveyed
 - 33 Staffing Agencies were identified
 - 49 Warehouse/ Manufacturing worksites were identified
- The most effective means of reaching workers was through door knocking
- Several sites were reported to have hazards that fall under OSHA Emphasis Programs
 - Unguarded machine parts
 - Lockout/tagout issues
 - Lack of forklift training for temporary workers

Results

Hazard	Total # of Times Cited
Heavy lifting	62
Repetitive Motion	50
Cluttered aisle/ Slip Hazard	50
Risk of Falling objects	42
Risk of Frostbite	22
Forklifts	18
Electricity	15
Handling Chemicals	14
Risk of Falling from High places	11

Challenges

- With all of the issues in temporary employment, it was difficult to narrow in on the health and safety issues.
- Scheduling and giving the survey.
- Frequently cited concerns are not the easiest to address.

Successes

- Increased the organizational capacity
- Identified serious hazards in workplaces
- Set up meetings with workers and area OSHA directors to begin to address these issues
- Introduced workers to CWC and WWJ

Recommendations to Worker Centers

- Continue to educate promoters on how to be effective leaders
- Conduct health and safety rights trainings for new members
- Involve current promoters in future health and safety activities

CWC Promoter Reflection

"I didn't realize that these unsafe conditions and hazards that we are subject to work in are things that we can report... I didn't know that. I now see that we do have rights, and that we do have advocates that are out there fighting for our rights... for safety in the workplace. I didn't know that."

- Greg (CWC Promoter)



Photo: Greg and Tessa

WWJ Promoter Reflection

"I feel like I got some leadership qualities, as far as knowing what I did not know before. What we learned in the sessions. Aiding in inviting people to get involved. Being able to bring in more [people]. I feel that I can talk about health and safety more now that I has been through the program."

- Elvis Foster (WWJ Promoter)



Photo of Warehouse Worker for Justice Training

Personal Reflections



Acknowledgements

- Health Promoters from CWC and WWJ
- Chicago Workers' Collaborative (CWC)
- Warehouse Workers for Justice (WWJ)
- Marsha Love, Linda Forst, Joseph Zanoni, Preethi Pratap, Eric Dangoy, UIC School of Public Health
- AOEC/OHIP
- NIOSH