

PUTTING THE ROOF ON INJURIES

BACKGROUND

How many employers are there in B.C.'s roofing industry?

In 2008, there were 1,467 roofing employers registered with WorkSafeBC – 333 low slope roofing employers and 1,134 steep slope roofing employers. Both low and steep slope roofing employers are involved in the installation, service, or repair of roofs.

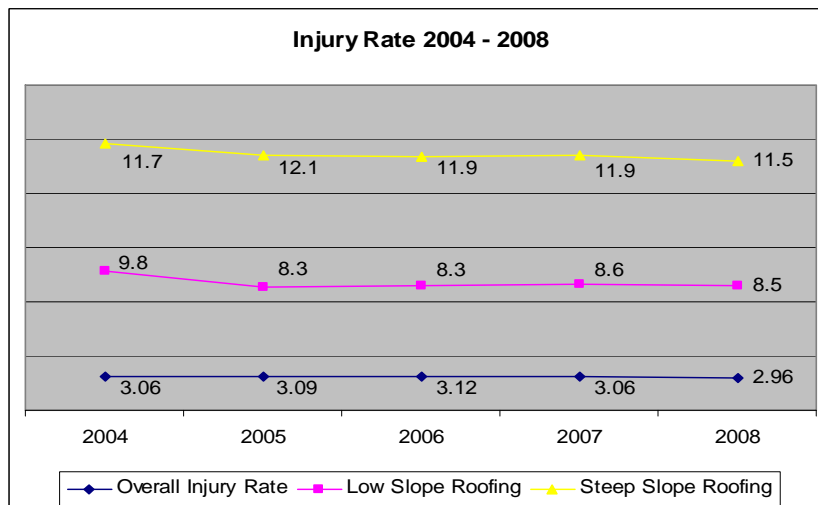
What is roof slope?

Roof slope is considered the primary factor in roof design. The slope of a roof has an effect on the interior volume of a building, the drainage, the style, and the material you use for your covering. The slope of a roof is determined by the vertical rise in inches for every horizontal twelve inch (12") length (called the "run"). A roof with x rise/12 run slope means that for every 12 inches horizontally (run), it rises x inches. Classifications for low/steep slope roofs are:

- Less than 4 in 12 (33%)
- Greater than 4 in 12 (33%)

What is the injury rate for roofing in B.C.?

The workplace injury rate in roofing exceeds the average rate for all industries in B.C. In 2008, the overall injury rate for all industries was 2.96 per 100 person years of employment. By comparison, steep slope roofing saw an average injury rate of 11.5 for the same year and low slope roofing with an average injury rate of 8.5.



There were 280 accepted claims in steep slope roofing in 2008 costing more than \$6.2 million and resulting in 18,448 days lost from work. In low slope roofing there were 243 accepted claims costing more than \$3.4 million and 10,337 days lost.

What types of workplace accidents are most common in roofing?

Falls from elevation are a major cause of accidents and resulting injuries to roofers. From 2004-2008 falls from elevation accounted for 34 percent of the claims in steep slope roofing and 19 percent of the claims in low slope roofing. The most common cause for falls is the lack of a proper fall protection system. Overexertion and struck by accidents are also common in roofing.

What are some of the contributing factors to the high number of accidents in roofing?

Several factors contribute to the high number of accidents resulting in injury including the lack of pre-planning in important areas such as, fall protection and supervision.

What is WorkSafeBC doing to help prevent accidents in roofing?

Because there are so many injuries and resulting claims in the roofing sector, both low slope and steep slope roofing are part of WorkSafeBC's province-wide high risk strategy. This means that when an officer inspects a construction site there will be increased focus on what's happening on the roof to see if there is a written fall protection plan, an appropriate fall protection system is in use and if ladders are properly set up and secured. Not having protective measures in place can result in penalties against the company.

What information and resources are available for workers and employers from WorkSafeBC?

WorkSafeBC information materials aimed at eliminating workplace accidents in roofing and construction including toolbox talks, hazard alerts, bulletins and more can be found on the [Construction portal](#) of WorkSafeBC.com.

For more information:

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