

The Current Culture of Workplace Injury

More than 60% of Canadians believe workplace accidents and injuries are an inevitable part of life. That's one of the findings of the first-ever national study of societal attitudes toward the work-related injury of nearly 350,000 Canadians each year. "This is a significant finding and has important implications for workplace health and safety," says Rick Iverson, Professor of Human Resource Management at the Faculty of Business Administration, Simon Fraser University.

"This is the first study to benchmark attitudes and beliefs about workplace injury against another important cause of injury and death: drinking and driving," says Iverson. "Nearly two-thirds of Canadians reject the idea that accidents and injuries caused by drinking and driving are an inevitable part of life. Shifting societal attitudes to similar levels for work-related injuries poses a major challenge."

Results varied by region more than two thirds of British Columbians agreeing that workplace injuries were inevitable. When benchmarked against the drinking and driving responses, the largest differentials in attitude were noted in Quebec.

Region	Agree: workplace accidents and injuries are an inevitable part of life.	Agree: Accidents and injuries caused by drinking and driving are an inevitable part of life.
BC	67%	38%
Alberta	59%	41%
Saskatchewan and Manitoba	62%	37%
Ontario	56%	34%
Quebec	64%	34%
Atlantic Canada	61%	40%
Canada	61%	39%

Perhaps surprisingly, the results were similar among rural and urban respondents and relatively consistent across income levels.

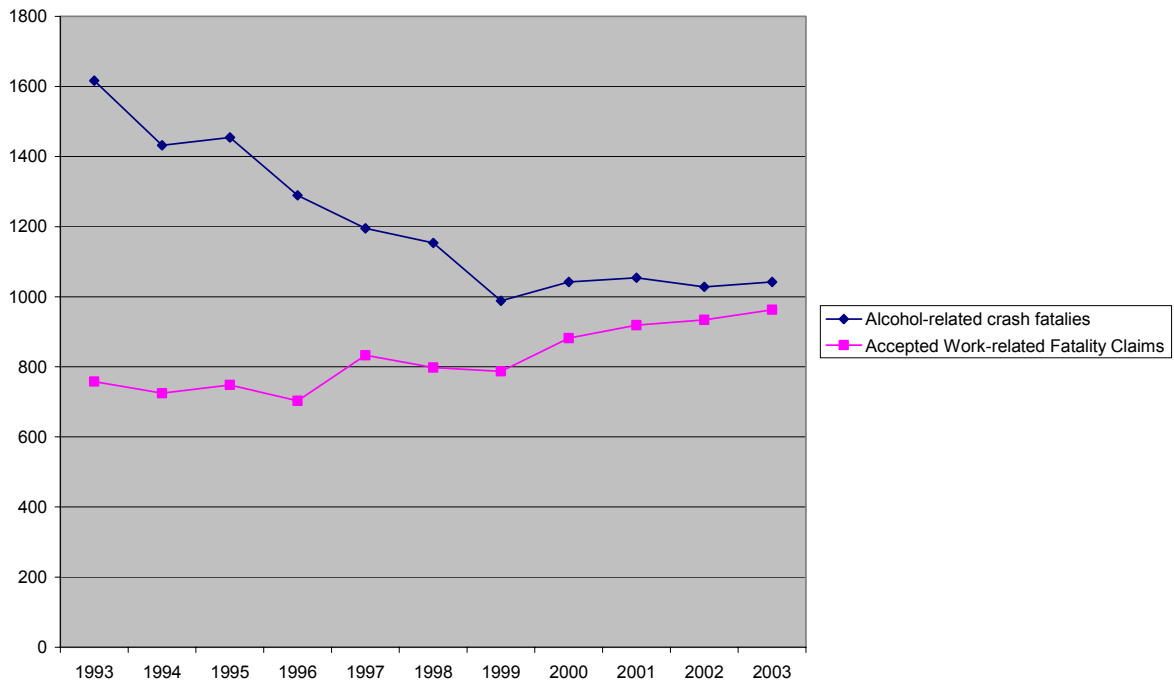
Educational level, however, had a marked impact on survey results. "Those with higher education were more likely to question the inevitability of workplace accidents and injury," said Iverson. "More than two-thirds of respondents with high school completion or less agreed that workplace accidents and injuries were inevitable yet fewer than half accept accidents and injuries from drinking and driving are inevitable."

The survey also asked how Canadians if either workplace-related accidents and injuries or those caused by drinking and driving were serious problems in Canada today.

Region	Agree: workplace accidents and injuries are a serious problem in Canada today.	Agree: Drinking and driving is a serious problem in Canada today
BC	61%	90%
Alberta	74%	93%
Saskatchewan and Manitoba	72%	88%
Ontario	70%	88%
Quebec	71%	90%
Atlantic Canada	69%	94%
Canada	70%	90%

According to the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada website, (www.awcbc.org) nearly 1000 work-related fatality claims were accepted across Canada in 2003. That's almost as many alcohol-related traffic fatalities recorded the same year, according to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (http://www.madd.ca/english/news/pr/lives_saved_2005.pdf)

**Alcohol-related traffic crash fatalities and Accepted Workers' Compensation Fatality Claims
1993-2003 Canada**



Full details of the study and a companion analysis conducted among Canadian employers will be released at the Public Forum 2005 conference.

The study was conducted for the Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada by Ipsos-Reid and is based on telephone interviews with a thousand Canadians conducted July 12-14, 2005.

For more information please contact:

Gladys Johnsen, WorkSafeBC
604 214-2441
Or cell: 604 908-0876

Donna Freeman, WorkSafeBC
604 276-3141 x 3585
Or cell: 604 802-1127