

## Occupational Health Unit

### YOUNG WORKERS AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Phone: (860) 509-7740

#### **Young Workers:**

In the United States, tens of thousands of young people are seen in hospital emergency departments for work-related injuries; hundreds of them require hospitalization; and more than 70 die of work-related injuries each year. The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) Occupational Health Program is actively involved in activities that promote injury prevention programs to reduce the number of young workers needlessly suffering from occupational injuries. Collaborations with federal, state, and local agencies have been implemented to support statewide efforts to improve teen workplace safety through surveillance, education and advocacy. The occupational health program recently analyzed the Connecticut Workers' Compensation Commission (WCC) data to provide a preliminary overview of occupational injuries and illnesses among Connecticut's young workers 14-17 years of age, from 1997-2001. The patterns of injuries, industries and occupations were examined, and the descriptions of demographic characteristics (gender and age) were reviewed for trends. Overall, the findings in Connecticut were consistent with those in other states, and the Connecticut Young Worker Safety Team is currently in the process of assessing this data in order to develop future intervention strategies. For more information about the Connecticut Young Worker Safety Team, please contact Deborah Pease at (860) 509-7740 or [deborah.pease@ct.gov](mailto:deborah.pease@ct.gov).

#### **Non-English Speaking Workers:**

The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) Occupational Health Program currently plays an active role in the Non-English Speaking (NES) Worker Task Force, which was organized by members of the [New England OSHA Region I Office](#) in 2003. The mission of this task force is to decrease injuries, illnesses and fatalities among NES workers, to raise public awareness through the Department of Labor training and enforcement activities to ensure that NES worker and their employers are aware of their rights and responsibilities under OSHA and Wage and Hour (ESA) rules. The long-term goals of this task force will be to develop training materials and publications that are unique to each diverse group about basic safety and health rights and responsibilities. For more information about the NES Task Force, please contact Dave May, OSHA Area Director and Task Force Advisor at (603) 225-1629 or [may.david@dol.gov](mailto:may.david@dol.gov).

#### **Other Special Populations:**

The State of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH) Occupational Health Program also focuses specific activities around other special populations of workers, such as migrant farm workers, restaurant workers, teachers, and older workers, in an effort to support their unique and often misrepresented needs.