

## Are our workplaces safe? ... Occupational Diseases (Ninth of a Series)

Cases of occupational diseases are generally excluded from the statistics on occupational injuries. Nevertheless, inquiry on this was included in the 2003/2004 BLES Integrated Survey, conducted last year, to provide added dimension in the analysis of the conditions of workers in their workplaces.

For purposes of the survey, an **occupational disease** is defined as an abnormal condition or disorder other than one resulting from an occupational injury caused by exposure over a period of time to risk factors associated with work activity.

In 2003, there were 55,413 cases of occupational diseases recognized, diagnosed and recorded during the year in non-agricultural establishments employing at least 20 workers. Around 37 percent of these were work-related musculoskeletal diseases.



### Work-related musculoskeletal diseases most common occupational condition

The inquiry covered twelve major types of occupational diseases. These were 1) occupational dermatitis; 2) bronchial asthma; 3) acute poisonings; 4) heat strokes, cramps, exhaustion; 5) chilblain, frostbite, freezing; 6) deafness; 7) infections; 8) cataracts; 9) cardiovascular diseases; 10) essential hypertension; 11) peptic ulcers; and 12) work-related musculoskeletal diseases.

A total of 55,413 cases of occupational diseases were reported in non-agricultural establishments employing 20 or more workers in 2003. Around 37 percent or 20,603 cases were diagnosed as work-related musculoskeletal diseases. (Table 1)

Other occupational diseases recorded at double-digit proportions were infections (14.1% or 7,825); bronchial asthma (12.2% or 6,742); and essential hypertension (10.3% or 5,708). Noted at lesser proportions were incidences of peptic ulcers (9.6% or 5,347); occupational dermatitis (9.1% or 5,028); and cardiovascular diseases (2.6% or 1,454).

Cases of cataracts (634); heat strokes, cramps and exhaustion (631); deafness (510); acute poisonings (202); and chilblain, frostbite and freezing (150); and other diseases (579) made up less than five percent of total occupational diseases during the year.

## Six out of ten cases of occupational diseases in manufacturing

As in cases of occupational injuries, manufacturing accounted for the biggest share of the 55,413 cases of occupational diseases at 35,956 (64.9%). This industry group also registered the most number of occupational diseases by type.

On the other hand, construction reported the fewest cases of occupational diseases at 149 (0.3%). Most of these were attributed to essential hypertension (62), heat strokes, cramps and exhaustion (26) and bronchial asthma (24).

The other major industry groups reported the following cases of occupational diseases: 5,241 in wholesale and retail trade (9.5%); 3,828 in transport, storage and communication (6.9%); 2,694 in private education services (4.9%); 2,195 in hotels and restaurants (4.0%); 1,350 in mining and quarrying (2.4%); 1,112 in electricity, gas and water supply (2.0%); 839 in health and social work except public medical and other health (1.5%); 761 in real estate, renting and business activities (1.4%); 695 in other community, social and personal service activities (1.3%); and 594 in financial intermediation (1.1%).

Statistics on occupational diseases indicated that manufacture of food products reported the highest number of occupational diseases in manufacturing at 5,647. This sub-industry also claimed the most number of occupational injuries in manufacturing.

Manufacture of office, accounting and computing machinery recorded 5,322 occupational diseases while wearing apparel registered 4,691. Manufacture of beverages; manufacture of radio, television and communication equipment and

apparatus; and manufacture of electrical machinery and apparatus n.e.c. reported 3,356, 2,263 and 2,099 cases, respectively. These six out of the 30 surveyed sub-industries in manufacturing accounted for 65.0 percent of all occupational diseases in the major industry group.

Around 63 percent of the 14,726 cases of work-related musculoskeletal occupational diseases in manufacturing establishments were also observed in these six sub-industries. However, the leading occupational disease in manufacture of office, accounting and computing machinery was infections at 2,464 (46.3% of sub-industry total).

Cases of infections (7,825) were also most prevalent in transport, storage and communication at 1,006 (26.3% of 3,828 total cases in the industry group), particularly in supporting and auxiliary transport activities; activities of travel agencies (836).

Manufacturing accounted for 50.6 percent of the total 6,742 cases of bronchial asthma (particularly, food products, 654; beverages, 528; wearing apparel, 443). This disease was also noted in transport, storage and communication (923); wholesale and retail trade (595); and private education services (589). These three major industry groups combined for a share of 31.3 percent of total bronchial asthma cases.

Essential hypertension at 5,708 was the fourth most common occupational disease according to the survey. In addition to manufacturing which accounted for 53.4 percent (3,047) of total cases, private education services reported 1,099 (19.3%) of this condition. Essential hypertension was the leading disease

in this major industry as it shared 40.8 percent of its total 2,694 cases of occupational diseases.

Peptic ulcer recorded at 5,347 cases was again largely observed in manufacturing (3,256 or 60.9%), particularly in manufactures of food products (651); beverages (627); wearing apparel (421); and radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus (328).

The sixth most common work-related disease in 2003 was occupational dermatitis at 5,028 cases. Close to 75 percent of these were recorded in manufacturing, largely noted in manufactures of food products (772); radio, television and communication equipment and apparatus (348); basic metals (302); beverages (277); wearing apparel (271); and textiles (217). Together, these six sub-industries made up 58.1 percent of the 3,762 such cases in manufacturing.

Cardiovascular diseases totaled 1,454, of which 442 (30.4%) were in manufacturing. Manufacture of office, accounting and computing machinery reported 150 cases of this disease. In addition, wholesale and retail trade recorded 228, of which 152 were in

wholesale and commission trade except of motor vehicles and motorcycles. Hotels and restaurants and private education services recorded 226 and 148 of such cases, respectively.

Cases of cataracts numbered 634, of which 478 were in manufacturing, particularly in manufacture of office, accounting and computing machinery (365).

There were 378 cases of deafness in manufacturing out of the total 510 cases. Manufacture of office, accounting and computing machinery again claimed the highest record in the major industry at 101 cases.

Of the 202 cases of acute poisoning, 170 were reported in manufacturing. This major industry likewise claimed most of the 631 cases of heat strokes, cramps and exhaustion at 47.2 percent (298), particularly in manufacture of food products (142).

Cases of chilblain, frostbite, freezing were least reported in the survey at 150 cases, of which 135 were observed in manufacturing.

---

For Inquiries:

Regarding this report contact LABOR STANDARDS STATISTICS DIVISION at 527-3489/527-9325

Regarding other statistics and technical services contact BLES Databank at 527-3577

Or write to BLES c/o Databank, 3/F DOLE Bldg. Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila 1002

FAX 527-9325

E-mail: [lssd@manila-online.net](mailto:lssd@manila-online.net)  
[bleslssd@bles.dole.gov.ph](mailto:bleslssd@bles.dole.gov.ph)

Website: <http://www.manila-online.net/bles>  
<http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph>

---

TABLE 1- Cases of Occupational Diseases in Non-Agricultural Establishments Employing 20 or More Workers by Industry and Type of Occupational Disease, Philippines: 2003

1994 PSIC	Industry	Total	Occupational dermatitis	Bronchial asthma	Acute poisonings	Heat stroke, cramps, exhaustion	Chilblain, frostbite, freezing	Deafness	Infections	Cataract	Cardio-vascular diseases	Essential hypertension	Peptic ulcer	Work-related musculoskeletal diseases	Others
	<b>Total</b>	<b>55,413</b>	<b>5,028</b>	<b>6,742</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>631</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>7,825</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>1,454</b>	<b>5,708</b>	<b>5,347</b>	<b>20,603</b>	<b>579</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>MINING AND QUARRYING</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>126</b>	-	-	-	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>597</b>	-
C10	Metallic Ore Mining	1,319	106	124	-	-	-	4	28	2	91	220	149	595	-
C11	Non-Metallic Mining and Quarrying	31	7	2	-	-	-	-	3	1	1	6	9	2	-
<b>D</b>	<b>MANUFACTURING</b>	<b>35,956</b>	<b>3,762</b>	<b>3,410</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>5,380</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>3,047</b>	<b>3,256</b>	<b>14,726</b>	<b>473</b>
D15 excl.															
D155	Manufacture of Food Products	5,647	772	654	49	142	1	80	593	55	49	616	651	1,931	53
D155	Manufacture of Beverages	3,356	277	528	22	-	3	27	425	2	68	738	627	638	-
D16	Manufacture of Tobacco Products	266	-	3	-	2	-	-	22	-	3	21	17	198	-
D17	Manufacture of Textiles	1,047	217	137	-	-	-	3	104	3	3	46	146	388	-
D18	Manufacture of Wearing Apparel	4,691	271	443	1	80	84	-	465	19	34	219	421	2,654	-
D191	Tanning and Dressing of Leather; Manufacture of Luggage and Handbags	27	25	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D192	Manufacture of Footwear	300	126	10	-	1	-	11	59	-	1	5	83	2	-
D201	Manufacture of Wood, Wood Products and Cork except Furniture	39	13	13	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	9	1	-	-
D202	Manufacture of Articles of Bamboo, Cane, Cork & the Like; Manufacture of Plaiting Materials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D21	Manufacture of Paper and Paper Products	357	34	40	-	-	-	-	8	1	8	6	11	248	-
D22	Publishing, Printing and Reproduction of Recorded Media	167	4	19	-	12	1	-	32	-	2	-	25	72	-
D23	Manufacture of Coke, Refined Petroleum and Other Fuel Products	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D24	Manufacture of Chemicals and Chemical Products	878	105	164	-	-	-	41	110	9	4	116	126	198	5
D251	Manufacture of Rubber Products	494	93	76	-	-	-	-	45	-	3	76	28	166	7
D252	Manufacture of Plastic Products	952	29	38	-	1	-	1	49	-	1	-	29	804	-
D261	Manufacture of Glass and Glass Products	758	22	8	-	-	-	6	339	2	14	46	2	318	-
D262	Manufacture of Cement	71	15	-	-	-	-	-	18	-	-	8	9	21	-
D269	Manufacture of Other Non-Metallic Mineral Products, n.e.c.	1,295	22	70	-	12	-	-	31	12	12	32	41	1,064	-
D27	Manufacture of Basic Metals	1,124	302	36	17	3	-	-	67	1	7	273	37	382	-
D28	Manufacture of Fabricated Metal Products, except of Machinery and Equipment	998	137	207	11	2	45	-	73	1	15	108	189	210	-
D29	Manufacture of Machinery and Equipment, n.e.c.	320	13	17	-	-	-	17	42	5	2	28	45	152	-
D30	Manufacture of Office, Accounting and Computing Machinery	5,322	258	109	47	9	-	101	2,464	365	150	122	45	1,491	162
D31	Manufacture of Electrical Machinery and Apparatus, n.e.c.	2,099	212	185	-	12	-	-	69	1	1	42	55	1,522	-
D32	Manufacture of Radio, TV and Communication Equipment and Apparatus	2,263	348	174	1	4	-	-	187	-	15	126	328	1,080	-
D33	Manufacture of Medical, Precision and Optical Instruments, Watches and Clocks	952	152	207	1	-	-	-	6	-	15	48	112	167	245
D34	Manufacture of Motor Vehicles, Trailers and Semi-Trailers	971	140	26	-	3	-	86	65	-	2	34	43	572	-
D35	Manufacture of Other Transport Equipment	632	94	8	-	5	-	-	22	1	1	210	17	274	-
D36	Manufacture and Repair of Furniture	704	69	146	3	10	-	2	74	1	31	57	140	172	-
D37	Recycling	34	-	17	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
D39	Manufacturing, n.e.c.	192	14	75	-	-	-	1	9	-	1	63	29	-	-
<b>E</b>	<b>ELECTRICITY, GAS AND WATER SUPPLY</b>	<b>1,112</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>606</b>	-
E40	Electricity, Gas, Steam and Hot Water Supply	1,018	67	62	1	11	4	5	77	2	83	50	60	596	-
E41	Collection, Purification and Distribution of Water	93	4	15	-	-	-	1	13	21	12	18	-	11	-

Notes: 1. Details will not add up to totals due to rounding of figures.  
2. A dash (-) entry implies zero (0) or no case/s reported.

TABLE 1 - Cases of Occupational Diseases in Non-Agricultural Establishments Employing 20 or More Workers by Industry and Type of Disease, Philippines: 2003 (Cont'd.)															
1994 PSIC	Industry	Total	Occupational dermatitis	Bronchial asthma	Acute poisonings	Heat stroke, cramps, exhaustion	Chilblain, frostbite, freezing	Deafness	Infections	Cataract	Cardio-vascular diseases	Essential hypertension	Peptic ulcer	Work-related musculoskeletal diseases	Others
F45	<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	149	8	24	1	26	-	1	8	5	2	62	10	1	-
G	<b>WHOLESALE AND RETAIL TRADE; REPAIR OF MOTOR VEHICLES, MOTORCYCLES AND PERSONAL AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS</b>	5,241	217	595	20	113	5	31	492	85	228	507	549	2,399	-
G50	Sale, Maintenance and Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles, Retail Sale of Automotive	423	28	104	-	57	-	2	53	-	12	39	40	89	-
G51	Wholesale Trade and Commission Trade, Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	1,325	107	233	20	10	3	-	178	3	152	171	169	279	-
G52	Retail Trade, Except of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles, Repair of Personal and Household Goods	3,493	82	258	-	46	2	29	261	82	63	297	341	2,031	-
H55	<b>HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS</b>	2,195	296	215	-	63	-	-	330	-	226	37	223	805	-
I	<b>TRANSPORT, STORAGE AND COMMUNICATION</b>	3,828	270	923	1	11	-	17	1,006	6	134	255	380	825	-
I60	Land Transport, Transport Via Pipelines	466	38	84	1	10	-	17	66	-	54	47	81	69	-
I61	Water Transport	153	22	10	-	-	-	-	75	1	-	14	-	32	-
I62	Air Transport	5	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
I63	Supporting and Auxiliary Transport Activities; Activities of Travel Agencies	3,130	208	813	-	1	-	-	836	5	80	194	292	701	-
I64 excl.	Post and Telecommunications except National Postal Activities	73	-	15	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	6	22	-
J	<b>FINANCIAL INTERMEDIATION</b>	594	77	147	2	3	-	60	49	1	9	86	87	73	-
J65 excl.	Banking Institutions except Central Banking	301	50	92	-	3	-	-	16	-	2	60	41	36	-
J66	Non-Bank Financial Intermediation	215	23	47	-	-	-	60	23	-	-	18	32	12	-
J67	Insurance and Pension Funding, Except Compulsory Social Security	52	4	7	2	-	-	-	7	1	7	5	11	8	-
J68	Activities Auxiliary to Financial Intermediation	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3	3	17	-
K	<b>REAL ESTATE, RENTING AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES</b>	761	64	214	-	14	-	1	159	9	22	149	74	46	9
K70	Real Estate Activities	102	16	17	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	67	-	-	-
K71	Renting of Machinery and Equipment Without Operator, Personal and Household Goods	19	-	1	-	-	-	-	16	-	-	1	-	1	-
K72	Computer and Related Activities	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
K73	Research and Development	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
K74	Miscellaneous Business Activities	637	48	194	-	14	-	1	141	9	22	81	73	44	9
M81	<b>PRIVATE EDUCATION SERVICES</b>	2,694	91	589	3	23	2	11	82	13	148	1,099	308	233	91
N85 excl.	<b>HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK EXCEPT PUBLIC MEDICAL, DENTAL AND OTHER HEALTH</b>	839	14	320	2	6	4	-	192	1	45	69	94	91	-
N851	<b>OTHER COMMUNITY, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL SERVICE ACTIVITIES</b>	695	47	101	-	64	-	-	6	8	10	105	148	201	6
O90	Sewage and Refuse Disposal, Sanitation and Similar Activities	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
O92	Recreational, Cultural and Sporting Activities	685	46	101	-	64	-	-	6	8	10	105	148	192	6
O93	Other Service Activities	10	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-
Notes: 1. Details will not add up to totals due to rounding of figures. 2. A dash (-) entry implies zero (0) or no case/s reported.															
Source of data: Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, BLES Integrated Survey.															