

# Indicator #6: Hospitalizations for Work-Related Burns

## Background and Public Health Significance

Burns are injuries to tissue caused by contact with dry heat (fire), moist heat (steam), chemicals, electricity, friction, or radiation. Thermal and chemical burns are the most frequent types of work-related burns reported. A large portion of workplace burns take place in the service industry, primarily in food service.

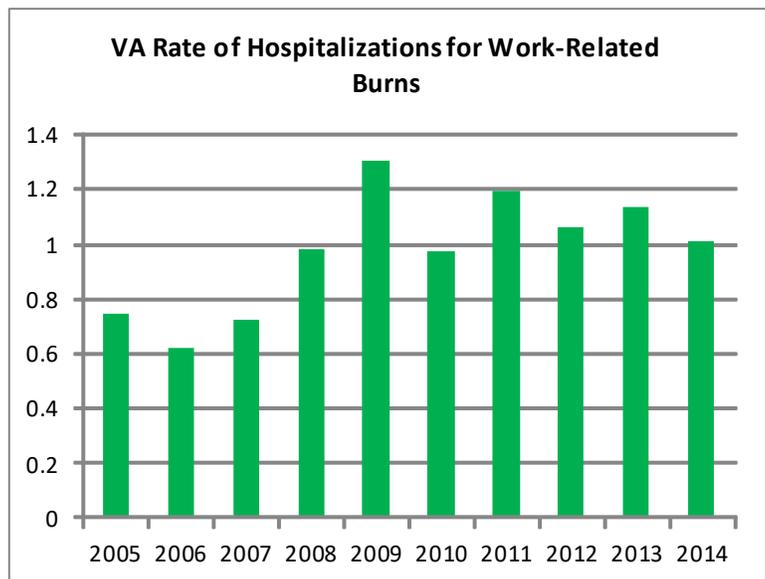
An estimated 30-40 percent of burns each year are work-related, with a peak incidence among younger workers, and with males affected more frequently than females. NIOSH has estimated that there are 150,000 work-related burns treated in the emergency rooms each year in the U.S.

Data source: VA Inpatient Hospital Discharge Data & Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey Data

## Rationale:

Work-related burns are some of the most devastating injuries affecting workers. Although hospitalized burns are unusual events, they are painful, disabling, and expensive to treat. Many result in significant disfigurement. In addition, burns are the most common cause of work-related hospitalization for young workers.

	6.1 Annual Number of Inpatient Hospitalizations for Work-Related Burns	6.2 Annual Crude Rate of Work-Related Burn Inpatient Hospitalizations
2005	28	0.74*
2006	24	0.62*
2007	28	0.72*
2008	39	0.98*
2009	50	1.30*
2010	37	0.97*
2011	47	1.19*
2012	42	1.06*
2013	45	1.13*
2014	41	1.01*



\* Rate per 100,000 Employed Persons Aged 16 years or older

## Limitations

Individuals hospitalized for work-related injuries and illnesses represent less than 10 percent of all workers who receive workers' compensation. The majority of individuals with work-related illnesses and many others with injuries do not file for workers' compensation. Additionally, self-employed individuals such as farmers and independent contractors, federal employees, railroad or longshore and maritime workers are not covered by state workers' compensation systems. Attribution of payer in hospital discharge may not be accurate. Data between states may not be comparable due to differences in states' workers' compensation programs.

Work-related burn injuries are experienced by workers under the age of 16, but corresponding denominator data is not readily available. Practice patterns and payment mechanisms may affect decisions by health care providers to hospitalize patients. Residents of one state may be hospitalized in another state and not be reflected in his/her state's hospitalization data. Until hospital discharge data is available in all states, aggregation of state data to produce nationwide estimates will be incomplete. Data on race/ethnicity is not collected in some states and is incomplete and/or of questionable validity in others. Hospital Discharge records are only available for non-federal, acute care hospitals.