

Suicide Prevention in Construction



The suicide rate in construction is about four times greater than the national average (17.3/100,000) and five times greater than that of all other construction fatalities combined (10.1/100,000). The increased risk of suicide is present at all levels. This includes owners, laborers, skilled workers, and project managers.

To change the direction of this trend, employers, unions, training centers, and construction associations must act and collaborate to prevent suicide.

Why is this a problem in the construction industry?

- The “tough guy” culture prevents workers from seeking help.
- Supervisors are promoted without specific types of leadership training.
- Workers experience sleep disruption/deprivation due to shift work.
- Seasonal layoffs and end-of-project furloughs cause financial stress.
- There’s a tolerant culture of alcohol and substance use.
- Many construction workers have chronic pain.
- The construction industry has the highest use of prescription opioids.
- There’s tremendous performance pressure related to project schedules, budgets, and quality requirements.
- Many construction workers have access to lethal means.



More construction workers die by suicide than all other workplace fatalities combined. A worker's suicide will have a deep, disturbing, and long-lasting impact on teammates and management.

How do you help your employees?

- Create a culture of safety and wellness.
- Raise awareness about the suicide epidemic in construction.
- Normalize the importance of focusing on mental health and suicide prevention.
- Provide specific training to supervisors related to risk recognition among workers.
- Provide training to all workers on substance abuse, stress management, injury prevention and rehabilitation, sleep hygiene, and the importance of a supportive environment.
- Evaluate the jobsite expectations of your workers regarding scheduling and quality goals.
- Determine if there's a high-pressure atmosphere surrounding your projects that could contribute to the suicide crisis.
- Conduct mental wellness screenings along with physical exams.
- Provide access to professional mental health services.

For more information go to
www.preventconstructionsuicide.com.