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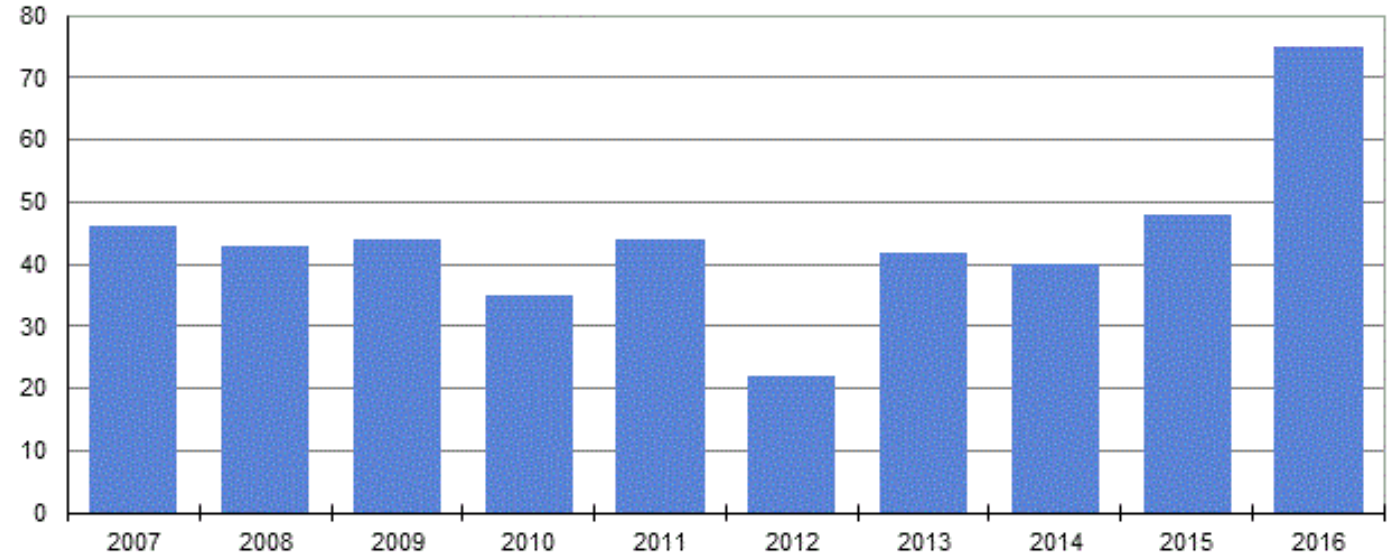
# Fatal Work Injuries in Boston-Cambridge-Newton: 2016

## Workplace Injuries Increase Over the Year

Fatal work injuries totaled 75 in 2016 for the Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Mass.-N.H., metropolitan area, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted the number of work-related fatalities in Boston increased by 27 over the year and reached its highest level since the series began in 2000. Since 2007, fatal occupational injuries in the metropolitan area have ranged from a high of 75 in 2016 to a low of 22 in 2012(See chart 1.)

Nationwide, a total of 5,190 fatal work injuries were recorded in 2016, a 7-percent increase from the 4,836 fatal injuries in 2015, according to the results from the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) program. This was the third consecutive increase in annual workplace fatalities and the first time more than 5,000 fatalities have been recorded since 2008.

**Chart 1. Total fatal occupational injuries, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, 2007-2016**




SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Type of Incident

Of the 75 fatal work injuries reported in Boston in 2016, exposure to harmful substances or environments resulted in 19 deaths. Violence and other injuries by persons or animals resulted in 17 deaths, while falls, slips, or trips were responsible for 16 deaths. These three major categories accounted for 69 percent of all workplace fatalities in the metropolitan area. (See table 1).

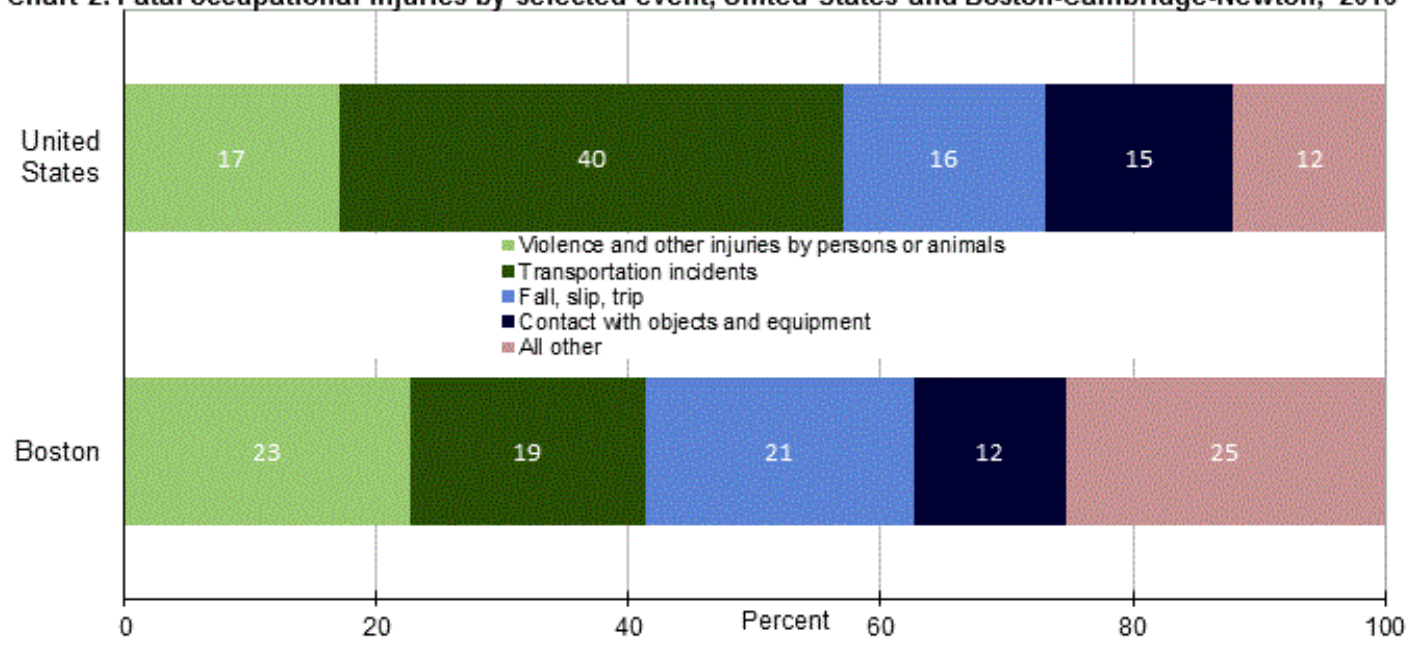
Within the exposure to harmful substances or environments category, workplace deaths due to exposure to other harmful substances more than tripled over the year, from 5 fatalities to 16.

Violence and other injuries by persons or animals accounted for about the same share of area incidents in 2016 as it did in 2015. Fifteen of the fatalities within the violence and other injuries by persons or animals category were incidents involving intentional injury by person, 13 were suicides and 2 were homicides. Within the falls, slips, or trips category, 13 of the 16 fatalities were due to falls to a lower level.

Transportation incidents accounted for 14 workplace fatalities locally. In 2015, this category accounted for the highest share of area workplace fatalities. Eight of the incidents in transportation were roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicle and four were related to pedestrian vehicular incidents.

Nationally, transportation incidents were the most frequent fatal workplace event in 2016, accounting for approximately 40 percent of fatal work injuries. (See chart 2.) Violence and other injuries by persons or animals was the second-most common fatal event (17 percent), followed by falls, slips, or trips (16 percent) and contact with objects and equipment (15 percent).

**Chart 2. Fatal occupational injuries by selected event, United States and Boston-Cambridge-Newton, 2016**




SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

## Industry

The private construction industry sector had the largest number of fatalities in the Boston area with 22, up from 14 in the previous year. (See table 2.) Transportation incidents were the most frequent fatal event in the construction sector with eight worker deaths, followed by falls, slips, and trips with seven fatalities. Ten of those fatally injured in this sector worked in specialty trade contracting.

The leisure and hospitality and trade, transportation, and utilities sectors had 11 workplace fatalities each in 2016. Professional and business services had 10 deaths in 2016, with most workplace deaths occurring within the administrative and support services sector.

**Occupation**

Two occupations, construction and extraction (24) and transportation and material moving occupations (10), accounted for the highest number of workplace fatalities. (See table 3.) Within the construction and extraction occupations, construction trades workers (22) had the largest number of fatalities. Motor vehicle operators accounted for the 4 of the 10 fatalities among transportation and material moving workers.

**Additional Highlights**

- Men accounted for 69, or 92 percent, of the work-related fatalities in the Boston area, compared with 93 percent nationwide. (See table 4.)
- White non-Hispanics accounted for 73 percent of those who died from a workplace injury. Nationwide, this group accounted for 67 percent of work-related deaths.
- Workers 25-54 years old accounted for 68 percent of the area's on-the-job fatalities in 2016 compared to the 57 percent national share.
- Of the 75 fatally-injured persons in Boston, 84 percent worked for wages and salaries while the remaining were self-employed.

## Technical Note

**Background of the program.** The Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), part of the BLS Occupational Safety and Health Statistics (OSHS) program, compiles a count of all fatal work injuries occurring in the U.S. during the calendar year. The CFOI program uses diverse state, federal, and independent data sources to identify, verify, and describe fatal work injuries. This ensures counts are as complete and accurate as possible. For the 2016 national data, over 23,300 unique source documents were reviewed as part of the data collection process. For technical information and definitions for CFOI, please go to the BLS Handbook of Methods on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/cfoi/home.htm.

**Federal/State agency coverage.** The CFOI includes data for all fatal work injuries, even those that may be outside the scope of other agencies or regulatory coverage. Thus, any comparison between the BLS fatality census counts and those released by other agencies should take into account the different coverage requirements and definitions being used by each agency. More on the scope of CFOI can be found at www.bls.gov/iif/cfoiscope.htm.

**Acknowledgments.** BLS thanks the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for their efforts in collecting accurate, comprehensive, and useful data on fatal work injuries. BLS also appreciates the efforts of all federal, state, local, and private sector entities that provided source documents used to identify fatal work injuries. Among these agencies are the Occupational Safety and Health Administration; the National Transportation Safety Board; the U.S. Coast Guard; the Mine Safety and Health Administration; the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (Federal Employees' Compensation and Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation divisions); the Federal Railroad Administration; the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; state vital statistics registrars, coroners, and medical examiners; state departments of health, labor, and industrial relations and workers' compensation agencies; state and local police departments; and state farm bureaus.

**The Boston-Cambridge-Newton, Mass.-N.H. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Suffolk Counties in Massachusetts and Rockingham and Strafford Counties in New Hampshire.

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## Table 1. Fatal occupational injuries by event or exposure, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH, 2015-16

| Event or exposure [1] | 2015 | 2016 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number | Percent |
| Total | 48 | 75 | 100 |
| Violence and other injuries by persons or animals | 9 | 17 | 23 |
| Intentional injury by person | 8 | 15 | 20 |
| Homicides (Intentional injury by other person) | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Suicides (Self-inflicted injury--intentional) | 5 | 13 | 17 |
| Animal and insect related incidents | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Bites and stings | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Struck by animal | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Transportation incidents | 14 | 14 | 19 |
| Pedestrian vehicular incident | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle in work zone | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle in roadway | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle on side of road | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Pedestrian struck by vehicle in nonroadway area | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Water vehicle incidents | 1 | -- | -- |
| Capsized or sinking water vehicle | 1 | -- | -- |
| Roadway incidents involving motorized land vehicle | 6 | 8 | 11 |
| Roadway collision with other vehicle | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Roadway collision with object other than vehicle | -- | 4 | 5 |
| Roadway noncollision incident | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Nonroadway incident involving motorized land vehicles | 2 | -- | -- |
| Nonroadway collision with object other than vehicle | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Nonroadway noncollision incident | 1 | -- | -- |
| Fires and explosions | -- | -- | -- |
| Explosions | -- | -- | -- |
| Explosion of pressure vessel, piping, or tire | -- | -- | -- |
| Falls, slips, trips | 12 | 16 | 21 |
| Falls on same level | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Fall on same level due to tripping | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Fall on same level due to slipping | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Fall onto or against object on same level, n.e.c. | 1 | -- | -- |
| Falls to lower level | 8 | 13 | 17 |
| Fall from collapsing structure or equipment | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall through surface or existing opening | -- | -- | -- |
| Other fall to lower level | 1 | 12 | 16 |
| Exposure to harmful substances or environments | 7 | 19 | 25 |
| Exposure to electricity | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Direct exposure to electricity | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Indirect exposure to electricity | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Exposure to temperature extremes | 1 | -- | -- |
| Exposure to environmental heat | 1 | -- | -- |
| Exposure to other harmful substances | 5 | 16 | 21 |
| Nonmedical use of drugs or alcohol--unintentional overdose | 5 | 15 | 20 |
| Exposure to harmful substance through skin, eyes, or other exposed tissue | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Exposure to oxygen deficiency, n.e.c. | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Drowning, submersion, n.e.c. | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Contact with objects and equipment | 4 | 9 | 12 |
| Struck by object or equipment | 4 | 7 | 9 |
| Struck by powered vehicle--nontransport | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Struck by falling object or equipment--other than powered vehicle | 2 | -- | -- |
| Injured by handheld object or equipment | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Struck by swinging or slipping object, other than handheld | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Struck, caught, or crushed in collapsing structure, equipment, or material | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Excavation or trenching cave-in | -- | 2 | 3 |

Footnotes:
(1) Based on the BLS Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (OIICS) 2.01 implemented for 2011 data forward.

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

NOTE: Data for all years are revised and final. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. CFOI fatality counts exclude illness-related deaths unless precipitated by an injury event. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.

## Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by industry, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH, 2015-16

| Industry [1] | 2015 | 2016 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number | Percent |
| Total | 48 | 75 | 100 |
| Private industry | 48 | 71 | 95 |
| Goods producing | 27 | 26 | 35 |
| Natural resources and mining | 6 | 2 | 3 |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Crop production | 2 | -- | -- |
| Animal production and aquaculture | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Fishing, hunting and trapping | 2 | -- | -- |
| Mining [2] | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Mining (except oil and gas) | 1 | -- | -- |
| Support activities for mining | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Construction | 14 | 22 | 29 |
| Construction | 14 | 22 | 29 |
| Construction of buildings | 1 | 6 | 8 |
| Heavy and civil engineering construction | 1 | 6 | 8 |
| Specialty trade contractors | 11 | 10 | 13 |
| Manufacturing | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| Manufacturing | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| Food manufacturing | -- | -- | -- |
| Beverage and tobacco product manufacturing | 1 | -- | -- |
| Plastics and rubber products manufacturing | -- | -- | -- |
| Transportation equipment manufacturing | 1 | -- | -- |
| Fabricated metal product manufacturing | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Computer and electronic product manufacturing | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Service providing | 21 | 45 | 60 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 7 | 11 | 15 |
| Retail trade | -- | 4 | 5 |
| Motor vehicle and parts dealers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Nonstore retailers | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Wholesale trade | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Merchant wholesalers, durable goods | 2 | -- | -- |
| Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| Truck transportation | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Postal service | 1 | -- | -- |
| Rail transportation | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Transit and ground passenger transportation | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Warehousing and storage | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Financial activities | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Finance and insurance | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Insurance carriers and related activities | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 3 | -- | -- |
| Real estate | 2 | -- | -- |
| Rental and leasing services | 1 | -- | -- |
| Professional and business services | 3 | 10 | 13 |
| Professional and technical services | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Administrative and waste services | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| Administrative and support services | 1 | 7 | 9 |
| Waste management and remediation services | 1 | -- | -- |
| Educational and health services | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| Educational services | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Educational services | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Health care and social assistance | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| Ambulatory health care services | -- | 2 | 3 |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

## Table 2. Fatal occupational injuries by industry, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH, 2015-16 - Continued

| Industry [1] | 2015 | 2016 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number | Percent |
| Hospitals | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Nursing and residential care facilities | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 2 | 11 | 15 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | -- | 5 | 7 |
| Performing arts, spectator sports, and related industries | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Amusement, gambling, and recreation industries | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Accommodation and food services | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| Food services and drinking places | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| Other services, except public administration | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Other services, except public administration | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Repair and maintenance | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Personal and laundry services | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Religious, grantmaking, civic, professional, and similar organizations | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Government [3] | -- | 4 | 5 |
| Federal government | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Service providing | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Public Administration | -- | 1 | 1 |
| National Security and International affairs | -- | 1 | 1 |
| State government | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Service providing | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Public Administration | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Justice, public order, and safety activities | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Local government | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Service providing | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Professional and business services | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Administrative and waste services | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Administrative and support services | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Public administration | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Justice, public order, and safety activities | -- | 1 | 1 |

Footnotes:
(1) CFOI has used several versions of the NAICS since ’03 to define industry. For more information on the version of NAICS used in this year, see our definitions page at https://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm
(2) Includes fatal injuries at all establishments categorized as Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (Sector 21) in the North American Industry Classification System, including ","establishments not governed by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) rules and reporting, such as those in Oil and Gas Extraction.
(3) Includes fatal injuries to workers employed by governmental organizations regardless of industry.
NOTE: Data for all years are final. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. CFOI fatality counts exclude illness-related deaths unless precipitated by an injury event. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.

## Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries by occupation, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH, 2015-16

| Occupation [1] | 2015 | 2016 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number | Percent |
| Total | 48 | 75 | 100 |
| Management occupations | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Operations specialties managers | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Other management occupations | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Computer and mathematical occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Computer specialists | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Business and financial operations occupations | 1 | -- | -- |
| Financial specialists | 1 | -- | -- |
| Architecture and engineering occupations | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Architects, surveyors, and cartographers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Drafters, engineering technicians, and mapping technicians | 1 | -- | -- |
| Life, physical, and social science occupations | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Life scientists | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Physical scientists | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Community and social services occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Counselors, social workers, and other community and social service specialists | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Entertainers and performers, sports and related workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Health diagnosing and treating practitioners | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Health technologists and technicians | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Healthcare support occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Protective service occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Law enforcement workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Food preparation and serving related occupations | -- | 4 | 5 |
| Supervisors of food preparation and serving workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Cooks and food preparation workers | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations | 3 | 9 | 12 |
| Supervisors of building and grounds cleaning and maintenance workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Building cleaning and pest control workers | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Grounds maintenance workers | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| Personal care and service occupations | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Entertainment attendants and related workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Other personal care and service workers | -- | -- | -- |
| Sales and related occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Retail sales workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Office and administrative support occupations | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Material recording, scheduling, dispatching, and distributing workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Agricultural workers | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Fishing and hunting workers | 2 | -- | -- |
| Construction and extraction occupations | 14 | 24 | 32 |
| Supervisors of construction and extraction workers | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Construction trades workers | 14 | 22 | 29 |
| Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations | 3 | 8 | 11 |
| Supervisors of installation, maintenance, and repair workers | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| Vehicle and mobile equipment mechanics, installers, and repairers | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Other installation, maintenance, and repair occupations | -- | 3 | 4 |
| Production occupations | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Supervisors of production workers | -- | -- | -- |
| Food processing workers | 1 | -- | -- |
| Metal workers and plastic workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Other production occupations | 1 | -- | -- |
| Transportation and material moving occupations | 9 | 10 | 13 |
| Supervisors, transportation and material moving workers | 1 | 3 | 4 |

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

## Table 3. Fatal occupational injuries by occupation, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH, 2015-16 - Continued

| Occupation [1] | 2015 | 2016 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number | Percent |
| Motor vehicle operators | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Rail transportation workers | -- | 1 | 1 |
| Material moving workers | 3 | 2 | 3 |

Footnotes:
(1) CFOI has used several versions of the SOC system since ’03 to define occupations. For more information on the version of SOC used in this year, see our definitions page at https://www.bls.gov/iif/oshcfdef.htm
NOTE: Data for all years are final. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. CFOI fatality counts exclude illness-related deaths unless precipitated by an injury event. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.

## Table 4. Fatal occupational injuries by worker characteristics, Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH, 2015-16

| Worker characteristics | 2015 | 2016 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Number | Number | Percent |
| Total | 48 | 75 | 100 |
| **Employee status** | | | |
| Wage and salary workers (1) | 41 | 63 | 84 |
| Self-employed (2) | 7 | 12 | 16 |
| **Gender** | | | |
| Men | 47 | 69 | 92 |
| Women | 1 | 6 | 8 |
| **Age (3)** | | | |
| Under 16 years | -- | 1 | 1 |
| 16 to 17 years | -- | -- | -- |
| 18 to 19 years | -- | 1 | 1 |
| 20 to 24 years | 5 | 5 | 7 |
| 25 to 34 years | 6 | 8 | 11 |
| 35 to 44 years | 12 | 18 | 24 |
| 45 to 54 years | 12 | 25 | 33 |
| 55 to 64 years | 8 | 9 | 12 |
| 65 years and over | 5 | 8 | 11 |
| **Race or ethnic origin (4)** | | | |
| White, non-Hispanic | 42 | 55 | 73 |
| Black or African-American, non-Hispanic | 1 | 7 | 9 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 3 | 10 | 13 |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native, non-Hispanic | -- | -- | -- |
| Asian, non-Hispanic | -- | 2 | 3 |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic | -- | -- | -- |

Footnotes:
(1) May include volunteers and workers receiving other types of compensation.
(2) Includes self-employed workers, owners of unincorporated businesses and farms, paid and unpaid family workers, and may include some owners of incorporated businesses or members of partnerships.
(3) Information may not be available for all age groups.
(4) Persons identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. The race categories shown exclude Hispanic and Latino workers.
NOTE: Data for all years are final. Totals for major categories may include subcategories not shown separately. Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding. CFOI fatality counts exclude illness-related deaths unless precipitated by an injury event. Dashes indicate no data reported or data that do not meet publication criteria.