

September 18, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- Oil drilling has reinvigorated Texas' economy, bringing money and jobs to the state. However, the state may be paying a high price for the economic boom. A report published in the March 2013 edition of Accident Analysis and Prevention entitled "Motor vehicle fatalities among oil and gas extraction workers" revealed that motor vehicles accidents are the leading cause of worker fatalities in the oil and gas extraction industry. With the increased numbers of oil industry workers on Texas roads, and the prevalence of auto accidents among those workers, all Texas drivers are at risk.

Oil worker auto accident statistics

Researchers for the study looked at worker fatality data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics from 2003 through 2008. They found that [motor vehicle accidents](#) were responsible for 202 of the industry's 648 on-the-job employee fatalities, or about 31 percent of fatalities. Employees driving pick-up trucks accounted for 51.5 percent of the fatal accidents.

[Tractor-trailers](#)

or other large trucks were involved in 26.7 percent of the accidents, and 12.4 percent of accidents involved other types of trucks. Automobile accidents made up 5.9 percent of recorded fatalities.

While the most common type of fatal accident among oil workers was a single vehicle jackknifing or overturning, at 38.6 percent of all fatal accidents, the second most common type was head-on collisions, accounting for 20.8 percent of fatal accidents. Other leading types of fatal auto accidents among oil workers include intersection collisions, at 8.9 percent of accidents, and collisions between vehicles travelling in the same direction, at 7.9 percent.

Contributing factors to oil worker auto accidents

The report's authors cited a number of factors that contribute to the prevalence of fatal auto accidents among oil field workers. The report noted that many drivers are driving while fatigued from working long hours at drilling sites. Additionally, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration laws that limit the number of hours a person can drive before resting do not apply to pick-up trucks unless those trucks are marked as transporting hazardous materials. This may explain why pick-ups drivers had the highest incidents of fatal accidents. Even when FMSCA laws do apply to a vehicle, time spent waiting at drilling sites does not count against driving hours under FMCSA laws. As such, drivers of large trucks may be fatigued after waiting around and then still have to drive their rigs.

Speak with an attorney

Fatigued oil workers put not only themselves at risk when they get behind the wheel; they threaten the safety of every other driver who shares the road with them. Accidents involving the large trucks that oil field workers drive are often particularly devastating for those driving passenger vehicles, and the workers -- and in some cases their employers -- need to be held accountable. If you have been injured in an accident involving an oil field worker, talk to an attorney with a history of successfully recovering compensation for victims in these complex cases.

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