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Advancing the safety, health and prosperity of Hoosiers in the workplace.

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hoosier Occupational Injuries and Illnesses at Record Low in 2008

Indianapolis, IN October 29, 2009 – Indiana’s non-fatal occupational injury and illness rate finally broke through that 5.0 floor, coming in at a historic low of 4.9 per 100 workers, according to the report of the Indiana Department of Labor (IDOL) released today. Based upon the survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) administered by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Indiana rate for 2008 has surpassed even the 2007 rate of 5.2. A separate report of Indiana work-related fatalities for 2008 was released in August 2009. The fatality report was the second lowest on record for the state.

Commissioner of Labor Lori A. Torres commented, “The 2008 Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses findings are encouraging news for all Hoosier workers, organized labor and the business community. I am especially enthusiastic about the progress made by the construction industry, as that industry had not seen a reduction in worker injury and illness rates for the past three years.”

Many factors led to the overall reduction in illnesses and injuries. In addition to the enforcement efforts of the Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration (IOSHA), the IDOL continuously works to create and enhance relationships with the Hoosier business community. Proactive safety and health partnerships on major construction projects, such as the **Parkview Medical Center** in Fort Wayne, **Ortho-Indy/Indiana Orthopedic ASC and Clinic** in Greenwood and **Morgan Elementary School** in Palmyra, have been established. Other notable factors in the reduction of Hoosier worker injury and illness include employers, as well as employees, being more proactive in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace. Today, nearly 100 workplaces, which employ more than 27,000 Hoosier workers, have been recognized by the IDOL’s VPP and INSHARP, for taking a positive approach to employee safety and health management.

Occupational injury and illness rates in all private industries were lower from previous years’ rates. In fact, all major industries, with the exception of **agriculture**, experienced their lowest rate on record. Indiana’s **construction industry** (4.6) experienced the largest occupational injury and illness rate drop on record in 2008, which is 19% lower than 2007.

Indiana’s **state and local government** rate remained unchanged from the 2007 rate of 5.7 per 100 workers. **State and local government** is among the top three industries with the greatest numbers of injured or ill workers.

The industries in Indiana with the greatest numbers of injured and ill workers include **manufacturing** (30,800), **healthcare and social assistance** (16,000) and **state and local government** (15,500). The Hoosier industry with the highest injury and illness rate is **agriculture, forestry and fishing** with a rate of 7.6 per 100 workers; however, the 2008 rate is less than the 2007 rate of 8.4. Other industries above the national and state average include **healthcare and social assistance** (6.4) as well as the **arts, entertainment and recreation** industry (5.8).

Further information regarding injuries and illnesses in particular occupations, industries, worker characteristics and injury event types will be released by the BLS in November 2009. A thorough analysis of the BLS SOII as well as the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) will be published in the IDOL's annual publication, *IN Review*, in February 2010.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact Sean M. Keefer at (317) 232-2683 or media@dol.in.gov.

About the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Data:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) data for Indiana includes work-related injuries and illnesses resulting from unintentional and intentional injuries. The IDOL's Quality, Metrics and Statistics Division staff works with Hoosier employers to collect this data.

About the Indiana Department of Labor:

The mission of the Indiana Department of Labor is to advance the safety, health and prosperity of Hoosiers in the workplace. In order to make significant strides, we emphasize both enforcement and compliance assistance by employers. www.in.gov/dol.

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