

# Young Employee Safety Hazard Alert

From 2018 to 2021, 1,519 U.S. workers under the age of 25 died from occupational injuries, and 17 of those fatalities were in Oregon.<sup>1</sup> Young workers frequently occupy jobs within the food service, retail, construction, and agriculture industries, which may expose them to a wide range of workplace hazards.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, some young workers may not be aware of their rights as employees and which tasks or work equipment are prohibited for workers below a certain age.<sup>3</sup> To ensure the safety of young workers, it is important to implement safety measures that specifically address them.

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics [2022]. Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries, 2018–2021.

2. I. Turner N, Deng C, Granger S, Wingate TG, Shafqat R, Dueck PM. Young workers and safety: A critical review and future research agenda. J Saf Res. 2022;83:79–95. doi: 10.1016/j.jsr.2022.08.006.

3. <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/healthyenvironments/workplacehealth/pages/youngworkers.aspx>

## Employers should observe the following safety tips:



- Provide safety trainings that use language that young workers can understand, such as the O[yes] training below.
- Encourage young workers to ask questions about safety.
- Label equipment that employees below a certain age should not use.
- Inform young workers about their rights in the workplace and make sure that they know what to do if they get hurt.

Safety tips source: <https://osha.oregon.gov/workers/Pages/Young-workers.aspx>

## Examples of Fatal Stories:

**Case 1:** An 18-year-old mechanic assistant was on a raised forklift changing an outdoor light fixture. While changing the light, he was electrocuted and subsequently fell off the forklift.

**Case 2:** A 14-year-old volunteer was planting trees after a storm when a falling tree branch struck him. He was pronounced dead at the scene.



Oregon Institute of Occupational Health Sciences • Oregon Health & Science University  
3222 SW Research Dr. L606 • Portland, OR 97239 • 503-494-2281

O[yes] Training:

