

# What's the Cost of Injury in Canada?



Parachute, in collaboration with The Conference Board of Canada and with support from the Public Health Agency of Canada, recently published *The Cost of injury in Canada, 2015*. The report quantifies the cost of injury to Canadian children, families, the healthcare system and Canadian society in general.

Although the report doesn't focus on or break out *workplace* injuries specifically, its findings are still valuable because it does focus on preventable injuries, which would presumably include most 'if not all' injuries suffered on the job.

The report examines all injuries at the national level and also provides breakdowns by jurisdiction. According to the report, preventable injuries resulted in:

- 15,866 deaths
- 231,596 Canadians hospitalized
- Nearly 3.5 million emergency room visits
- More than 60,000 Canadians either partially or permanently disabled
- \$15.9 billion in direct costs (health care costs arising from injuries)
- \$10.9 billion in indirect costs (costs related to reduced productivity from hospitalization, disability and premature death).

Every hour, 427 people in Canada suffer a preventable injury. Such injuries can be a result of events related to:

- Transportation
- Falls
- Drowning
- Fire/burns
- Suffocation
- Being struck by/against
- Poisonings.

Preventable injury is the leading cause of death for Canadians aged one to 44. On a daily basis, more than 10,000 Canadians are injured seriously enough to

require medical attention. Of these, approximately 9,567 are seen in emergency rooms, 43 die, 634 are hospitalized, and 165 are left partially or totally disabled.

Sadly, the injury death rate has increased by 2.8% from 42.06 (per 100,000) to 43.25 (per 100,000). Preventable injury in 2004 killed 13,000 Canadians that number increased to 15,866 in 2010. And the economic cost of injury in Canada has increased by 35% since 2004.

*Bottom line:* If the country continues on this trajectory, forecasts show that by 2035 injuries will cost Canadians \$75 billion and 26,390 lives. Because the vast majority of injuries in Canada are both predictable and preventable, measures *can* be implemented to reverse this trend both in general and at workplaces in particular.