

Recession Has Surprising Effect on Workplace Injuries *Lower injury rates do not mean safer workplaces*

New York, NY – (November 4, 2009) – The recession may be having a surprising effect on fatal and non-fatal workplace injuries. According to 2008 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), fatal work injuries dropped by more than 10 percent from 2007 to 2008. But this does not mean that workplaces are safer. BLS acknowledges that the economy had a major effect on the drop – industries with the highest number of workplace injuries, such as construction, lost the most jobs in the recession, and the average number of work hours across all industries also decreased.

“In fact, it is possible that workplaces are even less safe today,” said **Paul Dansker, Esq., partner at Dansker & Aspromonte Associates**, the New York City-based personal injury law firm.

“Companies may be cutting back on safety measures, enforcement and safe practices in order to reduce costs. Sadly, providing proper safety equipment, training employees to work safely, and supervising employees can be expensive and may be viewed by employers as a low priority,” Dansker added.

The construction industry is particularly fraught with injury risk. “Working on scaffolding and elevated platforms is extremely dangerous. We see injuries related to falling workers all the time in our practice,” said Dansker.

There are laws specifically written for workers on scaffolds and other heights because it is so dangerous. “Slips and falls often occur because floor surfaces are wet, slick, or covered with construction equipment and debris. Equipment can be negligently operated. Debris can fall. Trenches can collapse and kill workers.”

Dansker also noted that recent problems with mold overgrowth on sheetrock sourced from China frequently results in respiratory injuries to workers hired to remove contaminated surfaces.

Another cause in the drop in reported injuries may be a reluctance to report a workplace accident. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, approximately one-third of full-time workers and three-quarters of part-time workers do not have paid sick leave, and many workers in the construction field are undocumented aliens who are afraid to make waves. A worker may choose to ignore a work-related injury rather than lose income or even worse, lose their job.

“Not only can this exacerbate the injuries, but it also will ultimately cause the worker to lose the right to much needed and legally permissible compensation,” said Dansker.

Dansker offers valuable tips regarding workplace safety and injury:

- Know the dangers of the job, as well as the appropriate safety measures, and make sure to utilize those safety measures in the workplace.
- Speak up regarding workplace hazards.
- Use all equipment correctly and in accordance with proper training.
- Immediately notify the employer of an on-the-job injury in order to make a timely workers compensation claim and to secure a referral to the appropriate doctor.
- Find out about workers compensation rights as an injured employee.
- Learn proper posture and procedures for heavy manual labor.

Dansker & Aspromonte Associates is located at 30 Vesey Street, 16th Floor, New York, NY 10007. For more information, call (212) 732-2929 or visit www.dandalaw.com.

About Dansker & Aspromonte Associates:

Dansker & Aspromonte Associates is a New York City-based personal injury law firm that represents individuals seriously injured as the result of construction and motor vehicle accidents; medical malpractice; falls; brain injuries; sexual assaults; lead paint ingestion and more. The firm has represented thousands of clients and obtained hundreds of millions of dollars on their behalf in over thirty years in practice.