SMACNA Safety Profile

2025

SMACNA Safety Excellence Awards Program

CLRC Construction Labor Research Council

Overview

Each year SMACNA conducts a Safety Excellence Awards Program (SSEAP) to recognize SMACNA members with the lowest injury/illness rates during the prior calendar year. Awards are presented to participating contractors with the lowest injury/illness incident rate (as computed using the OSHA incident rate formula). There are various award categories based upon a contractor's hours worked.

Information submitted for the program provides a rich database for evaluating sheet metal and HVAC industry safety performance. Findings are summarized in this report. In addition, contractors participating in the awards program are provided with information to permit them to compare their own safety performance with other similarly sized contractors and those performing similar types of work.

The Safety Excellence Awards Program also profiles many aspects of SMACNA members' safety efforts. Information has been gathered on the prevalence and characteristics of safety programs and training and their impact on contractor safety performance. Some trend data are included. Particular attention is given to drug and alcohol abuse programs.

This report refers to data collected for hours worked in the calendar year 2024.

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I. Executive Summary

The average OSHA incident rate decreased from 1.59 last year to 1.32 in 2025 (data from 2024), marking the lowest measured incident rate in the timespan this survey has been conducted, and the sixth consecutive year the incident rate has dropped.

Nearly all contractors in the study conduct safety inspections (97 percent), use toolbox talks/videos (91 percent), and have a formal drug program (87 percent).

The majority (69 percent) of companies conduct pre-task planning at least as often as before each project. Furthermore, there was a correlation between a higher frequency of pre-task planning and a lower average incident rate.

Computer-based training (83 percent) remains the primary training material used, followed again by books (76 percent) in popularity. VHS videos continue to be the least common training material, at 6 percent. All of these percentages remain consistent with last year's results.

The number of reported hours of work was 53.0 million, a decrease of 13 percent from last year. Commensurately, the number of surveys submitted this year decreased by 41 percent (2024: 131; 2025: 90).

Although the percentage of contractors that use SMACNA Safety Products and Services remains high at 79 percent this year, the percentage has fallen by 11 percent since 2016 (90 percent).

Similar to the trend of SMACNA Safety Products and Services, the percentage of contractors that utilize SMOHIT Safety Products fell for the fourth consecutive year, now at 47 percent, slowly declining from 56 percent in 2021.

Exhibit 1.1 – Summary Statistics

Class	Hours	Reports	Total Hours	Number of Incidents	Incident Rate
1	1-25,000	12	218,492	6	5.49
2	25,001-50,000	13	505,596	6	2.37
3	50,001-100,000	6	387,188	3	1.55
4	100,001-200,000	13	1,932,237	9	0.93
5	200,001-300,000	13	3,239,172	37	2.28
6	300,001-400,000	6	1,717,800	19	2.21
7	400,001-500,000	5	2,171,997	40	3.68
8	Over 500,000	22	42,871,957	229	1.07
	All Class Total	**90**	**53,044,438**	**349**	**1.32**

As shown in **Exhibit 1.1**, there were 90 participants in the 2025 SMACNA Safety Excellence Awards Program Survey (data reflect 2024). These companies worked about 53.0 million hours in 2024. Like last year, a plurality of respondents, 22 (25 percent), was from contractors who worked over 500,000 hours (class size 8). Though these companies represented only 25 percent of the respondents, they represented over 80 percent of the hours for the 2024 data. Conversely, companies reporting 25,000 hours or less represented about 13 percent of respondents and approximately half a percent of the hours.

Exhibit 1.2 contains an overview of key statistics tracked by the SMACNA Safety Profile from 2015-2025.

Exhibit 1.2 – Safety Trends

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of Companies	222	139	185	237	164	209	201	199	96	131	90
Reported Hours (millions)	64.1	37.3	58.7	81.9	54.4	87.5	82.6	88.0	53.5	60.7	53.0
Incidents	795	450	650	920	640	874	788	790	479	483	349
Incident Rate	2.48	2.41	2.22	2.25	2.35	2.00	1.91	1.80	1.79	1.59	1.32
Use SMACNA Products	88%	90%	87%	81%	84%	78%	81%	80%	81%	79%	79%
Use SMOHIT Safety Products	59%	55%	57%	51%	48%	46%	56%	52%	51%	50%	47%
Drug Program	83%	77%	85%	82%	71%	81%	81%	82%	83%	88%	87%

II. Incident Rate

As shown in **Exhibit 2.1**, the average SMACNA OSHA incident rate slightly decreased again in 2025 (2024 data), for the 14th time in the last 17 years, falling by 0.27 to 1.32. The OSHA incident rate is a measure of frequency and does not necessarily reflect the severity of the cases (i.e., days away from work or restricted duty).

The OSHA incident rate for private industry plumbing, heating, and air-conditioning contractors is shown by the orange line. At the time this report was conducted, data was available through 2023. The data was gathered from the "Injuries, Illness, and Fatalities" program from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Thirty-six percent of the reporting contractors had an incident rate of zero, which was similar to past years. The remaining incident rates were spread throughout the range of reported values.

Exhibit 2.1 – Incident Rate Trend

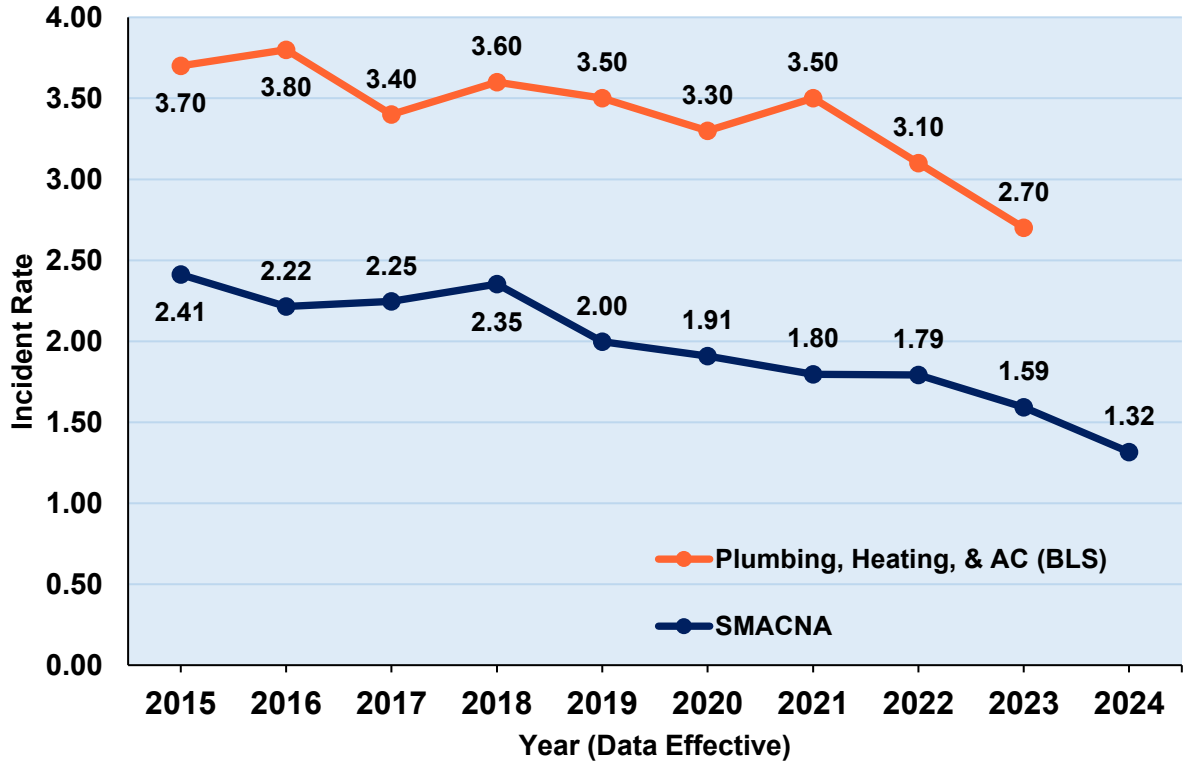


Exhibit 2.2 – Incident Rate by Company Size

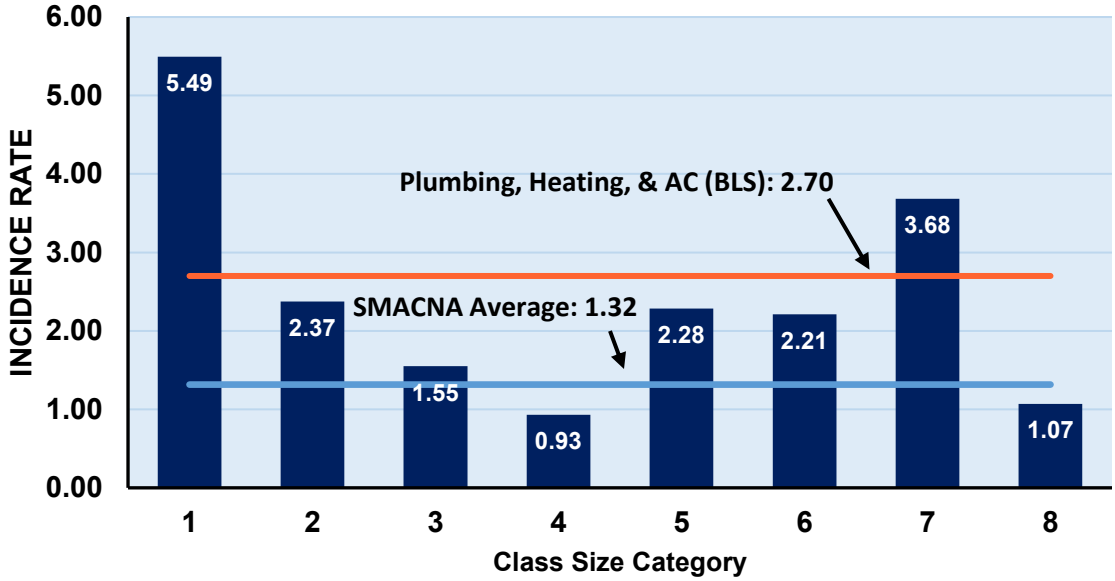


Exhibit 2.2 illustrates the incident rate by company size (see **Exhibit 1.1** for a description of the company size categories). There was no apparent correlation between class size and incident rate. The high incident rate in class size 1 (up to 25,000 hours) was due to one small company with a few recordable cases. Because the hours worked are low, this influences the average incident rate more in the smaller class sizes. Excluding that company, the average incident rate would have been 3.05 for class size 1.

Exhibit 2.3 – Most Common Types of Injuries

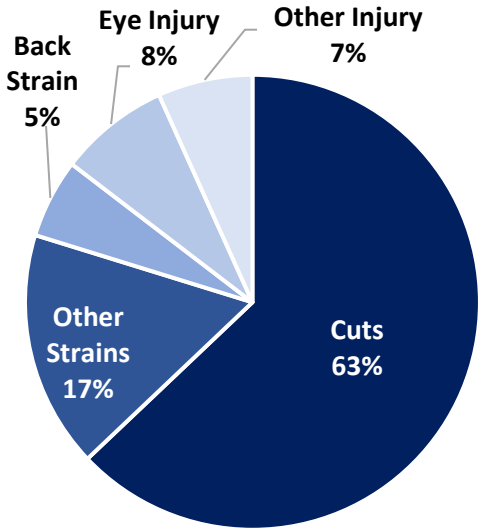


Exhibit 2.3 shows the prevalance of different types of injuries. Cuts are once again the most common by far at 63 percent of all injuries reported, similar to historical trends.

III. Safety

Shown by **Exhibit 3.1**, nearly all companies conducted safety inspections. As displayed in **Exhibit 3.2,** a strong majority of contractors—79 percent—use SMACNA's safety products and services, identical to last year.

Exhibit 3.1 – Conduct Safety Inspections

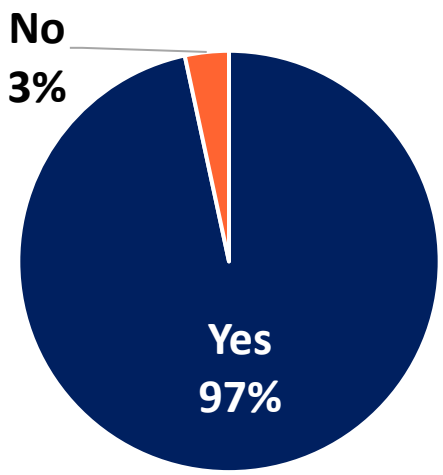
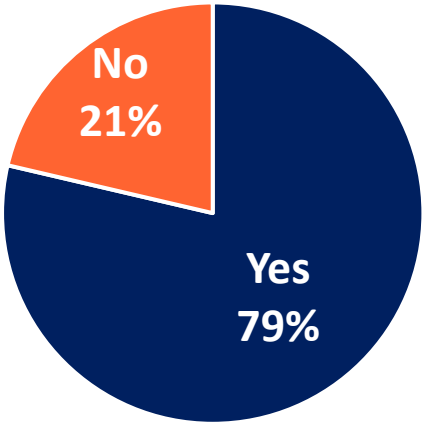


Exhibit 3.2 – Use Safety Products & Services from SMACNA



About half of contractors use SMOHIT safety products, commensurate with prior years (**Exhibit 3.3**). **Exhibit 3.4** shows that more than two-thirds of respondents either conducted a pre-task safety plan before each project or before each shift. Only two percent of respondents said they do not have a pre-task safety plan.

Exhibit 3.3 – Use SMOHIT Safety Products

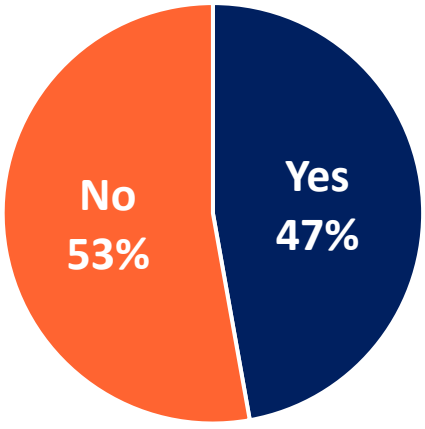


Exhibit 3.4 – Pre-Task Safety Planning

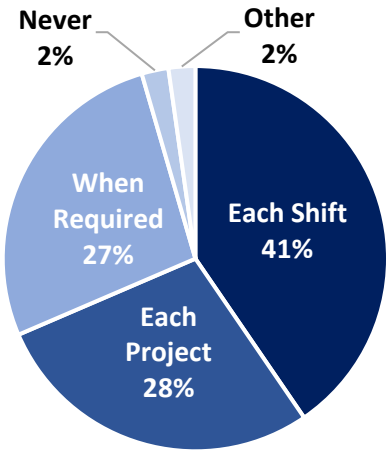


Exhibit 3.5 – Incident Rate by Pre-Task Plan

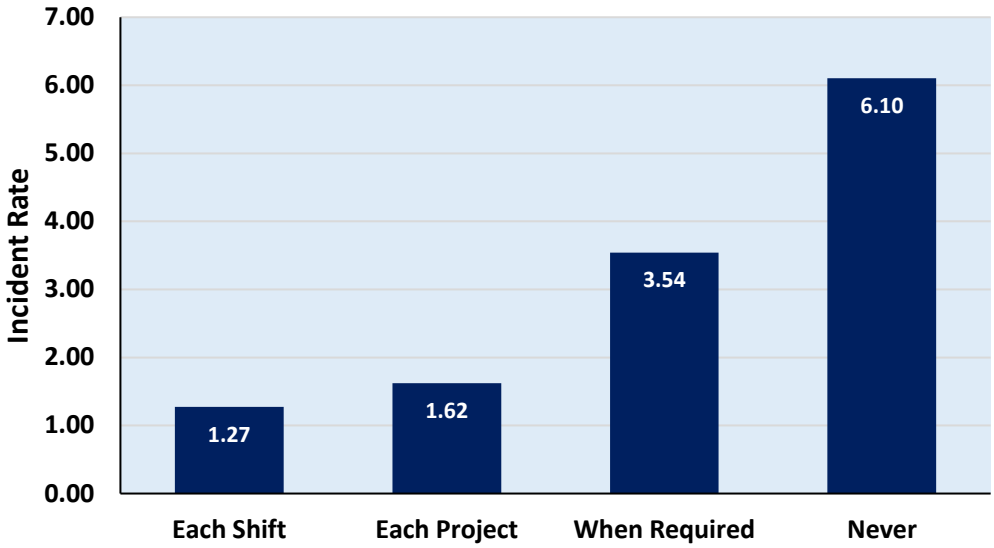


Exhibit 3.5 displays the average incident rate within each pre-task plan category. There is an evident correlation between a company's approach to pre-task planning and incident rate. Companies that conduct more frequent pre-task planning have a lower average incident rate. For example, companies that conducted pre-task planning each shift had an incident rate of 1.27, while companies that never conducted pre-task planning had the highest average incident rate (6.10).

Safety Training Methods

Exhibit 3.6 shows the frequency of usage for various types of safety training methods. The most common type of safety training was once again Toolbox Talks & Videos, used by 91 percent of the respondents. The OSHA 10-Hour Course was again the least popular method at 47 percent, down 8 percent from last year.

Exhibits 3.7-3.11 build on **Exhibit 3.6** by conveying the usage for each of the five different types of training methods by hours worked. The bars show the percentage of respondents using each method.

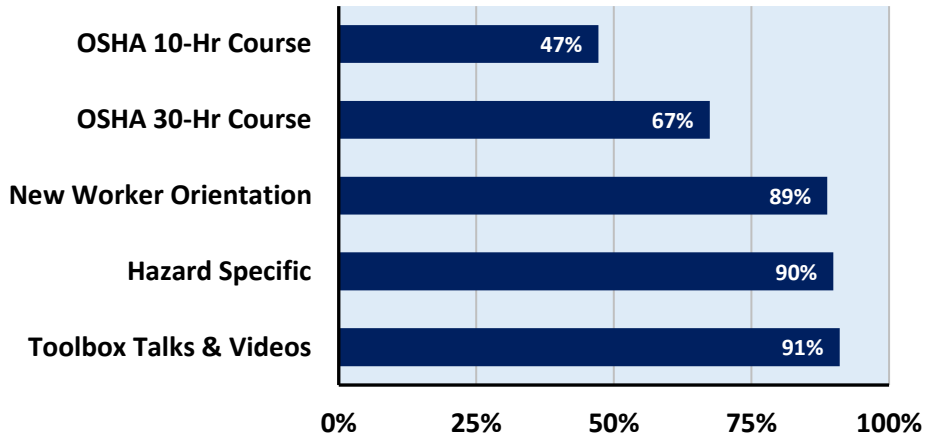


Exhibit 3.6 – Type of Safety Training

Exhibit 3.7 – OSHA 10-Hour Course

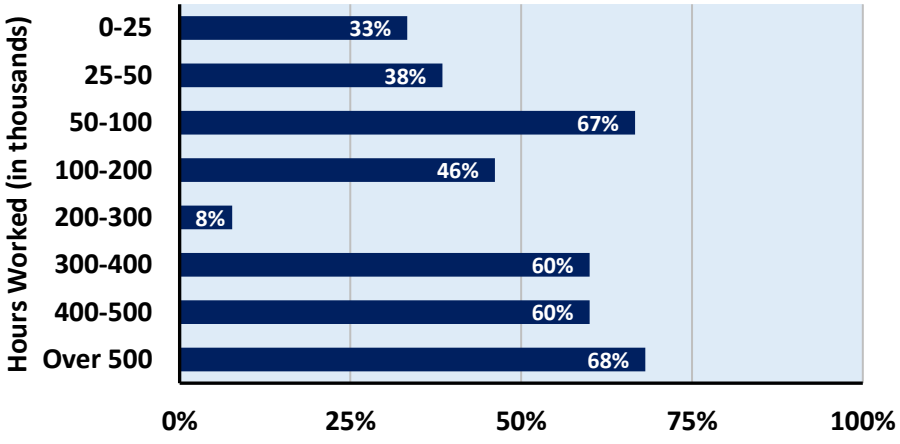


Exhibit 3.8 – OSHA 30-Hour Course

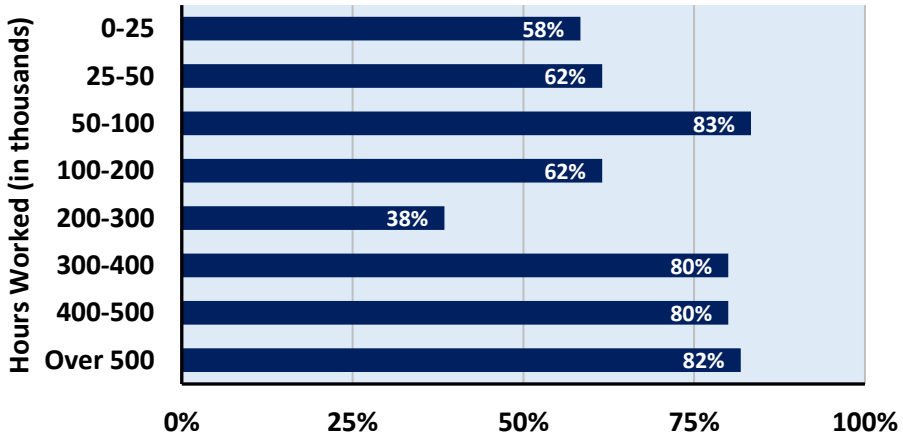


Exhibit 3.9 – New Worker Orientation

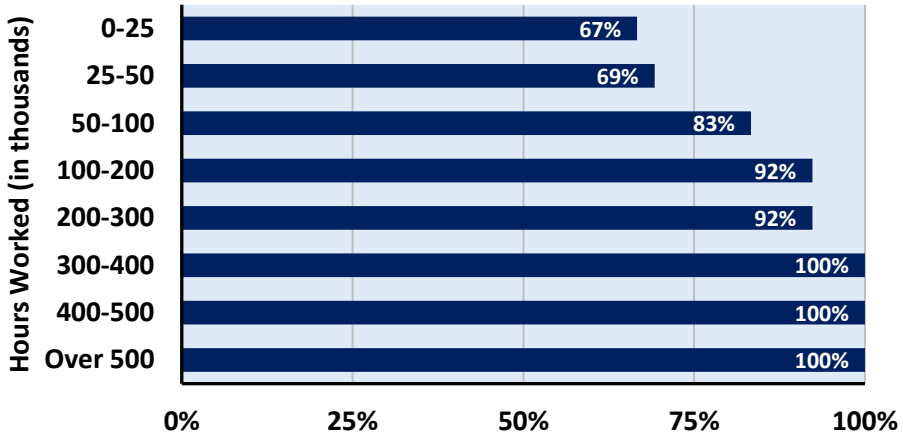


Exhibit 3.10 – Hazard Specific

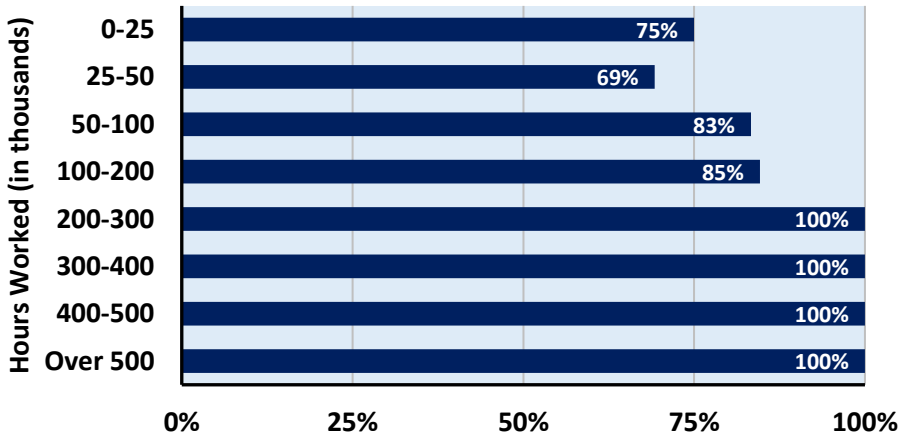
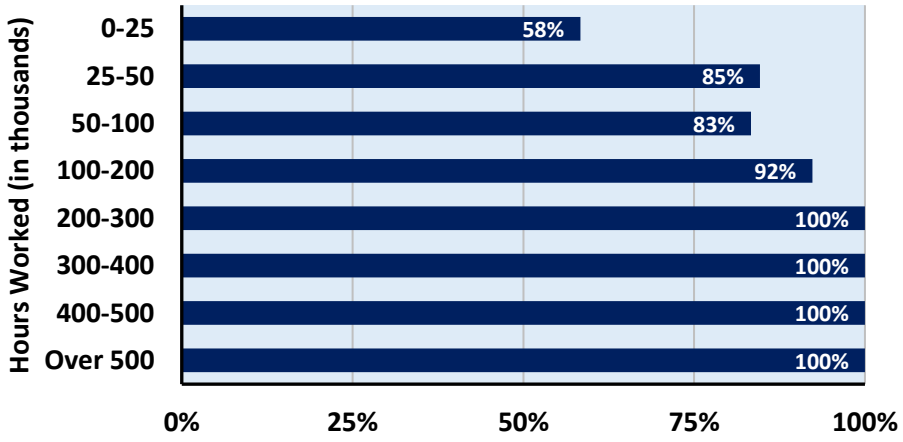


Exhibit 3.11 – Toolbox Talks and Videos



Safety Training Frequency

As shown in **Exhibit 3.12**, half (49 percent) of companies conduct safety training on a weekly basis. The distribution of contractors training in each category was similar to last year's marks.

Exhibits 3.13-3.16 show the results by hours worked for daily, weekly, monthly, and annual training. It is important to note that many companies may conduct training at multiple intervals (e.g., Company XYZ may conduct safety training weekly but have a more comprehensive review annually).

These exhibits display a trend between company size and frequency of training. As company size increases, the likelihood of daily training generally increases, while the likelihood of monthly training decreases. In other words, larger companies typically conduct safety training more often than their smaller counterparts.

Exhibit 3.12 – Frequency of Training

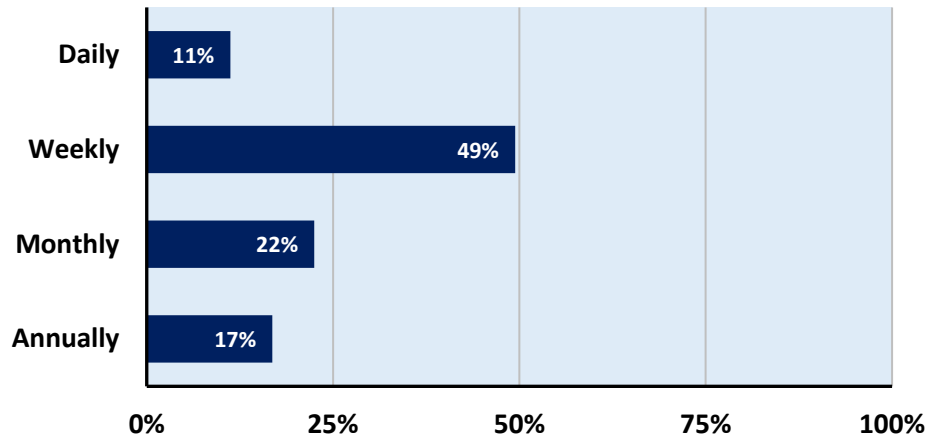


Exhibit 3.13 – Conduct Training Daily

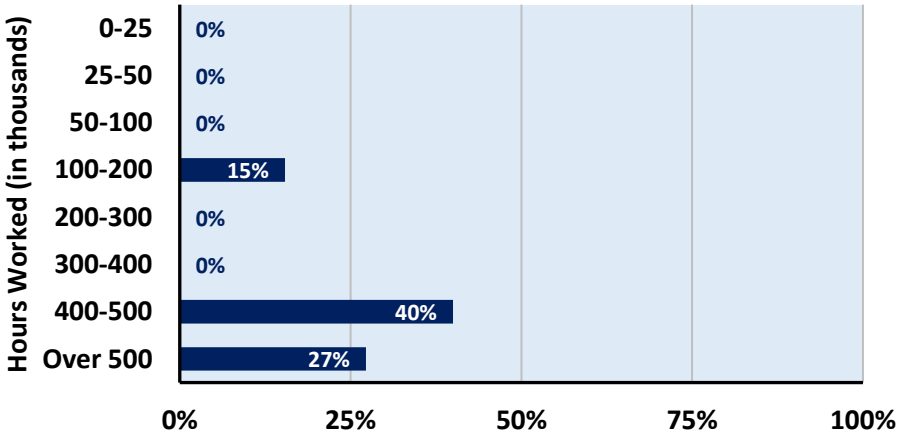


Exhibit 3.14 – Conduct Training Weekly

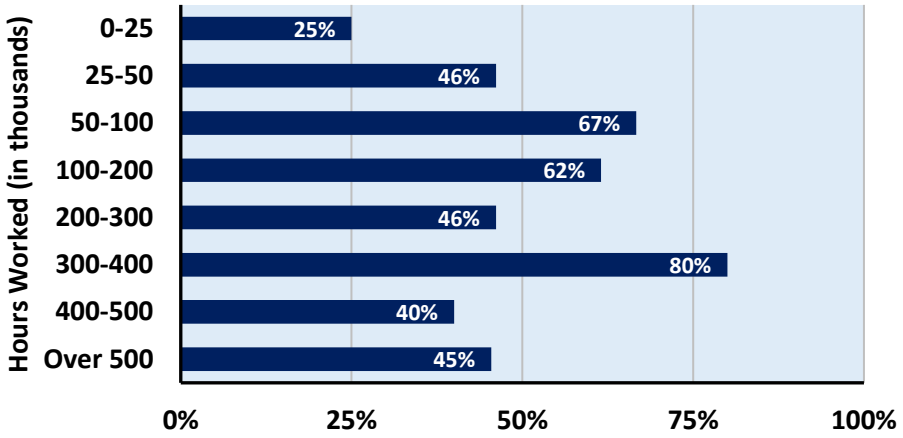


Exhibit 3.15 – Conduct Training Monthly

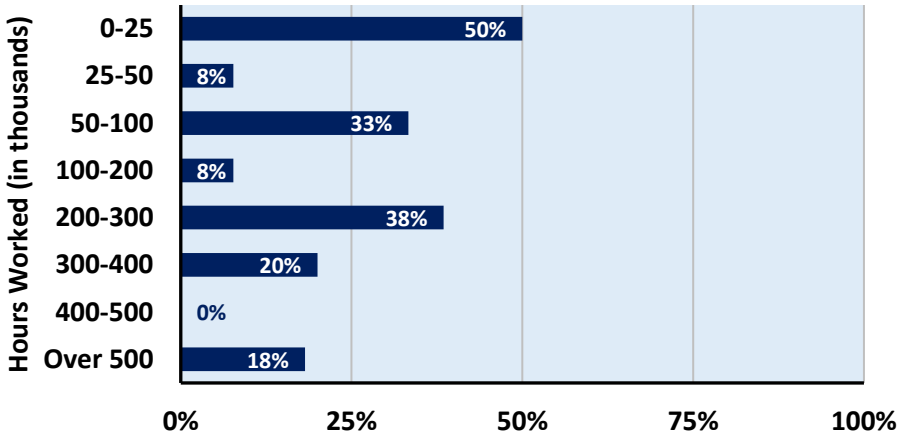
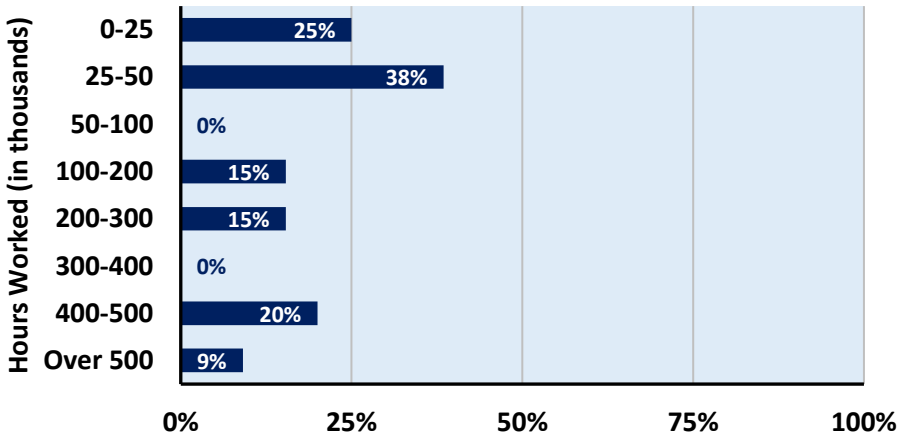


Exhibit 3.16 – Conduct Training Annually



Safety Training Materials

Exhibit 3.17 illustrates the use of various types of safety training materials. Computer-based training (83 percent) was the most common type of training material for a fourth consecutive year. Books remained the second most popular material this year at 76 percent. Computer-based training has increased the most, going from 39 percent in 2012 to 83 percent in 2025 (2024 data). VHS videos were, by far, the least common type of training material used, at 6 percent.

In **Exhibits 3.18-3.23,** the prevalence of each type of safety training material is outlined by hours worked by the participating contractors.

Exhibit 3.17 – Types of Training Materials Used

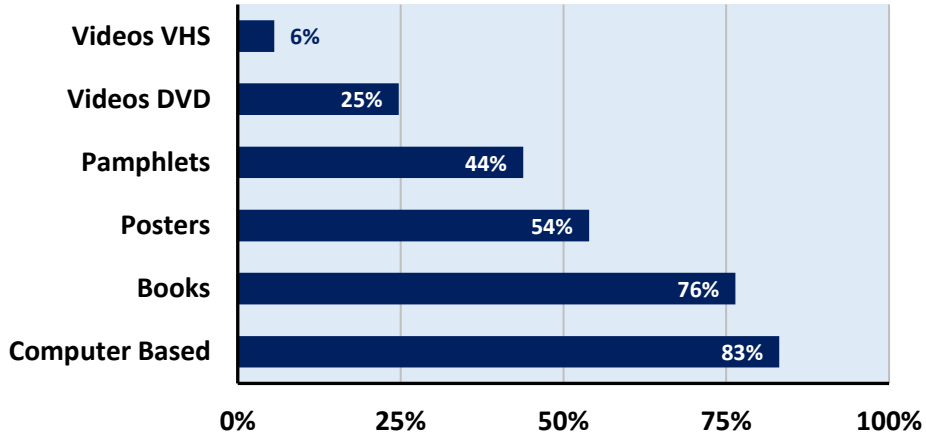


Exhibit 3.18 – VHS Videos

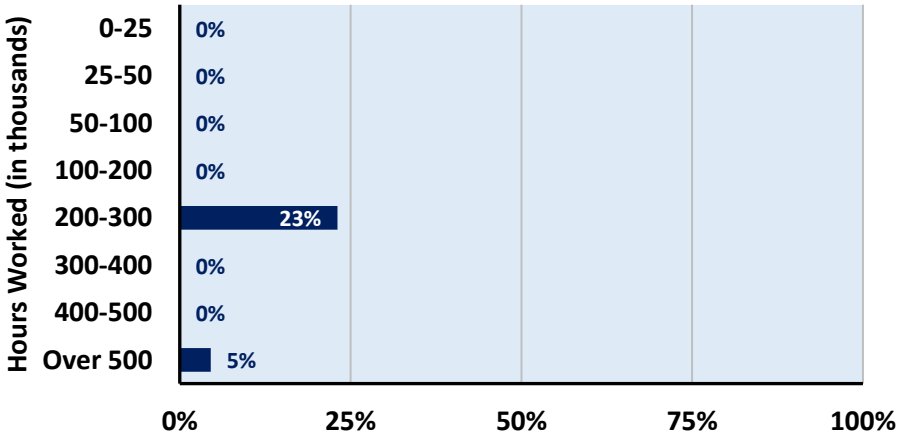


Exhibit 3.19 – DVD Videos

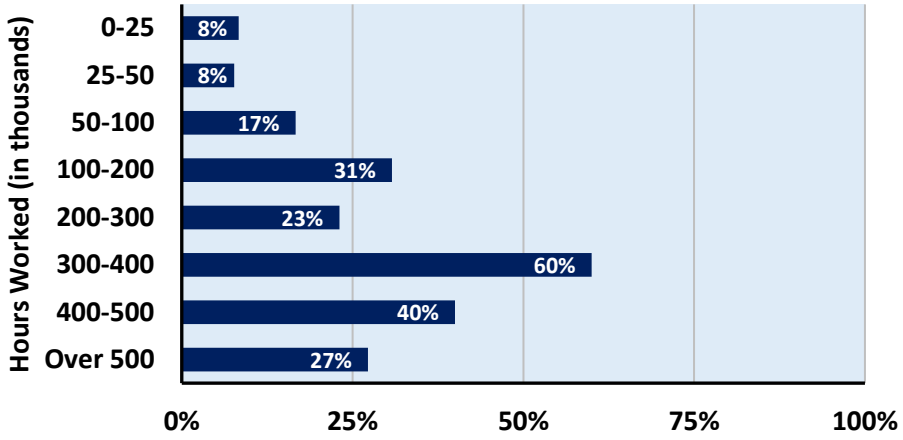


Exhibit 3.20 – Pamphlets

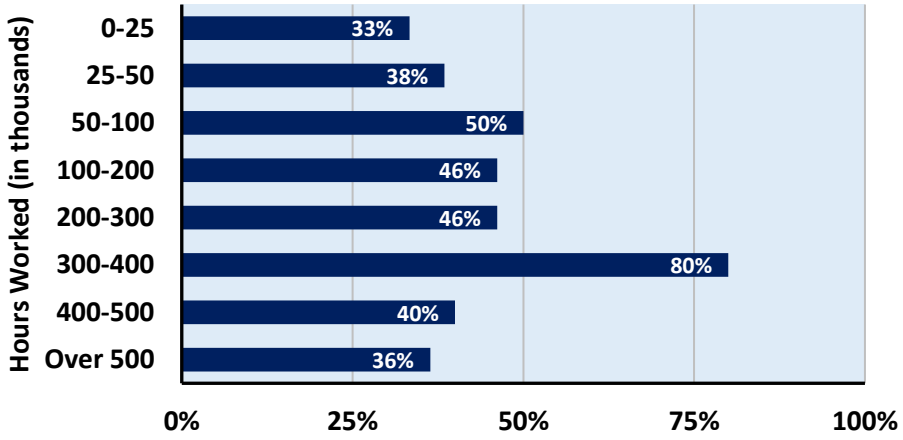


Exhibit 3.21 – Posters

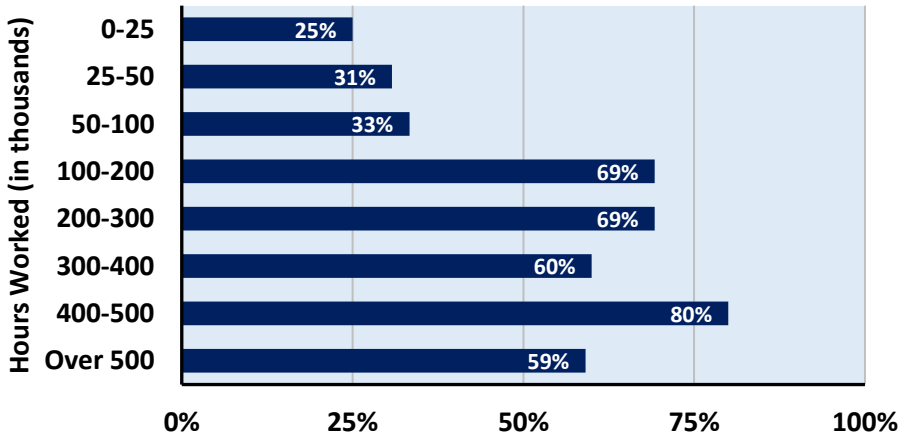


Exhibit 3.22 – Books/ Manuals

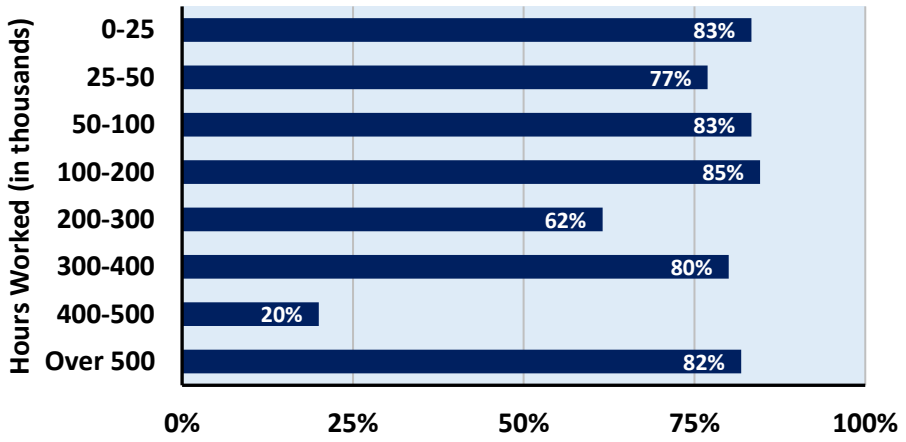
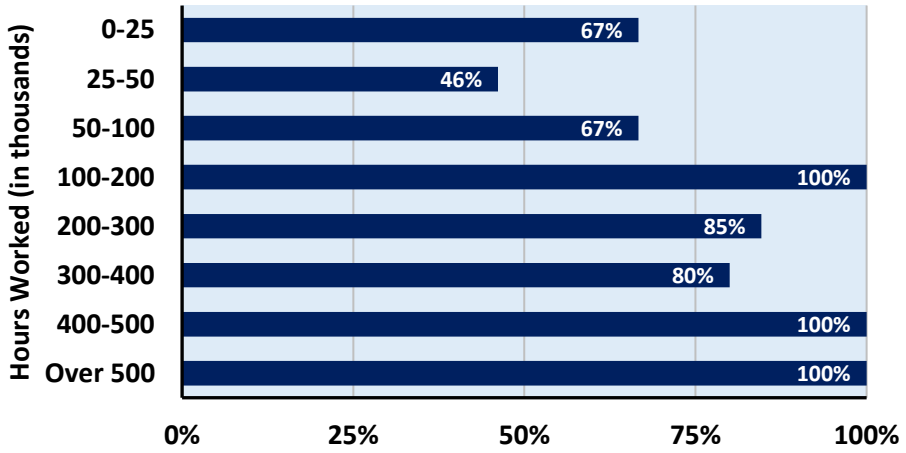


Exhibit 3.23 – Computer-Based Training



IV. Drug and Alcohol

Exhibit 4.1 shows that a strong majority (87 percent) of contractors had a formal drug and alcohol program in 2025 (2024 data), similar to last year.

Exhibit 4.2 expands upon the results from **Exhibit 4.1** by hours worked.

Exhibit 4.1 – Formal Program for Drug and Alcohol Abuse

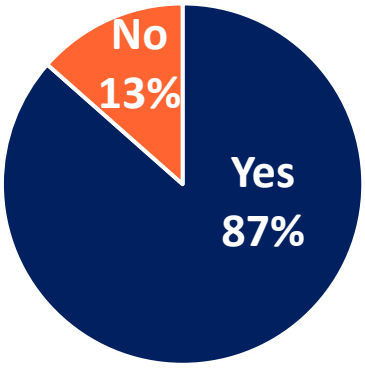
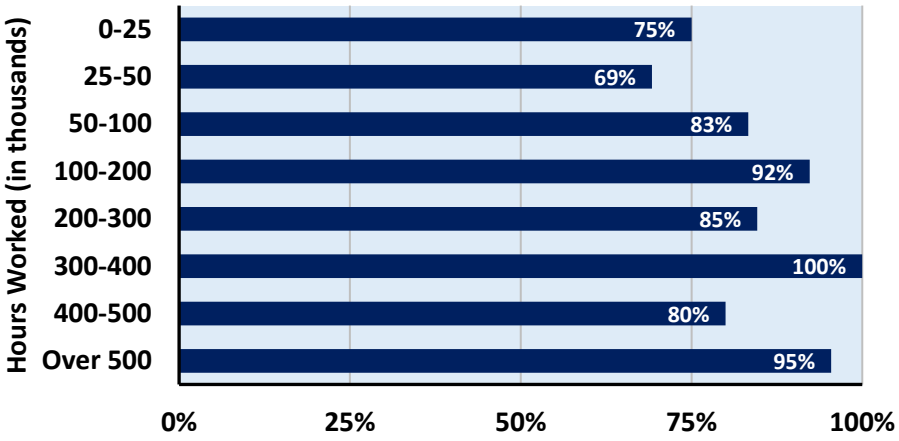
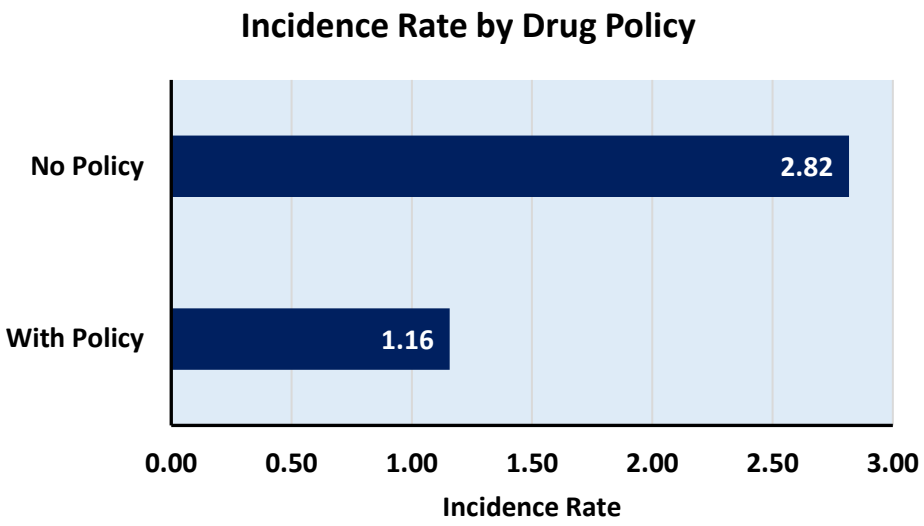


Exhibit 4.2 – Formal Program for Drug and Alcohol Abuse by Hours Worked



As shown in **Exhibit 4.3**, those contractors with no drug policy had a noticeably higher incident rate (2.82) than those with a policy (1.16).

Exhibit 4.3 – Incident Rate by Drug Policy



V. Select Issues

The table in **Exhibit 5.1** compares "superior performers" to "other respondents" (companies that did not reach the threshold to be considered a superior performer) for this year's survey (i.e., this 2025 profile based on data representing 2024) and last year's survey. For the purposes of this analysis, a superior performing contractor is one who achieved an OSHA incident rate at least 50 percent below the ten-year average of the industry incident rate of plumbing, heating, and air-conditioning contractors, as reported by BLS (3.44).

Contractors who met the criteria for superior performers in 2025 were more likely to participate in nearly all of the categories listed, such as using SMACNA safety products, utilizing OSHA 30 hour training, and conducting daily training.

Exhibit 5.1 – Superior Performers Compared to Other Respondents

	2025		2024	
	Other Respondents	Superior Performers	Other Respondents	Superior Performers
Use SMACNA Safety Products	66%	84%	76%	81%
Have a Formal Drug Policy	81%	88%	83%	91%
New Worker Orientation Safety Training	88%	88%	87%	91%
Utilize OSHA 10 Hr. Training	34%	53%	52%	56%
Utilize OSHA 30 Hr. Training	53%	74%	70%	76%
Utilize Computer Based Training	78%	84%	87%	84%
Utilize Book Based Training	56%	86%	78%	74%
Conduct Daily Training	3%	16%	13%	14%
Average Incident Rate	2.83	0.66	3.22	1.01

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