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# THE ALLIANCE ADVISOR

## AUGUST 2025

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NEWS AND SAFETY INFORMATION

## Congratulations to our Safe Workplace Award Recipients!

Safe Workplace Awards have been determined for current members on the January policy cycle. Recipients will be notified, and the awards will be distributed beginning in September.



There are two ways to qualify for the Safe Workplace Award. Members automatically qualify by having an exceptional loss history for the policy year. Members who do not automatically qualify may still be eligible to receive an award by completing an application that allows them to showcase their efforts to improve safety in their workplace. The application instructions for the June and July 2025 policy cycle were emailed to current members on that cycle, and the application is available via the [Comp Academy](#). The applications will be accepted through October 1, 2025.

In addition, current members on the June and July policy cycle will be receiving Loyalty Awards this fall in recognition of their commitment and dedication to the long-term vision of the Comp Alliance.

Together, the safe workplace and loyalty awards ensure that all Comp Alliance members share in the success of our program, and remain fully invested in keeping their employees free from workplace injuries. We are proud to continue giving back to our members through these programs.

Questions about the award programs can be sent to [compalliancemarketing@wrightinsurance.com](mailto:compalliancemarketing@wrightinsurance.com).

## Irondequoit Haber Award Recipient

In recognition of its commitment to maintaining a safe work environment and minimizing employees' time lost due to workplace injuries, the Town of Irondequoit was presented with the 2025 G. Jeffrey Haber Leadership Award by the Comp Alliance at their Safety Committee meeting on Wednesday, June 18th. The award recognizes the proactive measures the town has implemented to establish a "culture of safety" and keep its workplace safe for employees. As a result of the efforts of the elected officials, managerial staff and employees of the town, Irondequoit has elevated the importance of workplace safety, reduced the potential frequency and severity of workplace injuries, ultimately saving its taxpayers on the Town's workers' compensation costs. ➡

“This award recognizes the leadership and commitment required by elected officials, and the discipline required by employees at all levels, to maintain a safe work environment. The coordinated effort of the town’s leadership, its safety committee, and dedicated safety officer elevates the importance of workplace safety and promotes a safe workplace culture,” said Comp Alliance Executive Director Michael Kenneally.

New York Association of Towns (NYAOT) Executive Director Christopher Koetzle said, “The town’s workforce is the foundation of the community, and ensuring their safety is essential to the effective and efficient delivery of services. The leadership exhibited by the Town is truly an example to all towns in New York State.”



*Pictured L to R: Councilwoman Ann Cunningham, Risk Control Specialist Todd Higley (Comp Alliance), Councilman John Perticone*

## Current Exposures for Police and Fire Departments

Five years ago, we discussed hazardous workplace exposures for our municipal police and fire department members. Using member data, let’s look at the current exposures and workplace injury leaders for these departments and compare them to 2020, starting with police.

### Police

2020	% Frequency	% Severity
Struck or Injured by Physical Force	18	23
Strain or Injury by Physical Force	15	20
Slip, Trip, and Fall	12	29
Motor Vehicle Accidents	7	19
Pandemic	23	5



## Current Exposures for Police and Fire Departments (cont.)

2025	% Frequency	% Severity
Struck or Injured by Physical Force	22	22
Motor Vehicle Accidents	7	18
Strain or Injury by Physical Force	16	19
Slip, Trip, and Fall	7	10
Slip, Trip, and Fall on Ice	2	3

Two additional causes from 2025 to consider are animal bites, at a frequency of 4%, and chemical exposure (either inhaled or contact), at a frequency of 5%. These have been less common in past years but make up a notable proportion in 2025.

The major causes of member police officer injuries have remained largely consistent over the past five years, both in frequency and severity of the injuries. That being said, the corrective measures for this year are similar. These types of injuries are more common among police officers due to their intense job functions. Officers are likely to suffer struck-by and strain injuries while dealing with disruptive, combative people. Additionally, much of their job is spent on their feet, sometimes in foot pursuits, during evening hours, and in winter weather conditions, so slip, trip, and fall injuries continue to be a loss leader. Corrective measures to reduce these frequent police-related injuries include:

Cause of Injury	Corrective Measures
Struck or Injured by Physical Force	Use of force continuum, training on use of force, less-than-lethal equipment
Motor Vehicle Accidents	Improve department's high-speed pursuit policy, wear a seatbelt, defensive driving training, avoid distractions

## Current Exposures for Police and Fire Departments (cont.)

Cause of Injury	Corrective Measures
Strain or Injury by Physical Force	Safe lifting training, avoid twisting while lifting, use a back brace belt, improve physical conditioning, limit physical exertion, use mechanical assistance
Slip, Trip, and Fall	Be aware of your surroundings, proper footwear, take it slow and steady, improve housekeeping in-house, avoid distractions
Slip, Trip, and Fall on Ice	Be aware of surroundings and conditions, clear ice/snow from walking surfaces around the police station, wear traction cleat devices, take it slow and steady
Animal Bites	Wear bite gloves, avoid contact with stray animals
Chemical Exposures	Right-to-Know training, consider respirators, avoid the unknown, call FD for assistance

Now, review the types of losses our fire department personnel face.

### Fire

2020	% Frequency	% Severity
Slip, Trip, and Fall	23	46
Strain/Injury by Lifting/Twisting/Overexertion	24	33
Burn/Inhalation Injury	5	5

## Current Exposures for Police and Fire Departments (cont.)

2025	% Frequency	% Severity
Slip, Trip, and Fall	17	28
Strain/Injury by Lifting	8	13
Strain/Injury by Twisting	6	11
Strain/Injury from Overexertion	8	8
Burn/Inhalation Injury	12	2
Struck/Injured by Falling Object	4	1

In 2020, the three listed causes of loss accounted for 52% of member firefighter workplace injuries and 84% of the total incurred dollars for firefighter workers' compensation claims. Those numbers dropped for the categories of slip, trip, and burn/inhalation injuries, although the frequency of claims for this category more than doubled. The data from 2025 directly identifies the type of strain or injury claim (lifting, twisting, overexertion), but the overall percentage of loss over this period is about the same in comparison.

A new loss cause that represented an increase in workplace injury frequency in 2025 is struck/injured by a falling object. This object can be any overhead obstruction or flying debris and shows the importance of head and face protection.

Corrective measures to reduce these frequent fire-related injuries include:

Cause of Injury	Corrective Measures
Struck or Injured by Physical Force	Use of force continuum, training on use of force, less-than-lethal equipment

## Current Exposures for Police and Fire Departments (cont.)

Cause of Injury	Corrective Measures
Motor Vehicle Accidents	Improve department's high-speed pursuit policy, wear a seatbelt, defensive driving training, avoid distractions
Strain or Injury by Physical Force	Safe lifting training, avoid twisting while lifting, use a back brace belt, improve physical conditioning, limit physical exertion, use mechanical assistance
Slip, Trip, and Fall	Be aware of your surroundings, proper footwear, take it slow and steady, improve housekeeping in-house, avoid distractions
Slip, Trip, and Fall on Ice	Be aware of surroundings and conditions, clear ice/snow from walking surfaces around the police station, wear traction cleat devices, take it slow and steady
Animal Bites	Wear bite gloves, avoid contact with stray animals
Chemical Exposures	Right-to-Know training, consider respirators, avoid the unknown, call FD for assistance

For police officers and firefighters, managing stress and maintaining a good safety culture greatly contributes to a positive work environment and reduced work injuries. Safety culture is the application of safety standards throughout your department – the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and values that employees share and display regarding safety. Develop comprehensive programs so that safety is mutually beneficial for all staff. Work together to ensure the well-being of coworkers by being proactive about safety standards, guidelines, and practices. This approach is of the utmost importance to police and fire department operations, given their high-hazard nature and workplace claim history.

Please reach out to the Comp Alliance Director of Loss Control, Robert Blaisdell, at [rblaisdell@wrightinsurance.com](mailto:rblaisdell@wrightinsurance.com) or (518) 330-8591 for more information or assistance with your workplace safety programs.



### Groundskeeper Safety

School groundskeepers work diligently to maintain lawns, field areas, and play structures, ensuring they are neat and safe for students. By prioritizing health and safety at work, you can avoid disruptions in your life and improve safety on school grounds for students, teachers, and visitors this summer.

Groundskeepers can suffer from chronic lower back pain, muscle strains, ligament and tendon injuries, spinal disc degeneration, shoulder injuries, and tennis elbow from repeated motions and heavy lifting. Use proper lifting techniques when lifting heavy loads, such as lifting and moving with your legs, avoiding twisting movements, using a harness or mechanical devices, or asking for assistance. Appropriate footwear is another way to reduce these types of injuries.



Groundskeepers may use pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, insecticides, rodenticides, sanitizers, cleaning agents, and other hazardous chemicals as part of their job. A groundskeeper should always wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) such as safety eyewear, gloves, a mask, and even an apron. Further, employees should also review the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) before using a chemical and receive annual training on Right-to-Know – Chemical Safety.

Power tools such as leaf blowers, weed trimmers, and chainsaws can be loud enough to damage your hearing. Employees should wear proper hearing protection when operating this equipment. In addition, protect the hands and eyes from flying debris with proper PPE. Long pants, though sometimes deemed too hot for summer work, protect against flying debris kicked up by a weed trimmer and poisonous plants like poison ivy. Have staff wear pants made from lightweight fabrics in the summer to improve comfort. When operating a chainsaw, employees should still wear chaps, a hard hat with a mesh face shield, and earmuffs.

School groundskeepers spend a lot of time outdoors and in the sun. Workers who spend several hours outdoors in the sun are at risk of heat illness. Exposure to the sun can also cause problems such as cataracts and skin cancer. Workers should be provided with water, shade for rest breaks, and training so they can identify the symptoms of heat illness and take corrective measures. In addition, sunscreen should be worn and reapplied as needed. Sunglasses with UV protection and proper lightweight sun-reflective clothing should be worn.



## Upcoming Conferences



Thank you for visiting us at the NYCOM Annual Meeting!



We hope you caught our presentation on Strategies and Best Practices for Worker Safety. You can find us at Fall Training School, September 15-19, in Lake Placid.

**We'll also be seeing you at these conferences. Be sure to check out our booth! Take a look at the [Events page](#) on our website to stay up-to-date on where we're headed next.**

10/14 Potsdam Local Government Conference - Potsdam, NY

10/6 - 10/8 NYCOM Public Works School - Lake George, NY

11/17 - 11/20 ASBO New York School Business Management Workshop - Saratoga Springs, NY

## Upcoming Training Seminars

The Comp Alliance has several live video conference trainings scheduled for members throughout August and September. We'll cover PESH-mandated topics including Workplace Violence, Right-to-Know, and Bloodborne Pathogens. Visit <https://compalliance.org/events> for our full calendar.

### HAZWOPER

Monday, 9/8, 8:00 - 8:30 am  
Monday, 10/13, 8:00 - 8:30 am  
Monday, 11/17, 8:00 - 8:30 am  
Monday, 12/22, 8:00 - 8:30 am

### Upcoming Virtual Trainings

- Monday, 9/8: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 9/15: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 9/22: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 9/29: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 10/6: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 10/13: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 10/20: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Tuesday, 10/21: 5 PM - 7 PM

## Welcome New Members

Welcome new members! We look forward to working with you to keep your organization safe.

Niagara Falls Water Board  
Town of Clarkson  
Town of Danby  
Town of East Greenbush  
Town of Inlet  
Town of Jewett  
Town of Philipstown  
Town of Tyre  
Union Springs CSD  
Village of Bellport  
Village of Harriman  
Village of Portville  
Village of Valatie