

- 591 compensable claims
- Costs \$19.5 million
- Over 114,000 days of lost time
- A compensable rate of 4.1 per 100 FTE or 1 in 25 employees

Strain, sprain or overexertion injuries were the most common compensable claims for Couriers and Messengers accounting for 34% of compensable injuries during this time period (Figure 62). Falls on same level (10% of compensable claims) had the highest median cost (\$20,653). Drivers accounted for 77% of compensable claims and had the highest median medical costs (\$8,444) for fall on the same level.

Figure 61. Compensable Claims By Age Group

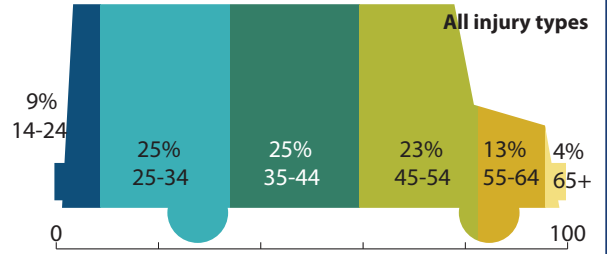


Figure 62. Percent of compensable injuries by type, Couriers and Messengers 2006-2012

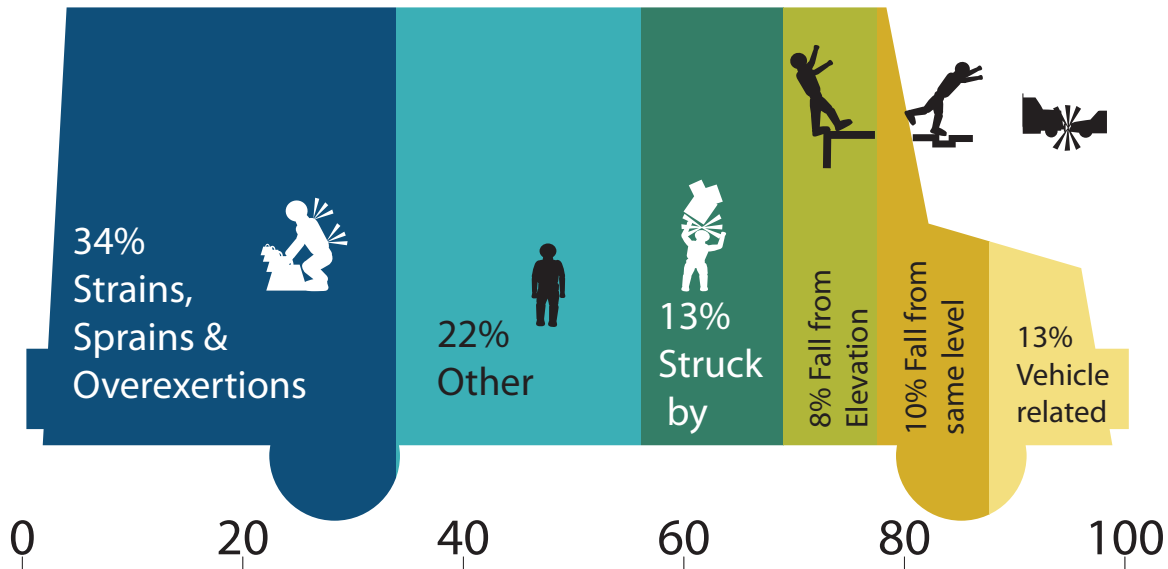
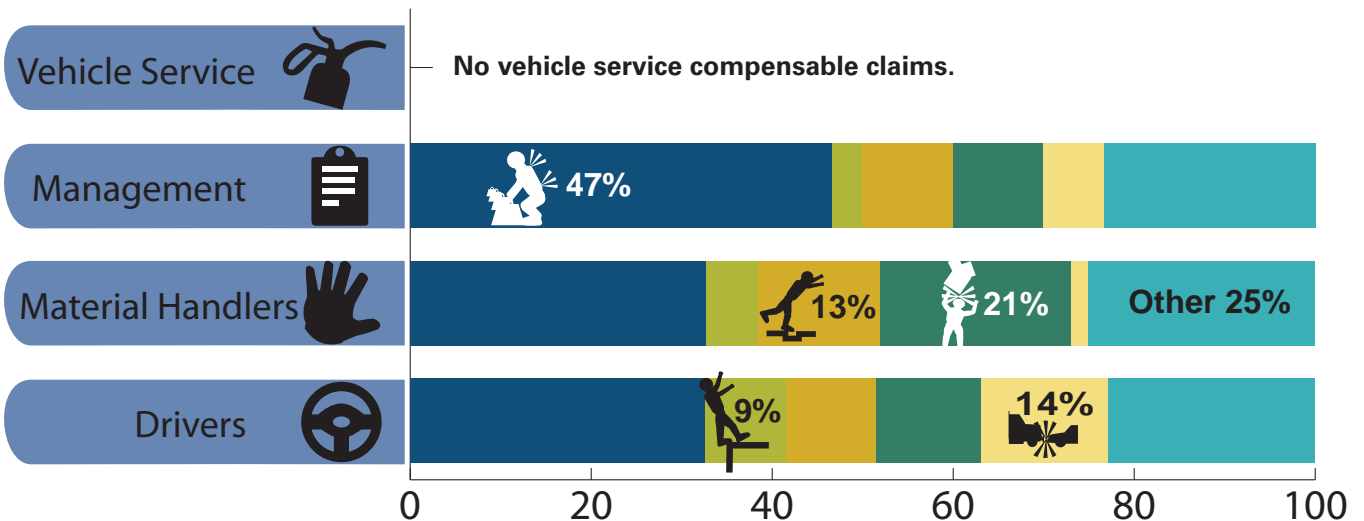


Figure 63. Percent of injury type by occupation, Couriers and Messengers 2006-2012



**Table 33. The top five injury type and source of injury combination in Couriers and Messengers, ranked by intervention priority were:**

| Description  | PIP Rank |
|--|----------|
| Falling off the back of the truck, or missed a step and fell                               | 1        |
| Slipped or tripped while carrying packages   | 2        |
| Slipped while walking – ice or wet ground  | 3        |
| While getting in to or out of cab/truck; twisted lower extremity – knees, ankles, and feet | 4        |
| Overexertion – back, upper extremity (shoulders, neck, and arms) from lifting heavy boxes  | 5        |
| Motor vehicle crash – being hit from behind  | 5        |

\*PIP prioritizes injury types by ranking three important factors and averaging. The PIP ranks the count of injuries, the type (e.g., fall from elevation, struck by), and the number of time-loss days. Highest time-loss = □, Highest medical cost = ○, Highest count of claims = △ are noted with these symbols, when available.

## Prevention Targets

### Employers

- Invest in trucks with adequate hand holds at appropriate heights.
- Provide mechanical assist to drivers to reduce heavy lifting.
- Allow enough time for drivers to complete their routes.
- The severity of strain, sprain and overexertion injuries can be positively impacted by early reporting and implementing prevention strategies. This cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Encourage your employees to let you know if they are feeling pain, before the damage becomes severe.

### Drivers

- Always use 3 points-of-contact.
- Wear footwear with a good tread.
- Since packages can disrupt your vision, scan the area for ice, debris, or potholes before carrying your package.
- Report pain early to your employer and physician. Early intervention can decrease the severity of injuries to muscles, tendons, joints and other soft-tissue.

- 201 compensable claims
- Cost over \$6 million
- Over 40,000 days of lost work

Drivers represent 76% of the strain, sprain or overexertion compensable claims in this sector. Although management occupations accounted for only 7% of the injuries of this type, they had the highest median claim cost (\$17,327).

Figure 64. Compensable Claims By Age Group

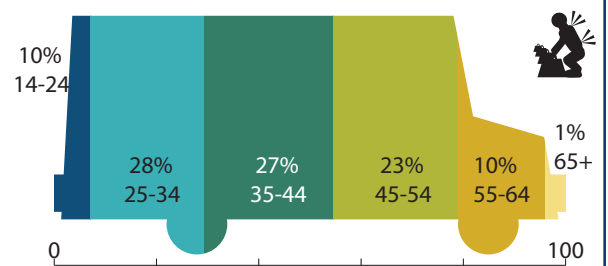


Table 34. Most common strain, sprain or overexertion by type and source combination of injuries in Couriers and Messengers, ranked by intervention priority.

| Description   | PIP Rank |
|---|----------|
| Bodily reaction - twisting leg, getting in/out of truck | 1        |
| Overexertion lifting heavy boxes                        | 2        |
| Overexertion lifting heavy objects, not boxes           | 3        |
| Bending, reaching or twisting                           | 4        |

\*PIP prioritizes injury types by ranking three important factors and averaging. The PIP ranks the count of injuries, the type (e.g., fall from elevation, struck by), and the number of time-loss days. Highest time-loss = □, Highest medical cost = ○, Highest count of claims = △ are noted with these symbols, when available.

## Prevention Tips

### Employers

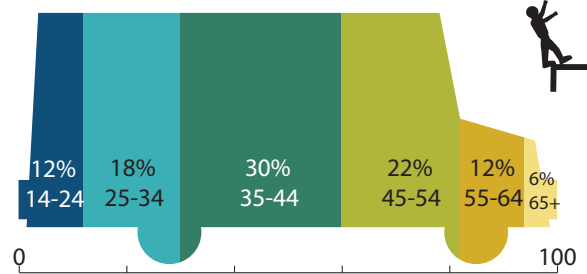
- Invest in trucks with adequate hand holds at appropriate heights.
- Provide mechanical assist devices to reduce heavy lifting.
- Make sure cargo is loaded in the order to be delivered.
- Pre-trip leased trucks or trailers and do not lease them if the maintenance is poor such as doors that don't open and close smoothly.
- The severity of strain, sprain and overexertion injuries can be positively impacted by early reporting and implementing prevention strategies. This cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Encourage your employees to let you know if they are feeling pain, before the damage becomes severe.

### Drivers

- Pre-trip your equipment in addition to your truck. Mark damaged equipment out-of-service.
- Report pain early to your employer and physician. Early intervention can decrease the severity of injuries to muscles, tendons, joints and other soft-tissue.

- 50 compensable claims
- Cost over \$1.8 million
- Over 10,000 days of lost work




Figure 65. Compensable Claims By Age Group



Only driver claims are represented here as they are the only occupation with more than 5 compensable claims. Median claim cost for drivers was \$8,801.

Table 35. Most common fall from elevation by type and source combination of injuries in Couriers and Messengers, ranked by intervention priority.

| Description  | PIP Rank |
|--|----------|
| Fall from vehicle - back of truck or cab               | 1        |
| Fall down stairs                                       | 2        |
| Fall from vehicle - missed a step or fell off liftgate | 3        |

\*PIP prioritizes injury types by ranking three important factors and averaging. The PIP ranks the count of injuries, the type (e.g., fall from elevation, struck by), and the number of time-loss days. Highest time-loss = , Highest medical cost = , Highest count of claims =  are noted with these symbols, when available.

## Prevention Tips

### Employers

- Invest in trucks with adequate hand holds at appropriate heights.
- Inspect truck steps in late summer/early fall for wear and refinish or repair before winter weather arrives. Re-inspect periodically throughout the winter.

### Drivers

- Report worn steps to your employer.
- Wear footwear with good treads.
- Don't rush into or out of your truck.

- 60 compensable claims
- Cost over \$2.7 million
- Over 15,700 days of time-loss

Only driver and material handler claims are represented in the table below as they are the only occupations with more than 5 compensable claims. Median claim cost was \$22,594 for drivers and \$1,422 for material handlers.

Figure 66. Compensable Claims By Age Group

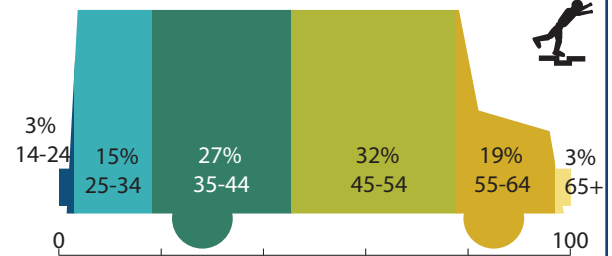


Table 36. Most common fall from the same level by type and source combination of injuries in Couriers and Messengers, ranked by intervention priority.

| Description  | PIP Rank |
|--|----------|
| Slip and trip while carrying packages                            | 1        |
| Slips and trips while walking or getting out of cab - water, ice | 2        |

\*PIP prioritizes injury types by ranking three important factors and averaging. The PIP ranks the count of injuries, the type (e.g., fall from elevation, struck by), and the number of time-loss days. Highest time-loss = □, Highest medical cost = ○, Highest count of claims = △ are noted with these symbols, when available.

## Prevention Targets

### Employers

- Invest in trucks with adequate hand holds at appropriate heights.
- Allow enough time for workers to complete their routes.

### Drivers

- Wear appropriate footwear with good tread.
- Don't rush.
- Look twice for slick surfaces, debris or potholes before exiting your vehicle.
- If you regularly deliver during dusk or darkness, ask customers to turn on exterior lighting. Many will be glad to do what they can to keep you safe.
- Visually inspect the delivery path for obstacles that might be blocked from view when carrying packages.
- Using a hand truck will help keep you steady and keep your view less obstructed.

- **76 compensable injuries**
- **Cost over \$1.9 million**
- **13,000 days of lost work**

71% of struck by or against claims were for drivers with a median claim cost of \$5,956.

Figure 67. Compensable Claims By Age Group

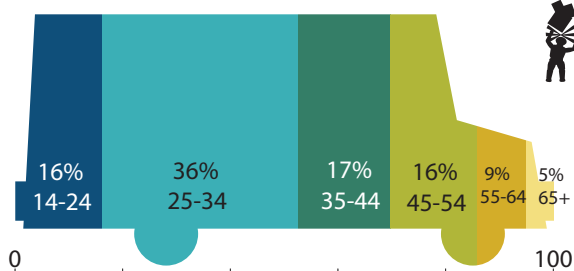


Table 37. Most common struck by or against injuries by type and source combination of injuries in Couriers and Messengers ranked by intervention priority.

| Description                        | PIP Rank |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Boxes and crates falling on worker |          |

\*PIP prioritizes injury types by ranking three important factors and averaging. The PIP ranks the count of injuries, the type (e.g., fall from elevation, struck by), and the number of time-loss days. Highest time-loss = , Highest medical cost = , Highest count of claims = are noted with these symbols, when available.

## Prevention Targets

### Employers

- Train drivers and material handlers on proper load securement.

### Drivers

- Double check that your load is secure during your truck’s pre-trip inspection.
- Don’t try to catch falling freight.

- 74 compensable claims
- Cost \$3.5 million
- Over 15,000 days of lost work

Drivers accounted for 86% of vehicle-related claims with a median claim cost of \$13,564.

Figure 68. Compensable Claims By Age Group

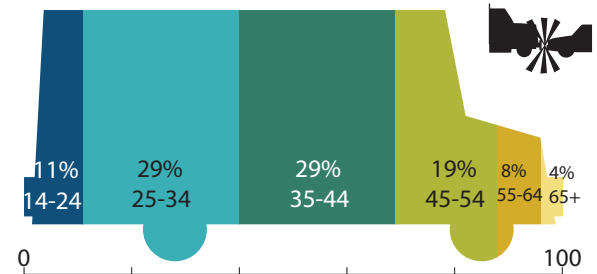


Table 38. Most common vehicle-related claims by type and source combination of injuries in Couriers and Messengers, ranked by intervention priority.

| Description  | PIP Rank |
|--|----------|
| Crash between vehicles moving in the same direction – rear-ended | 1        |
| Vehicle crash, unspecified                                       | 2        |
| Motor vehicle crash in an intersection                           | 3        |
| Hit or fell off of bike  | 4        |

\*PIP prioritizes injury types by ranking three important factors and averaging. The PIP ranks the count of injuries, the type (e.g., fall from elevation, struck by), and the number of time-loss days. Highest time-loss = □, Highest medical cost = ○, Highest count of claims = △ are noted with these symbols, when available.

## Employers

- Make sure new drivers have experience driving in conditions similar to their route before sending them out.
- Meet with new drivers regularly to discuss near misses and other traffic issues they may not have experienced before.
- Develop a culture where driving drowsy is as taboo as driving drunk.
- Have a sick leave program in place and encourage workers to use it when needed.

## Drivers

- Be sure to check all lights especially brake lights during your pre-trip.
- Don't be afraid to call in sick if overly tired or ill.
- Leave plenty of space around your vehicle.
- Wear your seatbelt.
- Minimize in-cab distractions.

## General injury prevention

### Equipment maintenance:

- Have a regular schedule where everything (including handtrucks) are checked for wear and tear.
- Inspect truck steps in late summer/early fall for wear and refinish or repair before winter weather arrives. Re-inspect periodically throughout the winter.
- Fix equipment BEFORE it is used again. Tag broken equipment and put it out of service immediately.
- Add equipment checks to your pre-trip inspection.

### Employers

- Invest in trucks with adequate hand holds at appropriate heights.
- The severity of strain, sprain and overexertion injuries can be positively impacted by early reporting and implementing prevention strategies. This cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Encourage your employees to let you know if they are feeling pain, before the damage becomes severe.
- Allow enough time for drivers to complete their routes.

### Drivers

- Always use 3 points-of-contact.
- Wear footwear with a good tread.
- Since packages can disrupt your vision, scan the area for ice, debris, or potholes before carrying your package.
- Use a hand truck when possible. It'll keep you steadier and obstruct your view less than carrying boxes.
- Don't rush.
- Look twice before exiting your truck for debris, slick surfaces or pot holes.
- Report pain early to your employer and physician. Early intervention can decrease the severity of injuries to muscles, tendons, joints and other soft-tissue.



**Suggested citation:** Rauser, Smith and Williams 2014. Trucking Industry: Examining Injuries for Prevention, 2006-2012. SHARP Program, report #90-148-2014. Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, Olympia, Washington.

**Full Report** at [www.KeepTruckingSafe.org](http://www.KeepTruckingSafe.org)