

Waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; materials recovery statistics in Great Britain, 2025

Data up to March 2025
Annual statistics
Published 20 November 2025



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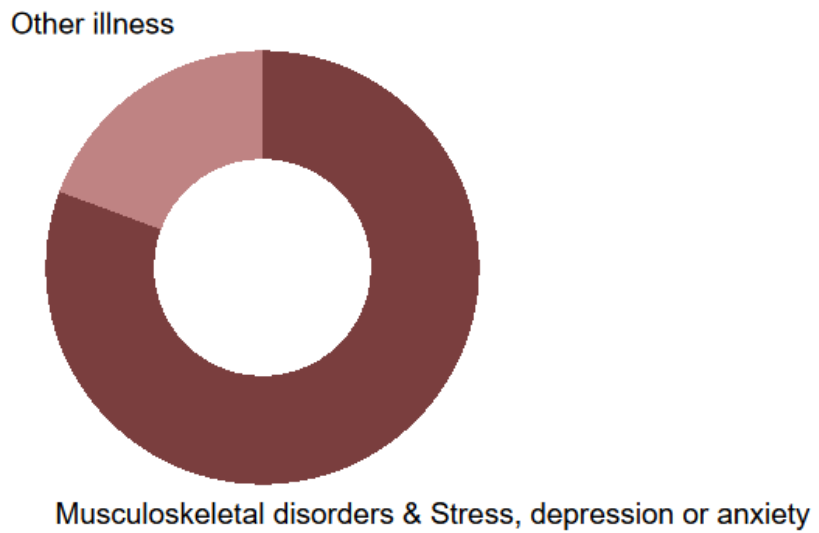
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Key statistics

Ill health

5,000 workers suffering from work-related ill health (new or long-standing) averaged over the nine-year period 2016/17-2024/25.

Proportion of self-reported work-related ill health by type in Waste: new and long-standing



Source: LFS, average estimate over 2016/17-2024/25

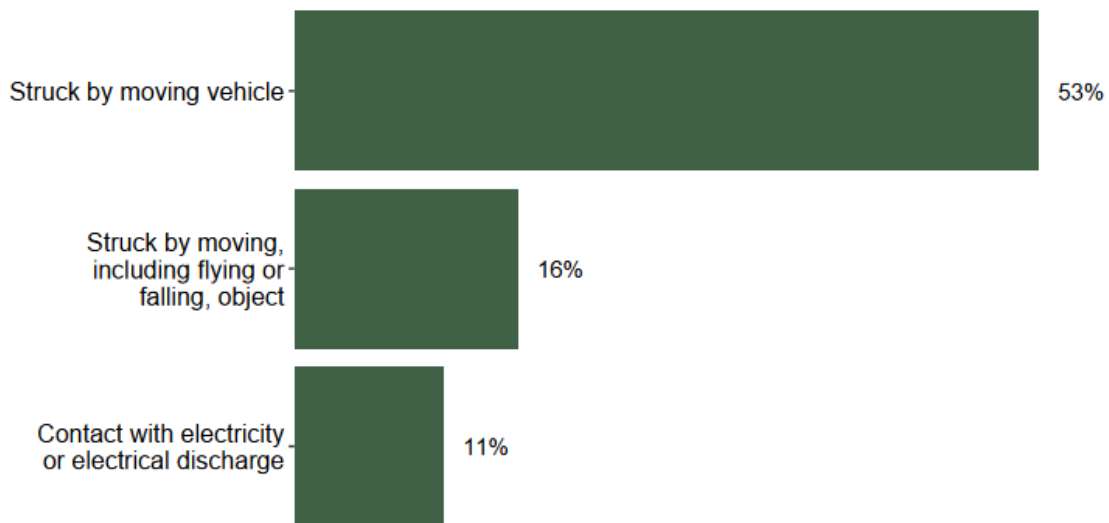
Fatal injuries

There were 3 fatal injuries to workers in 2024/25p. This is in comparison with the annual average of 4 fatalities over the five-year period 2020/21-2024/25p.

There were 3 fatal injuries to members of the public in 2024/25p. This is in comparison with the annual average of 2 fatalities over the five-year period 2020/21-2024/25p.

Source: RIDDOR, 2024/25p

Percentage of fatal injuries by accident kind in Waste



Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 10% or more of fatal injuries.

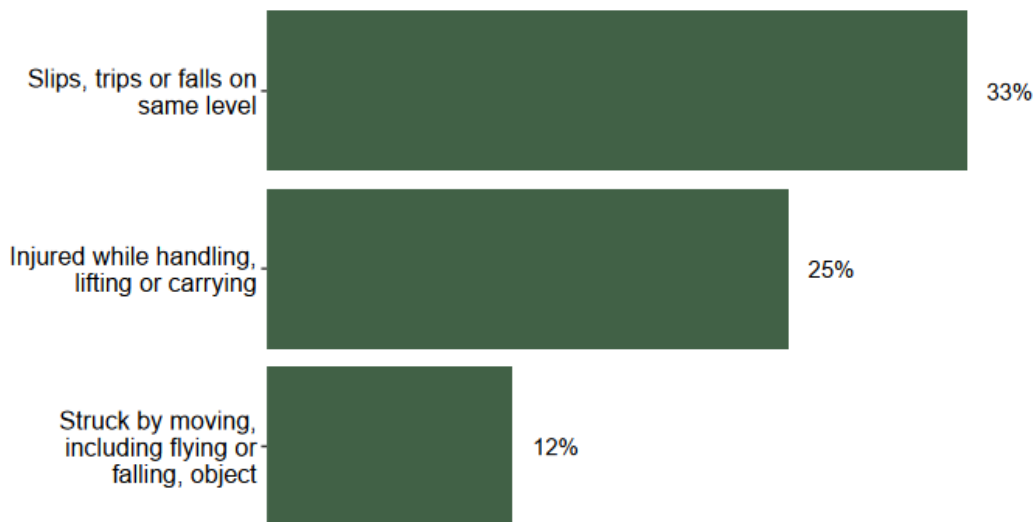
Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Non-fatal injuries

4,000 workers sustained non-fatal injuries at work averaged over the eight-year period 2017/18-2024/25.

Source: LFS, average estimate over 2017/18-2024/25

Percentage of non-fatal injuries by accident kind in Waste



RIDDOR is used here as the LFS is not able to provide a breakdown to this level of detail.

Accident kinds are shown that account for 10% or more of non-fatal injuries.

Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Introduction

This report provides a profile of workplace health and safety in the Waste¹ sector.

For this report, the waste sector has been defined with reference to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC), an internationally agreed classification of industries, and includes the following activities: waste collection, treatment and disposal activities; and materials recovery (SIC 38).

Some activities associated with waste fall outside of this definition of the waste sector. Most notably, the wholesale of waste and scrap² (including collecting, sorting, separating and stripping of used goods) is an industry that is often associated with the waste sector, but within the Standard Industrial Classification is classified in the wholesale and retail trade sector. The wholesale of waste and scrap industry is small relative to the waste sector: statistics show the contribution of the wholesale of waste and scrap to the totality of work-related illness and injury in the combined sector (including both waste and wholesale of waste and scrap) to be small. Further, the rate of illness and injury is broadly similar for the combined industry group and the waste sector on its own. Therefore, statistics in this report are presented for the waste sector only (SIC 38) and do not include wholesale of waste and scrap.

The Waste sector accounts for around 0.3% of the workforce³ in Great Britain. This report considers the current health and safety situation for the waste sector, with a focus on the scale and profile of work-related illness and injury in workers in the sector.

¹ The Waste sector is defined as SIC 38 in section E of the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification. See

www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/classificationsandstandards/ukstandardindustrialclassificationofeconomicactivities/uksic2007 for more detail.

² Wholesale of waste and scrap industry is defined as class 46.77 within the 2007 Standard Industrial Classification

³ Annual Population Survey, 2024

Work-related ill health

All illness

In Waste:

- There were an estimated 5,000 workers suffering from work-related ill health (new or long-standing)
- Around 81% of these were musculoskeletal disorders or stress, depression or anxiety.
- The remaining workers were suffering from other types of illness, such as skin or respiratory conditions.

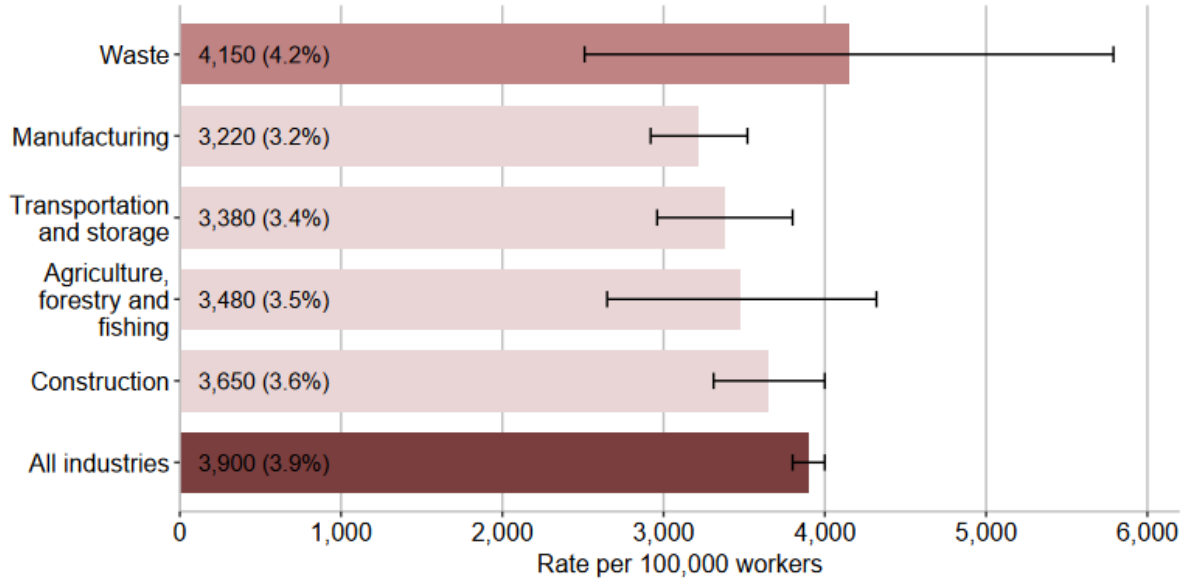
Source: LFS, average estimate over 2016/17-2024/25

Waste compared with other selected industries⁴

- Around 4.2% of workers in the sector suffered from work-related ill health (new or long-standing)

⁴ Selected manual type industries are generally those with either a higher rate of work-related ill health or workplace injury compared to the rate for all industries.

Rate of self-reported work-related ill health in Waste compared with other selected industries, per 100,000 workers: new and long-standing



95% confidence intervals are shown on the chart.

Source: LFS, average estimate over 2017/18-2024/25

Workplace injuries

Fatal injuries

In Waste:

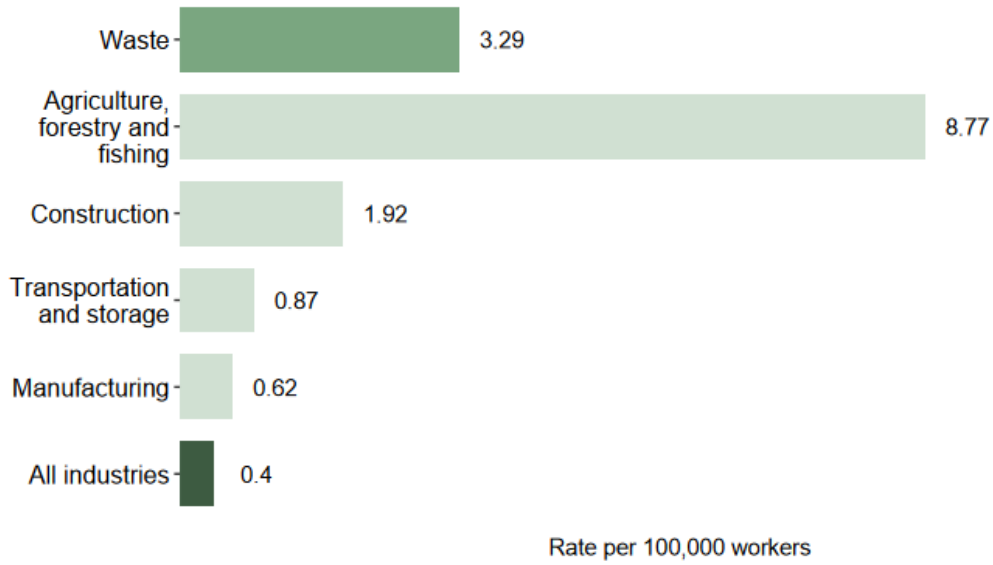
- There were 3 fatal injuries to workers in 2024/25p.
- This is in comparison with the annual average number of 4 fatalities for 2020/21-2024/25p, though statistically speaking numbers are small and prone to annual fluctuations.
- 53% of deaths over the same five-year period were classified as Struck by moving vehicle.
- There were 3 fatal injuries to members of the public in 2024/25p.
- This is in comparison with the annual average of 2 fatalities over the five-year period 2020/21-2024/25p.

Source: *RIDDOR, 2024/25p*

Waste compared with other selected industries

- The fatal injury rate in Waste is 3.29 per 100,000 workers.
- This is around 8.2 times the all industry rate.

Rate of work-related fatal injuries in Waste compared with other selected industries, per 100,000 workers



Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Non-fatal injuries

The Labour Force Survey is HSE’s preferred data source for non-fatal injuries.

In Waste:

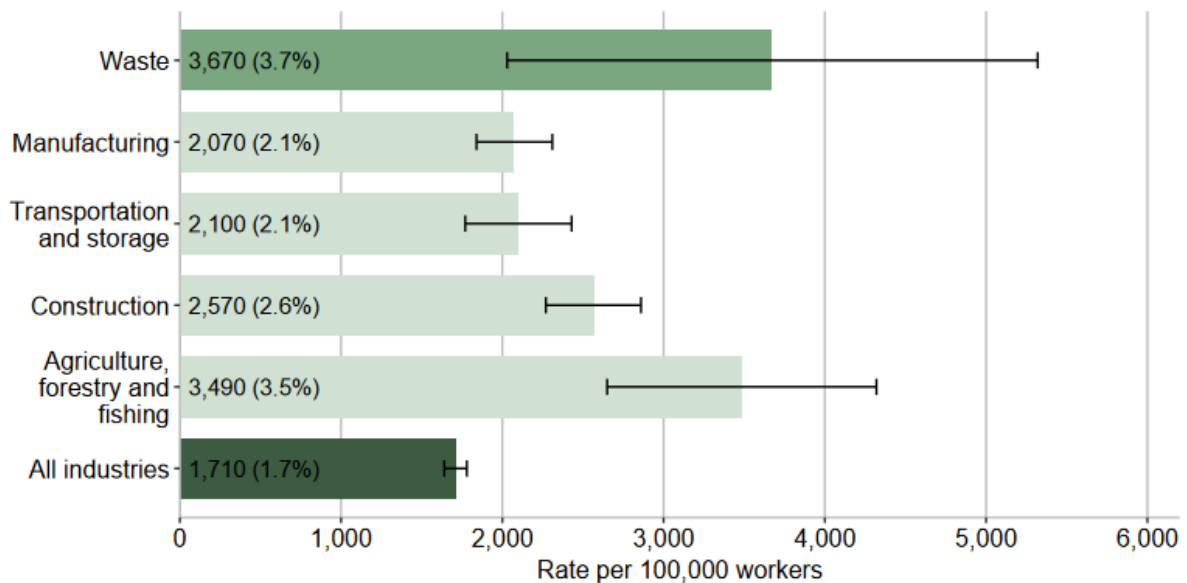
- There were an estimated 4,000 workers who reported sustaining a workplace non-fatal injury.

Source: LFS, average estimate over 2017/18-2024/25

Waste compared with other selected industries

- Around 3.7% of workers in the sector sustained a workplace non-fatal injury.

Rate of self-reported workplace non-fatal injuries in Waste compared with other selected industries, per 100,000 workers



95% confidence intervals are shown on the chart.

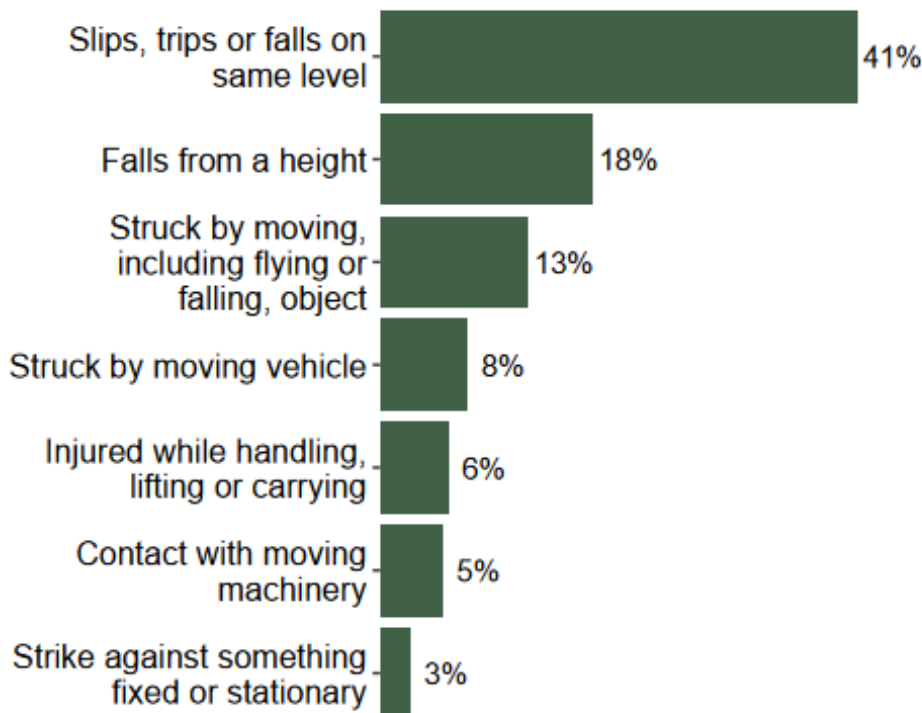
Source: LFS, average estimate over 2017/18-2024/25

Supporting information around work-related injuries is available from RIDDOR reporting⁵. In Waste:

- There were 1,530 non-fatal injuries to employees reported by employers under RIDDOR in 2024/25p.
- 413 (27%) were specified injuries⁶ and 1,117 (73%) were injuries resulting in the incapacitation of a worker for over seven days

Source: RIDDOR, 2024/25p

Percentage of non-fatal work-related specified injuries by accident kind in Waste



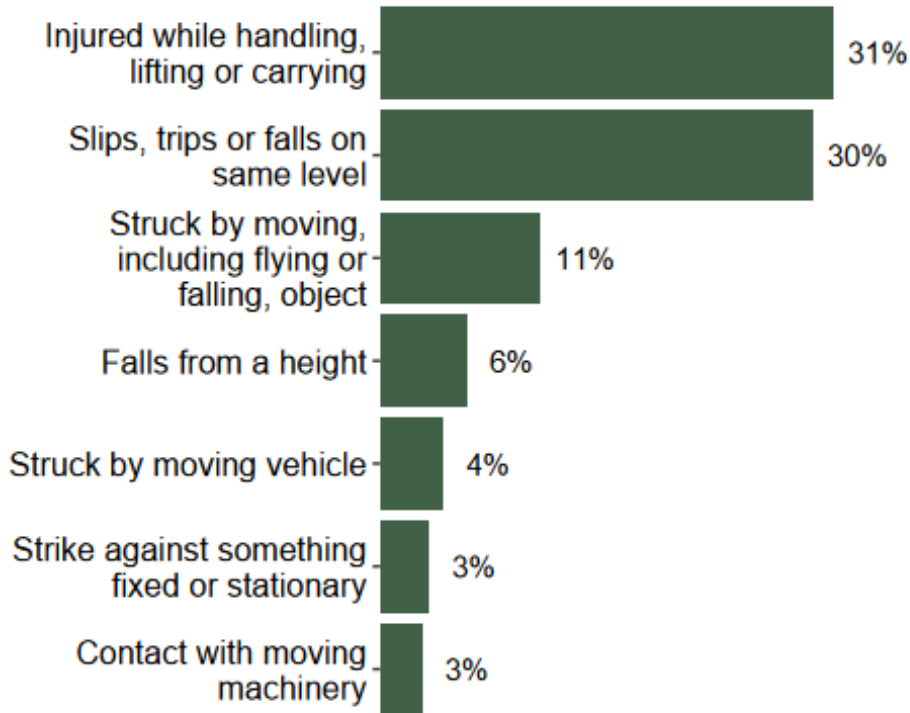
Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 2% or more of fatal injuries.

⁵ The LFS gives the best indication of the scale of workplace injury within the sector. RIDDOR provides additional information for non-fatal injuries but needs to be interpreted with care since it is known that non-fatal injuries are substantially under-reported. Possible variations in reporting rates both between industries and over time make comparisons difficult. However, RIDDOR can be used for analysis at a detailed level not available through the LFS, for example, around the kind of incident.

⁶ Specified injuries are a defined list of injuries. The full list is at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/reportable-incidents.htm

Percentage of non-fatal work-related injuries resulting in incapacitation of a worker for over seven days by accident kind in Waste



Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

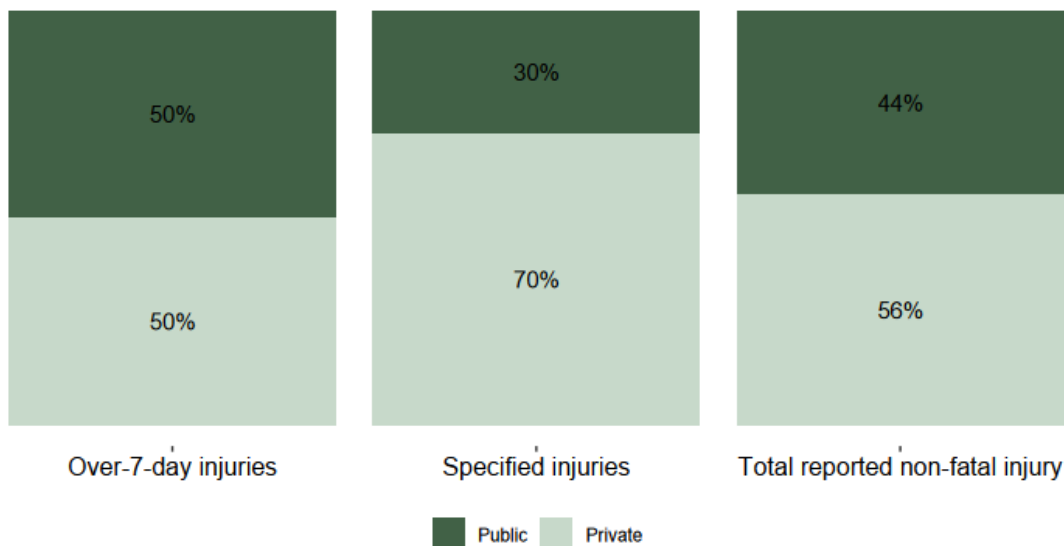
Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 2% or more of fatal injuries.

Of the non-fatal injuries reported by employers over the period 2020/21-2024/25p:

- 44% were from public sector employers and 56% from private sector employers. The public sector is estimated to account for around 33% of employment in the sector.
- The proportion of reports from public and private sector employers varies between specified injuries and those resulting in over-7-day incapacitation of a worker, with the public sector accounting for 50% of over-7-day injuries compared to 30% of specified injuries. Differences in sickness absence practices between public and private sector may account for some of this variation, though specified injuries are reportable regardless of absence from work.
- The kind of accidents reported by both public and private sector employers follows a broadly similar profile.

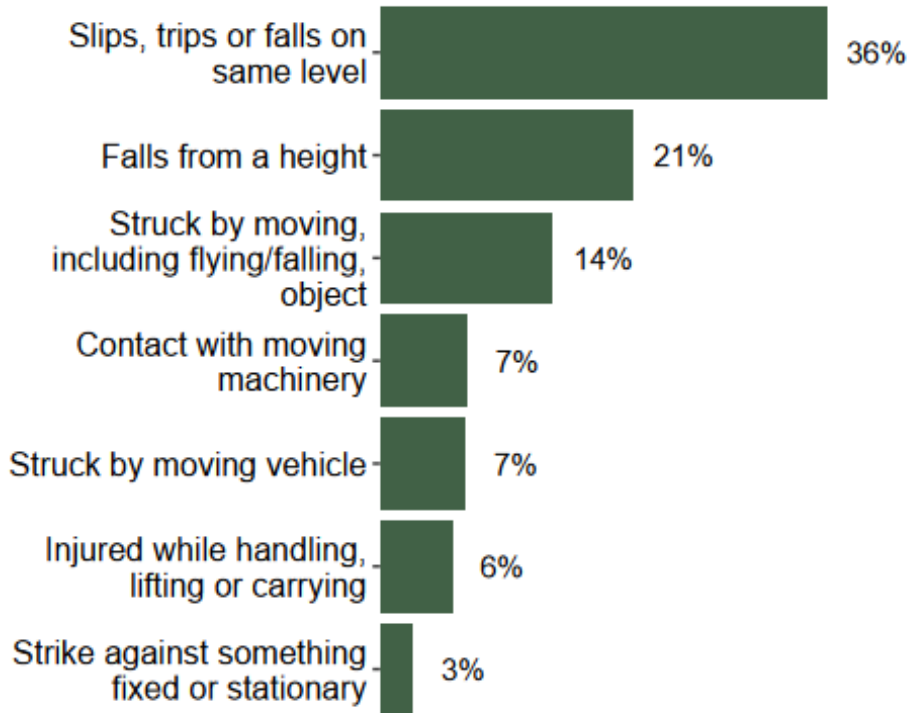
Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Percentage of non-fatal work-related specified injuries and non-fatal work-related injuries resulting in incapacitation of a worker for over seven days by employer type in Waste



Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

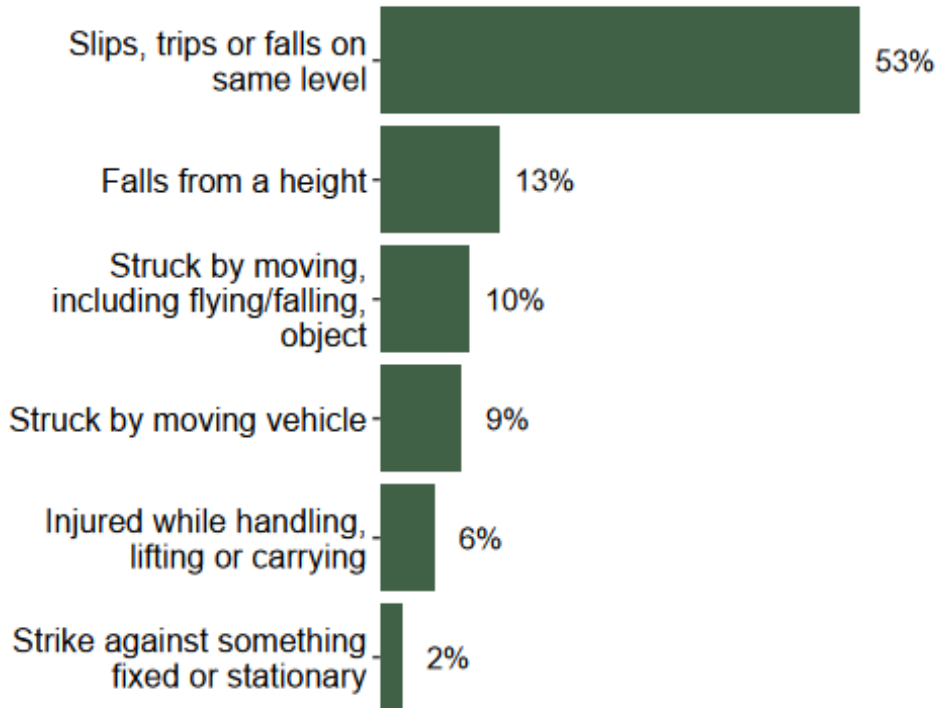
Percentage of non-fatal work-related specified injuries by accident kind in the private sector in Waste



Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 2% or more of fatal injuries.

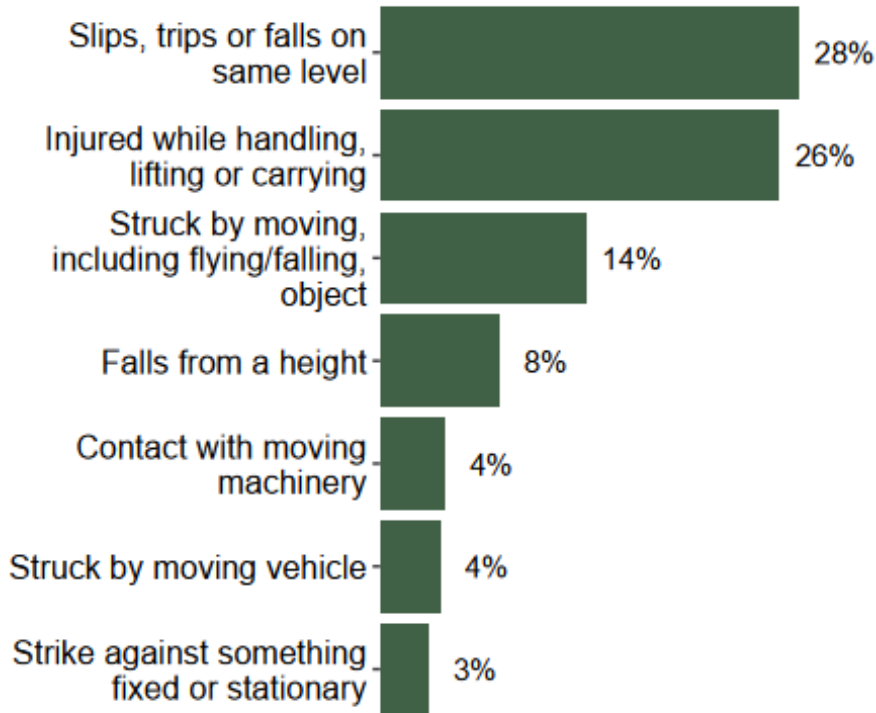
Percentage of non-fatal work-related specified injuries by accident kind in the public sector in Waste



Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 2% or more of fatal injuries.

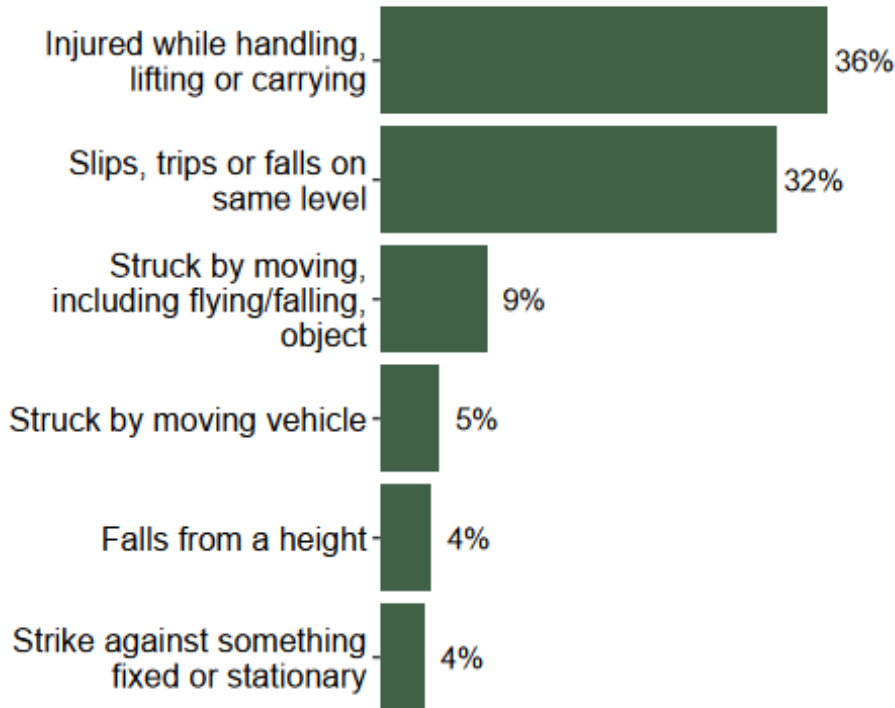
Percentage of non-fatal work-related injuries resulting in incapacitation of a worker for over seven days by accident kind in the private sector in Waste



Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 2% or more of fatal injuries.

Percentage of non-fatal work-related injuries resulting in incapacitation of a worker for over seven days by accident kind in the public sector in Waste

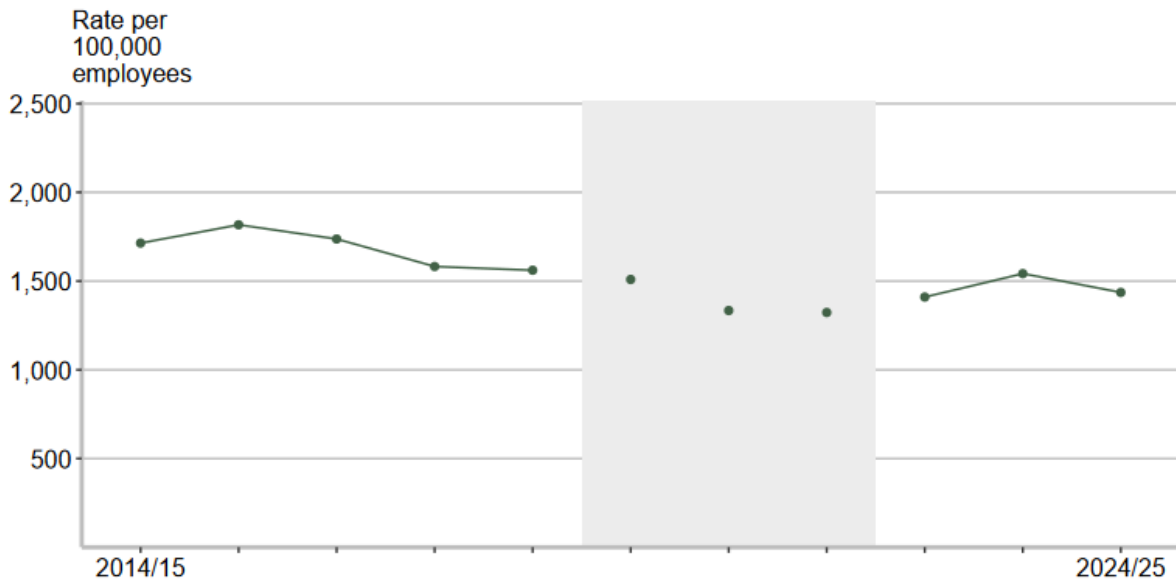


Source: RIDDOR, average over 2020/21-2024/25p

Accident kinds are shown for those that account for 2% or more of fatal injuries.

Changes over time

Rate of employer reported workplace non-fatal injuries in Waste, per 100,000 employees



The rate of employer reported non-fatal injuries showed a downward trend, with signs of flattening out in more recent years (though reporting to RIDDOR is known to be incomplete and may be distorting the trend).

The data for 2019/20 - 2021/22p includes years affected by the coronavirus pandemic, shown inside the grey shaded column.

Source: RIDDOR, 2016/17-2024/25p

Annex 1: Sources and definitions

The Labour Force Survey (LFS): The LFS is a national survey run by the Office for National Statistics of currently around 31,000 households each quarter. HSE commissions annual questions in the LFS to gain a view of self-reported work-related illness and workplace injury based on individuals' perceptions. The analysis and interpretation of these data are the sole responsibility of HSE.

- Self-reported work-related illness: People who have conditions which they think have been caused or made worse by their current or past work, as estimated from the LFS. Estimated total cases include long-standing as well as new cases. New cases consist of those who first became aware of their illness in the last 12 months.
- Self-reported injuries: Workplace injuries sustained as a result of a non-road traffic accident, as estimated by the LFS.

RIDDOR: The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, under which fatal and defined non-fatal injuries to workers and members of the public are reported by employers.

Certain types of work-related injury are not reportable under RIDDOR, hence excluded from these figures. Particular exclusions include fatalities and injuries to the armed forces and injuries from work-related road collisions.

Rate per 100,000: The number of annual workplace injuries or cases of work-related ill health per 100,000 employees or workers.

95% confidence interval: The range of values within which we are 95% confident contains the true value, in the absence of bias. This reflects the potential error that results from surveying a sample rather than the entire population.

Statistical significance: A difference between two sample estimates is described as 'statistically significant' if there is a less than 5% chance that it is due to sampling error alone.

Notes:

Percentages presented on charts in this document use rounded data and so may not sum to 100% in all cases.

p is used in this document to indicate provisional figures due to be finalised in 2026

For more information, see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/sources.pdf>

Annex 2: Links to detailed tables

The data in this report can be found in the following tables:

Work-related illness

lfsillind: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/lfsillind.xlsx>

lfsillwaste_8yr: https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/lfsillwaste_8yr.xlsx

Workplace injuries

lfsinjind: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/lfsinjind.xlsx>

lfsinjwaste_8yr: https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/lfsinjwaste_8yr.xlsx

RIDIND: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/ridind.xlsx>

RIDWASTE: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/ridwaste.xlsx>

RIDFATAL: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/assets/docs/ridfatal.xlsx>

Other tables can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk/Statistics/tables/index.htm

Accredited Official Statistics

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<https://www.uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/uk-statistical-system/types-of-official-statistics/> for more details on the types of official statistics.

From 7 June 2024 the Accredited Official Statistics badge has replaced the previous National Statistics badge.

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You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk or via the OSR website.

An account of how the figures are used for statistical purposes can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/sources.htm>.

For information regarding the quality guidelines used for statistics within HSE see <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/quality-guidelines.htm>.

A revisions policy and log can be seen at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/about/revisions/>.

Additional data tables can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/tables/>.

Lead Statistician: [Rebecca Simpson](#)

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