

KENTUCKY

Occupational Health Success Stories

Women as Victims of Workplace Violence

The Challenge

Homicides are the second highest cause of workplace deaths for Kentucky women, behind only motor vehicle crashes. In Kentucky from 1998 to 2018, more than 1 in 5 workplace fatalities of women were due to homicide. Comparatively, during the same period 1 in 20 male workplace fatalities was due to homicide.



The Response

Based on analysis of workplace homicides involving women, the Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance (KOSHS) program created the Hazard Alert, *Women as Victims of Workplace Violence*, released in July 2020. The Hazard Alert described two incidents of female victim workplace homicides: one in which the female employee was killed via firearm by a former intimate partner, and the other in which the female employee was killed via knife by a resident at a residential care facility where the victim worked. The Hazard Alert highlighted alarming trends—nearly 1 in 3 female employees killed in U.S. workplaces are killed by a former or current intimate partner, and workers in health care fields account for 75% of workplace assaults. The Hazard Alert provided recommendations for preventing workplace violence, including employee training, security measures, and zero-tolerance policies for violence.

In July 2020, the Hazard Alert was disseminated to the KOSHS general listserv of more than 1,700 occupational safety and health stakeholders. Additional targeted recipients included the KY Commission on Women, American Association of University Women, Fairness Campaign, Federally Employed Women, KY Environmental Foundation, General Foundation of Women's Clubs, KY Health Justice Network, KY League of Women Voters, Professional Women's Forum, Women for Women, and Women Leading KY.

The Impact

The Hazard Alert, *Women as Victims of Workplace Violence*, was featured on Environment, Health and Safety Today's website, which has a monthly audience of 471,000 viewers. In August 2020, the KOSHS project manager was a guest on Women in Trucking's weekly radio show on Sirius XM Radio, "Road Dog," to discuss the Hazard Alert. The 45-minute interview featured discussion about what companies can do to protect female employees. The KOSHS program received feedback from the manager of a Kentucky mental health care company, who stated, "I sent these to all KY Career Centers in our region to share with their partner agencies." Additionally, a certified prevention specialist at a Kentucky health care center stated, "I forwarded this information to around 15 community members in the Pennyriple region. I previously read over this information; I thought it was very well put together."

For more information, visit the Kentucky Occupational Safety and Health Surveillance website: <https://kiprc.uky.edu/programs/kentucky-occupational-safety-and-health-surveillance-koshs-program>