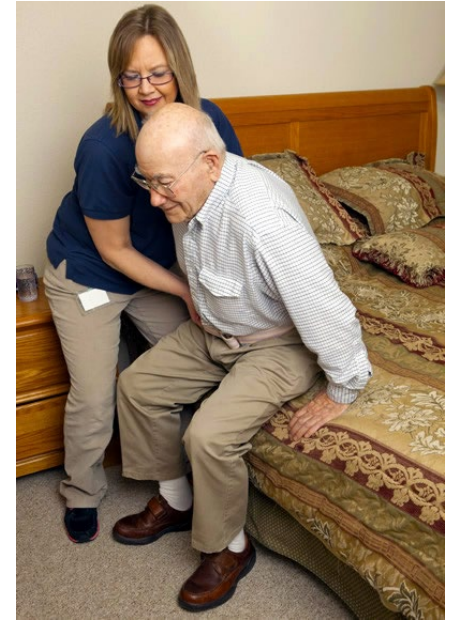


Hazards for Domestic Workers and Day Laborers in Private Homes in California

Kevin Riley, PhD, MPH

UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program

April 29, 2022



Alamy



California Labor Code

- **Includes within its definition of “employee” those “employed by the owner or occupant of a residential dwelling whose duties are incidental to the ownership, maintenance, or use of the dwelling” (California Labor Code §3351(d))**
 - **Definition of residential employee is limited to those employed more than 52 hours in previous 90 days, earned more than \$100 in wages**
- **Includes any person “in the service of an employer under any appointment or contract of hire or apprenticeship, express or implied, oral or written, whether lawfully or unlawfully employed” (California Labor Code §3351)**

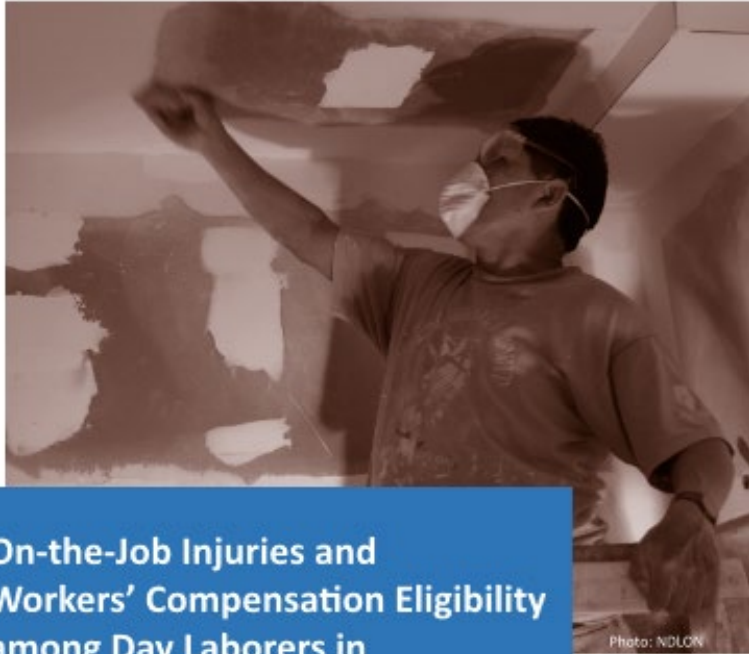


Photo: NDLON

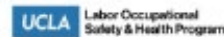
**On-the-Job Injuries and
Workers' Compensation Eligibility
among Day Laborers in
Residential Worksites
in California**

RESEARCH BRIEF | UCLA-LOSH April 2017

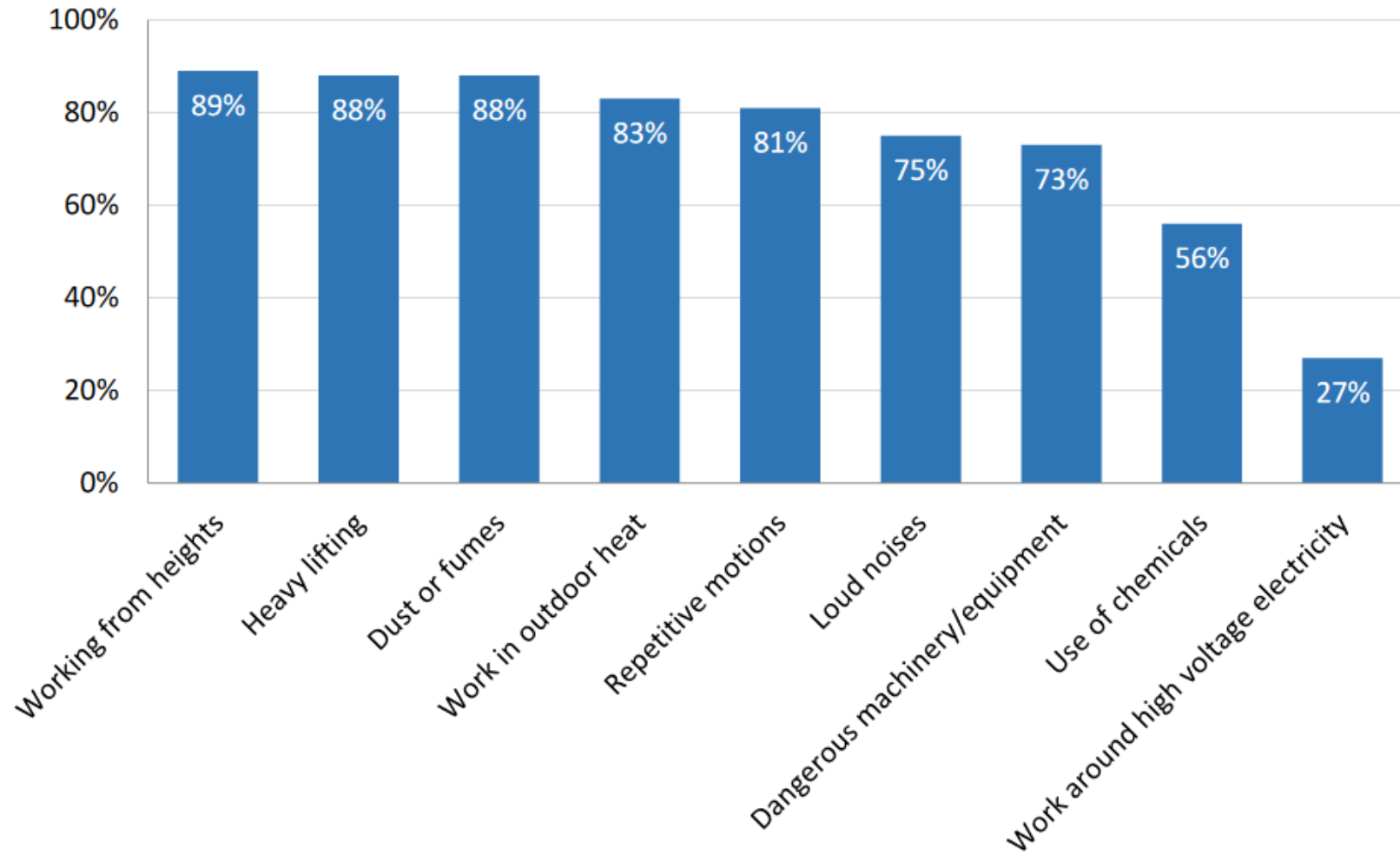


Hidden Work, Hidden Pain:
**Injury Experiences of
Domestic Workers in California**

Research Brief
UCLA LOSH | July 2020



Hazards encountered by day laborers in private homes (N=64)



Hazards Encountered in Private Homes by Housecleaners (n=36)

Hazard	n	%
Repetitive motions	36	100
Dust or fumes	35	97
Chemical exposure	33	92
Working from heights	30	83
Lifting heavy objects	30	83

Note. Respondents chose all that applied.

Hazards Encountered in Private Homes by Caregivers (n=41)

Hazard	n	%
Lifting patients	39	95
Biological hazards	38	93
Lifting heavy objects	31	76
Repetitive motions	25	61
Syringe needles	19	46

Note. Respondents chose all that applied.

Worker stories

I was helping a contractor fix the roof of a house. I was using the skill-saw to cut pieces of wood, but wasn't using the guard on the skill-saw. When I was cutting into the wood it ricocheted and cut my hand. (*Day laborer*)

I was lifting a 250 lb. patient out of bed and into a wheelchair. The home had a Hoyer lift, but it wasn't able to carry all the weight. The patient was not helping herself to be lifted, and I lost my balance and twisted my hip. (*Caregiver*)

My shoulder pain was due to excessive work, the repetitive movements required in cleaning showers and windows and in cleaning cobwebs and spiders. I had to stop cleaning and I still occasionally use pain medication for it. It sometimes still hurts even when I'm not working, although the intense initial pain lasted 15 days. (*Housecleaner*)

Injury reporting and WC access

- “Did you tell your employer about the injury?”
 - **Day laborers** → 69%
 - **Domestic workers** → 55%

	Eligible for workers' comp	Received workers' comp
Day laborers	52%	5%
Domestic workers	84%	6%

- **Only 26% of domestic workers and 5% of day laborers had written contract with employer at time of injury**

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

AMERICAN JOURNAL
OF
INDUSTRIAL MEDICINE WILEY

Using workers' compensation claims to investigate occupational injuries among residential day laborers and domestic workers

Kevin Riley PhD, MPH  | Rosario Majano MS

- Examination of **5,463 workers' compensation claims for residential day laborers and domestic workers in California** between 2008-2018

Number of WC claims, by location

	No.	%
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana MSA	2,622	48.0%
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont MSA	667	12.2%
San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos MSA	377	6.9%
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario MSA	292	5.4%
Sacramento-Arden-Arcade-Roseville MSA	200	3.75
Other	1,305	23.8%
TOTAL	5,463	100.0%

Type of work at time of injury

	No.	%
Housekeeping	2,072	37.9%
Construction/maintenance	1,460	26.7%
Caregiving	1,121	20.5%
Gardening/landscaping	405	7.4%
Nanny/childcare	326	5.9%
Other/unknown	107	1.9%
TOTAL	5,463	100.0%

Worker characteristics, by work type

	Median age at time of injury	Gender	
		% Female	% Male
Housekeeping	51	88.9	11.1
Construction/maintenance	44	2.8	97.2
Caregiving	53	89.6	10.4
Gardening/landscaping	46	3.7	96.3
Nanny/childcare	50	97.9	2.1
Other/unknown	49	43.4	56.6

Injury accounts from WC claims records

“Insured’s housekeeper was cleaning bookshelves when the bookshelves fell on her wrist.”
(Housekeeping)

“Attacked by client. ‘I was thrown...attacked, choked.’ Injury to neck, shoulder, arms, lower back, Rt. foot.” *(Caregiving)*

“Landscapeer fell off a rotten beam on the home and fractured 2 ribs and their left wrist.”
(Gardening/landscaping)

“Claimant amputated tip of right index finger while using a hedge trimmer.”
(Gardening/landscaping)

“Nanny involved in auto accident while picking up the insd.’s children. Injuries unknown.”
(Nanny/childcare)

Top 10 cause of injuries, by work type

Housekeeping		Caregiving		Nanny/childcare	
Fall, on same level	13.6%	Lifting	18.6%	Fall, on same level	18.3%
Cumulative, NOC	10.8%	Fall, on same level	11.8%	Fall, on stairs	10.2%
Fall, slip, trip	9.3%	Fall, slip, trip	7.9%	Fall, slip, trip	8.4%
Strain or injury	6.8%	Strain or injury	6.4%	Cumulative, NOC	7.2%
Fall, on stairs	6.1%	Cumulative, NOC	6.1%	Lifting	5.5%
Fall, from elevation	5.4%	Fall, on stairs	3.5%	Fall, from elevation	4.1%
Repetitive motion	5.2%	Fellow worker, patient, or other person	2.9%	Strain or injury	4.1%
Lifting	4.2%	Repetitive motion	2.9%	Collision or sideswipe with another vehicle	3.8%
Fall, from ladder or scaffolding	3.9%	Collision or sideswipe with another vehicle	2.6%	Fellow worker, patient, or other person	3.5%
Animal or insect	3.3%	Absorption, ingestion, or inhalation	2.5%	Repetitive motion	3.5%
<i>Other</i>	<i>31.4%</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>34.8%</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>31.4%</i>

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Top 10 cause of injuries, by work type

Construction/maintenance		Gardening/landscaping		Other/unknown	
Fall, from ladder or scaffolding	19.5%	Fall, from ladder or scaffolding	12.8%	Strain or injury	11.3%
Fall, from elevation	10.6%	Fall, from elevation	11.4%	Animal or insect	8.5%
Powered hand tool	7.6%	Powered hand tool	5.4%	Fall, from elevation	7.6%
Strain or injury	4.9%	Fall, on same level	5.4%	Fall, on same level	7.6%
Fall, on same level	4.3%	Strain or injury	5.4%	Fall, slip, trip	7.6%
Cut, puncture, or scrape	4.0%	Animal or insect	5.4%	Lifting	6.6%
Fall, slip, trip	4.0%	Fall, slip, trip	5.2%	Cumulative, NOC	6.6%
Lifting	3.6%	Lifting	4.9%	Cut, puncture, scrape	3.8%
Object being lifted or handled	3.0%	Falling or flying object	4.4%	Object being lifted or handled	2.8%
Falling or flying object	2.7%	Cut, puncture, or scrape	4.0%	Fall, from ladder or scaffolding	2.8%
Other	35.8%	Other	35.7%	Other	34.8%

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Powered hand tool	7.6%	Powered hand tool	5.4%	Fall, from elevation	7.6%
Strain or injury	4.9%	Fall, on same level	5.4%	Fall, on same level	7.6%
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Most common nature of injuries

Housekeeping		Caregiving		Nanny/childcare	
Strain or tear	31.6%	Strain or tear	35.7%	Strain or tear	31.5%
Fracture	12.8%	Fracture	10.7%	Fracture	18.1%
Sprain or tear	8.1%	Sprain or tear	10.6%	Contusion	10.8%
Contusion	6.3%	Multiple physical injuries	5.3%	Sprain or tear	10.5%
Multiple physical injuries	5.2%	Contusion	5.2%	Multiple physical injuries	4.7%
Laceration	5.1%	Laceration	2.9%	Dislocation	2.9%

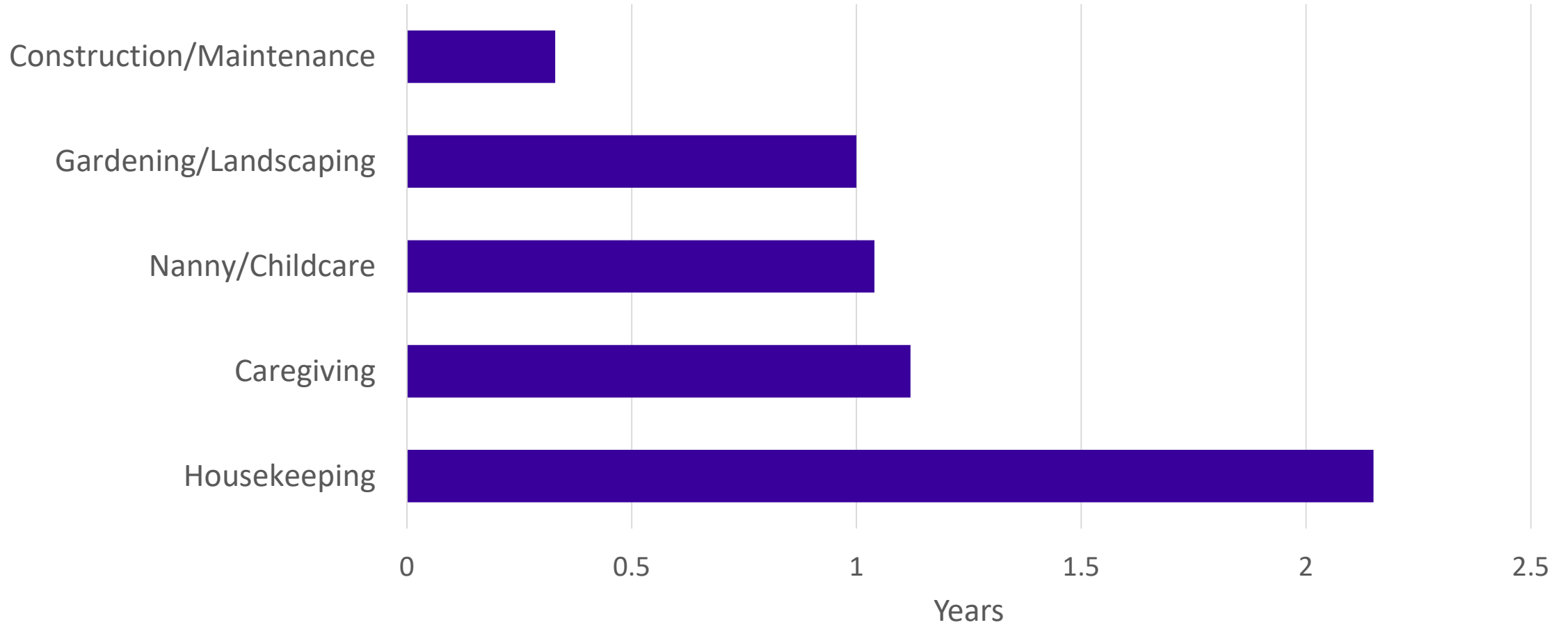
Construction/maintenance		Gardening/landscaping		Other/unknown	
Strain or tear	19.9%	Strain or tear	23.2%	Strain or tear	21.7%
Fracture	19.1%	Fracture	16.8%	Fracture	11.3%
Laceration	17.3%	Laceration	16.1%	Contusion	10.4%
Sprain or tear	5.8%	Puncture	6.7%	Laceration	9.4%
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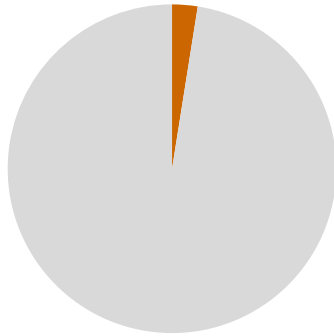
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Median employment length at time of injury

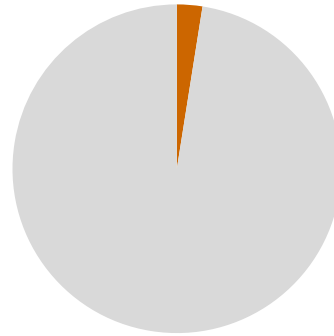


Injuries on same day of hire

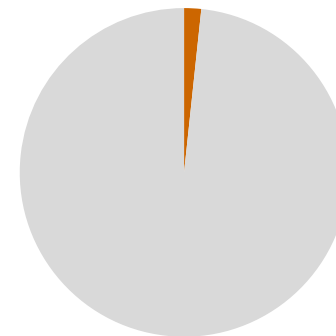
Housekeeping



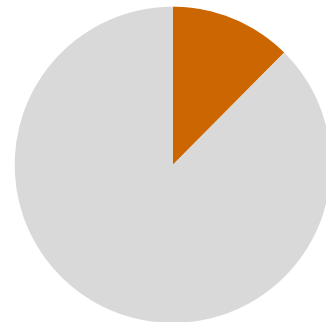
Caregiving



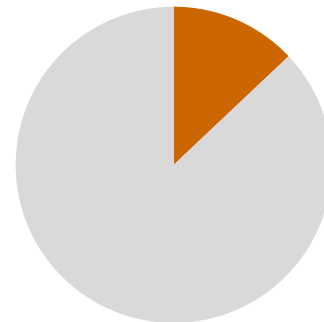
Nanny/Childcare



Gardening/Landscaping



Construction/Maintenance



Implications and takeaways

- **Common hazards and patterns of injuries for workers in private homes mirror those of workers in more “conventional” work settings**
- **Workers’ comp claims are only tip of the iceberg – do not capture all injuries/illnesses, may not reflect most common hazards workers face**
- **Range of tasks in private homes may be more varied than in other work settings**
- **Importance for employers to anticipate hazards from beginning of employment period**

THANK YOU

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