

Cal Beyer, February 11, 2025

## A Call to Action on Opioids and Naloxone

phrc.psu.edu

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## Pennsylvania Housing Research Center

- The Pennsylvania Housing Research Center (PHRC) provides and facilitates education, training, innovation, research, and dissemination to the residential construction industry for the purpose of improving the quality and affordability of housing.
- Educational programs and publications by the PHRC address a wide range of topics relevant to the home building industry and are designed to reach a diverse audience: builders, code officials, remodelers, architects, developers, engineers, planners, landscape architects, local government officials, educators, etc. to provide professional development and continuing education

@PHRCPennState

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## 2025 PHRC Housing Conference

### March 26-27

*The Central Hotel & Conference Center in Harrisburg*

Register here!

Standard Rate through March 12  
\$450 (2 days)  
\$300 (1 day)

This conference highlights best practices, regulation, and innovation in the housing industry. Invited speakers present on a wide range of topics, including construction materials & methods, high-performance housing, land development & planning, codes & construction, and weatherization & building science.

Continuing education available for AIA, ICC, PA L&L, NARI, and PA PDHs for engineers pending individual session approvals.

Advertiser & Limited Exhibitor Sponsorships Available!

@PHRCPennState

<https://bit.ly/HOUSINGCONFERENCE>

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## Description

The construction industry has been adversely impacted by the nation's ongoing opioid crisis. Opioids impact both the overall mental health and wellbeing of the workforce as well as company performance. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2023 unintentional overdoses comprised 9.7% of occupational fatalities among all industries. The intersection between substance misuse and suicide is well known. Nationally in 2023, there were approximately 50,000 deaths by suicide in the US, and over 105,000 overdose deaths. Construction has the second highest rate of suicide among major industries with a rate of 56 per 100,000 workers. The construction industry has the highest rate of death from overdose among 19 industries at 130.9 per 100,000 workers. Over 70% of these deaths are related to opioids with the synthetic fentanyl comprising not less than 75% of these.



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## Learning Objectives

1. Learn how the construction industry and workforce has been adversely impacted by the opioid crisis.
2. Discover practical and proven strategies to address first dose prevention to help prevent new persistent opioid use from leading gateways in both Workers Compensation and group health benefit plans.
3. Understand the rising risk of fentanyl and psychostimulants (cocaine and methamphetamine) contributing to growing overdose rates.
4. Learn how to share resources with workers and families to focus on first dose prevention and help promote harm reduction and recovery pathways.
5. Consider the risk management consequences versus benefits and the why and how of stocking naloxone in company workplaces and job sites.



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## The Problem is Well Known

- Substance misuse and substance use disorders contributes to absenteeism, presenteeism, decreased productivity, safety and quality incidents, turnover, schedule pressures, and profit fade
- National Safety Council reports 70% of workplaces have been impacted by opioid crisis
- Bureau of Labor Statistics Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI)
  - 2022: 10th consecutive annual increase in number of unintentional overdoses from nonmedical use of drugs and alcohol (525 or 9.5% of the total 5,486 fatalities)
  - 2023: unintentional overdoses comprised 9.7% of all occupational fatalities (512 of the total 5,283 fatalities)



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## What Are Opioids



**Opioids are a class of medication that are typically prescribed to relieve pain, such as Hydrocodone, Oxycodone, and Morphine.**

Opioid pain relievers are generally safe (as prescribed by a doctor), but because they relieve pain and produce euphoria, they can be accidentally overused or misused.



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### EXAMPLES OF OPIOIDS

<b>Hydrocodone</b> <small>Vicodin, Lorcet, Lortab, Norco, Zohydro</small>	<b>Oxycodone</b> <small>Percocet, OxyContin, Roxicodone, Percodan</small>	<b>Morphine</b> <small>MSContin, Kadian, Embeda, Avinza</small>	<b>Codeine</b> <small>Tylenol w/ Codeine, TyCo, Tylenol #3</small>
<b>Heroin</b>	<b>EXAMPLES OF OPIOIDS</b>		<b>Hydromorphone</b> <small>Dilaudid</small>
<b>Metadone</b> <small>Dolophine, Methadose</small>	<b>Fentanyl</b> <small>Duragesic, Antiq</small>	<b>Meperidine</b> <small>Demerol</small>	<b>Buprenorphine</b> <small>Suboxone, Subutex, Zubsolv, Bunavali, Butrans</small>
<b>Oxymorphone</b> <small>Opana</small>			

■ Medications for opioid use disorder
 ■ Prescription Pain Relievers
 ■ Illicit Opioids



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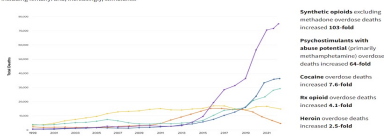
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## Impact of Opioids on Overdose Crisis

### Trends in U.S. Drug Overdose Deaths (December 1999–June 2023), by Drug Type\*

The overdose crisis has evolved over time and is now largely characterized by deaths involving illicitly manufactured synthetic opioids, including fentanyl and, increasingly, stimulants.



**Synthetic opioids** (including methadone) overdose deaths increased **185-fold**.

**Stimulants** (including amphetamine) with abuse potential (primarily methamphetamine) overdose deaths increased **64-fold**.


**Cocaine** overdose deaths increased **7.6-fold**.

**Heroin** overdose deaths increased **4.1-fold**.

**Other opioids** overdose deaths increased **2.5-fold**.

**Heroin** overdose deaths increased **2.5-fold**.

\*This graph shows the total number of drug overdose deaths in the United States over the previous 22 months for each month from December 2019 through June 2023, by drug type. Overdose deaths of all causes are included, using underlying cause of death (ICD-10 codes E85.0-E85.9) (unintentional overdose), E86.0-E86.9 (heroin), E87.0-E87.9 (stimulants), and unintentional death (ICD-10 codes R09.00-R09.99) (drug use (drug overdose) (intentional or unintentional) (poison) (multiple cause) (undetermined) (death)). All polysubstance deaths (R09.00-R09.99) are reported across multiple categories (stimulant, benzodiazepine, heroin, cocaine, PEI, and polysubstance) with their cause(s) generally unspecified. **NOTE:** Data source: CDC WONDER Multiple Cause of Death data for 1999-2022. Most data for 2022-2023 provisional data for November & 2024. Source: National Center for Health Statistics (2024) <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/tables/overdose-deaths>



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**Medical News in Brief**  
 March 6, 2024  
**More Than 40% of US Adults Know Someone Who Died of Drug Overdose**  
 Emily Harris  
 JAMA. 2024;331(12):1002. doi:10.1001/jama.2024.1571

**More than 125 million Americans have lost at least 1 person in their life to a drug overdose**




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**More than 321,000 U.S. children lost a parent to drug overdose from 2011 to 2021**  
 JAMA Psychiatry; May 8, 2024

**The rate of children experiencing loss of parent more than doubled during from 27 to 63 children per 100,000**

[https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/article-abstract/2818228?utm\\_campaign=articlePDF&utm\\_medium=articlePDF&utm\\_source=articlePDF&utm\\_content=jamapsychiatry.2024.0810](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/article-abstract/2818228?utm_campaign=articlePDF&utm_medium=articlePDF&utm_source=articlePDF&utm_content=jamapsychiatry.2024.0810)




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**Impact of Opioids on Construction Industry**




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## Impact of Opioids on US Labor Pool

- 2017 Princeton Economist Alan Krueger first reports impact of opioids on labor rate participation:
- Up to 43% decline among males and 25% among females between 1998-2015
- In 2015, 2 million men between ages 25-64 took daily opioid pain medication

# BROOKINGS

## The economic impact of the opioid epidemic

Julia Paris, Caitlin Rowley, and Richard G. Frank  
April 17, 2023

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### Liberty Mutual Insurance

#### 2023 – Evaluation of the Construction Industry

#### 8 Greatest Risks

1. Climate Volatility
2. AI and BIM (Building Information Modeling)
3. Supply Chain Disruptions
- 4. Opioid Misuse**
5. Labor Shortages
6. Water Intrusion
7. Modular/Prefabricated Construction
8. 3D Printing

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### Construction: Highest Rate of Overdose Deaths

- 130.9 per 100k workers
- 3x higher than 18 other Industries

**National Vital Statistics Reports**  
 Volume 77, Number 7  
 August 27, 2023

**Drug Overdose Mortality by Usual Occupation and Industry: 46 U.S. States and New York City, 2020**

[www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr77/nvsr77-07.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr77/nvsr77-07.pdf)

Industry Group	Drug overdose death rate per 100,000 workers
Accommodation and food services	104.4
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	97.4
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	97.4
Construction	130.9
Education services	25.0
Finance and insurance	27.2
Healthcare and social assistance	27.2
Information	27.2
Management, administrative, and waste services	27.2
Manufacturing	27.2
Mining	27.2
Other services (except public administration)	27.2
Professional, scientific, and technical services	27.2
Public administration	27.2
Retail trade	27.2
Real estate, rental, and leasing	27.2
Transportation and warehousing	27.2
Utilities	27.2
Wholesale trade	97.4

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### Pictogram: Opioid Risk in Construction

Construction work is hard work → High rates of injuries → Commonly prescribed opioids → "If I don't work I don't get paid" → Workers work while in pain → Work while under the influence of opioids

Source: <https://www.publichealth.uowa.edu/opioid-management-guidelines-for-the-construction-trades/>

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### Leading Gateways of New Persistent Opioid Use

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### Leading Gateways for New Persistent Opioid Use

- Chronic Pain
- On- and Off-the-Job Injuries
- Surgical Procedures
- Medical and Dental Procedures
- Diversion of Leftover Pills


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### Sensitivity and Support for Those Experiencing Chronic Pain


- Chronic pain is a real, complex medical condition frequently treated by large doses of opioids
- In 2021, an estimated 20.9% of U.S. adults (51.6 million) experienced chronic pain
  - 6.9% (17.1 million) with high-impact chronic pain resulting in substantial restriction to daily activities

*Please be sensitive and avoid judging and shaming those experiencing chronic pain.*

**Consider safe storage of medications and naloxone in case of accidental overdose**



<https://www.acpanow.com/>




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### Impact on Persons in Recovery

Challenge: Identify alternatives to opioid pain management for persons in recovery

- 30.5 million adults aged 18 or older (or 12.0%) perceived they ever had a substance use problem.
- Among these adults, 73.1% (or 22.2 million people) consider themselves to be in recovery or to have recovered.



<https://www.samhsa.gov/2k24/release/2024-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-media-releases>




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## Reality of Prescription Opioids

National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) cited frightening statistics about prescription opioids (March 2021):

- 21-29% of patients prescribed opioids for chronic pain misuse them
- 8-12% of people using an opioid for chronic pain develop an opioid use disorder
- 4-6% who misuse prescription opioids transition to heroin
- About 80% of people who use heroin first misused prescription opioids

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/drug-topics/opioids/opioid-overdose-ortals>




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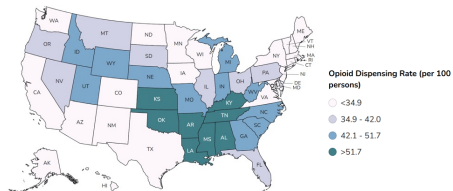
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## 2023 State Opioid Prescribing Rates

The national opioid dispensing rate declined steadily from a rate of 46.8 opioid prescriptions dispensed per 100 persons in 2019 to a rate of 37.5 in 2023



<https://www.oaia.org/qa/question-category/press-releases/oaia-releases-2023-state-opioid-dispensing-rates.html>




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## Opioid Prescriptions Impact Whole Households



Study details (July 2022)  
*Journal of the American Medical Association*  
 >840,000 patients




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## Opioids leading cause of Childhood poisoning deaths

American Academy of Pediatrics  
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

[www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/pediatrics/2022/study-opioid-poisoning-deaths-rising-disproportionately-in-infants-young-children](http://www.aap.org/en/news-room/news-releases/pediatrics/2022/study-opioid-poisoning-deaths-rising-disproportionately-in-infants-young-children)




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## Drug Deactivation and At Home Disposal Products



- Different products for different uses and different price points
- Innovative idea to engage your workforce by distributing samples during Toolbox Talks
- Available online and any many retail pharmacies

**Opioids In Construction: How Home-based Drug Deactivation & Disposal Saves Lives**  
<https://www.foreconstruction.com/business/construction-safety/article/22891746/asafe-project-opioids-in-construction-how-homebased-drug-deactivation-and-disposal-saves-lives>




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## Residential Builder's Recovery Journey

### Rebuilding a Future Through Recovery

The recovery journey of one construction business owner through treatment and dedicated support.



One of the most beautiful homes designed and built by Alair Homes, showcasing their signature style and quality. Source: Alair Homes website

**Featuring Stacy Eakman, Partner of Alair Homes Kirkland (WA state)**

<https://www.foreconstruction.com/business/business-services/coaching-consulting/article/22924378/safe-project-addiction-recovery-in-construction-rebuilding-a-future-through-recovery>




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## What May Lead to Overdose



- Misunderstanding directions for use, accidentally takes an extra dose
- Combining substances, like alcohol and opioids, not realizing dangerous impact
- Combining opioids with over the counter products that depress breathing, heart rate, and other functions of the central nervous system.
- Misusing a prescription opioid or an illegal drug such as heroin due to substance use disorder
- Taking opioid medications prescribed for someone else

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## OPIOID OVERDOSE SYMPTOMS

- Non-responsive
- Slow/stopped breathing
- Blue/gray Lips & fingernails
- Skin is pale/ashen and clammy
- Limp body
- Vomiting
- Weak or no pulse



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## OPIOID OVERDOSE SYMPTOMS



You may notice that these symptoms could also signal other life-threatening emergencies.

We recommend to always contact emergency medical support when responding to an overdose

**USE NALOXONE!** If we are unsure there is an overdose, we should use naloxone since it will not cause harm even if it is not needed.

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# NALOXONE


Naloxone is purely an opioid antagonist.

Naloxone has a very strong attraction to opioid receptors, blocking without activating them. In this process, it kicks out attached opioids and blocks opioid receptors for 30-60 minutes.

Naloxone is easy to administer and has no potential for misuse.

Active breathing isn't necessary for it to be effective.

No matter how strong an opioid is, naloxone can be highly effective.



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## Free Naloxone Training – English & Spanish

English



Spanish



Downloadable with companion administration instruction sheets in English and Spanish:  
<https://www.safeproject.us/workplaces/>






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## Free Opioid Overdose Reversal Training

5-minute and 30-minute versions



WWW.SAFEPROJECT.US/NALOXONE



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**Join the No Shame Movement**

**WE ARE NO SHAME**

I joined the No Shame Movement because substance use disorder is a disease, not a moral failure, and those struggling with it, like those with any other disease, should be supported and never stigmatized.

**Please Post Your Signed Certificate to Social Media:**

- #NoShame
- #MentalHealthAwareness
- @SAFEProject

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**Additional Resources**

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**Call to Action for Home & Family: Opioid First Dose Prevention**

1. Discuss opioid risks with all family members (diversion; contaminated and counterfeit supply)
2. Purchase medication lockbox for use with opioids
3. Request Naloxone when prescribed opioids
4. Purchase drug deactivation products
5. Search your home for leftover medications
  - Discard at Pharmacy Take-Back Kiosk
  - Use drug deactivation product for environmentally safe disposal
6. Ask dentists and doctors (all specialties) about non-opioid medications, multi-modal pain relief, and Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) protocols
7. Use Goldfinch Health Questions to Ask Surgeons before scheduling surgery and request ERAS: [www.goldfinchhealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/10-Questions-for-your-Surgeon.pdf](http://www.goldfinchhealth.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/10-Questions-for-your-Surgeon.pdf)

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Deep Dive Article on Naloxone  
QR Code to Downloadable Version



Reversing Opioid Overdoses in Construction: A Safety Imperative

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Thank you for attending!  
Check out the next webinar on:

**Tuesday, Mar. 11 @ 1pm ET**  
*Navigating the Ever-Changing Energy Code Landscape, the 2021 IRC/IECC Edition*

Register at <https://bit.ly/PHRCWebinars>



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**A Call to Action on Opioids and Naloxone**

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