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## NEWS RELEASE

### North Carolina's injury and illness remains at historic low

RALEIGH—North Carolina's workplace injury and illness rate for private industry remained at a historic low for 2010 making the Tar Heel state one of the safest states in which to work. The rate remained at 3.1 cases per 100 full-time workers and remains below the national average.

“During my term as Labor Commissioner, I am proud of the fact that North Carolina's injury and illness rate has dropped 41.5 percent (5.3 to 3.1) over the past 10 years,” Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry said. “The record low injury and illness rate is a credit to the employers and employees of our state. Safety is being embraced by management as well as those on the front lines who are performing the state's most dangerous work.”

The state's Occupational Safety and Health Division focuses on hazardous industries like construction and manufacturing by implementing special emphasis programs, providing free education and training, conducting free safety and health consultative visits, and establishing partnerships and alliances.

The 2010 rate for construction dropped to 3.0 per 100 full-time workers from 3.1 in 2009, well below the national average of 4.0. The 2010 manufacturing rate increased slightly to 3.7 from 3.5 in 2009, but still remains below the national rate of 4.4.

North Carolina is tied for the fourth lowest workplace injury and illness rate in the country, trailing only Louisiana, New York and Texas, which all had a rate of 2.7. North Carolina is one of 13 states with a rate statistically less than the national average of 3.5.

Labor officials point to other driving factors that are affecting the state's record low rates. Accidents are costly when you factor in legal fees, insurance costs, plant down time and liability suits. Many employers are implementing effective safety and health programs to lower costs and improve their bottom line.

“Good employers understand that a good workplace safety program pays for itself,” Commissioner Berry said, “but at the end of the work day, it's really about making it home to family and loved ones that matters most.”

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