

Day Labor Safety and Health Initiative Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research suggests that contingent workers (workers with no long-term work arrangements), and especially day laborers (workers who solicit temporary work on a daily basis) probably suffer occupational injuries more often than do workers with traditional employment. However, the risk of occupational injury among this group of workers remains unclear, and particular occupational risk factors have not been identified. The purpose of this project was to review and summarize the available literature regarding health and safety issues in day labor, to identify individuals and organizations both within and outside the University of Washington with interest or ability to assist in efforts regarding day laborer safety and health, and to develop one or more research proposals to assess or improve working conditions for day laborers.

Twenty-five peer-reviewed articles regarding day labor and health and safety issues were identified in the literature review. In addition, 41 reports, papers, and websites were identified. Little research has been done on occupational health problems in day labor, but the work that has been done suggests that this is a dangerous occupation, and that workers have little recourse if they are injured on the job. A number of governmental and non-governmental agencies were identified that have interest or expertise in evaluating health and safety issues among day laborers. These include several departments and centers within the University of Washington, the Washington state Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention program, two day labor assistance programs, and one very large temporary labor agency.

The limited data available on safety and health problems among day laborers suggest that additional research is warranted. This study identified interest in conducting further research in this area among University of Washington researchers and community partners. An initial study designed to characterize basic occupational health knowledge and injury experience among day laborers was developed, and will be implemented by DEOHS researchers during 2006.

REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE

Day labor is a significant portion of the growing informal labor market, also called contingent work, precarious employment or temporary work. The contingent workforce has grown tremendously in recent years (Quinlan et al, 2001). Day laborers are frequently employed in relatively high injury-risk work such as construction, painting, landscaping, fishing, household moving, home renovation, warehousing, janitorial and cleaning work, and manufacturing (Valenzuela, 1999; personal communications: Hilary Stern of CASA Latina, Brent Herman of the Millionair Club, May 17, 2005). Since day labor worker is temporary, there is almost no employer-employee bond, and employers typically take little or no responsibility for injuries or accidents. In a recent survey of day laborers in the Washington DC area, more than 25% reported injuries or illnesses requiring medical attention (Washington Post, 2005). Work in high risk industries, coupled with evidence of a high injury rate would suggest the need for effective regulation or other interventions. However, the nature of the industry has made workplace protections very limited (Quinlan and Bohle, 2004). The employers of day laborers are primarily homeowners and small businesses with minimal or nonexistent safety and health resources. A large fraction of day laborers are immigrant workers, a significant portion of whom are undocumented (Valenzuela, 2000a and 2000b) and have little education (Anonymous, 2002). This undocumented status may drive these workers towards day labor by preventing them from obtaining other types of employment. The nature of contingent work is that if a worker takes action to protect themselves, they are (or at least believe they are) vulnerable to layoff and possible future employment discrimination. Furthermore, if a worker is injured, they have little or no access to workers compensation payments or other insurance to cover the cost of medical treatment or lost wages (Quinlan and Mayhew, 1999; Azaroff et al, 2004; Quinlan and Bohle, 2004). Employment instability, lack of benefits and health insurance, lack of advancement opportunities, and limited access to workers' compensation are reasons why day laborers' hourly wages are somewhat higher on average than workers with more permanent jobs (Quinlan and Mayhew, 1999; Worby, 2002).

Several large studies of day laborers have been conducted in cities with extensive manufacturing bases and large populations of immigrant laborers, including Chicago, New York, Washington, DC, and Los Angeles (Valenzuela, 2000a; Valenzuela, 2003; Valenzuela, 2005; Peck and Theodore, 2001). A large national survey of day labor has also recently been completed, the results of which should be released in the near future (personal communication,

Hilary Stern of CASA Latina, August 12, 2005). However, none of these surveys comprehensively addressed safety and health issues. While day laborers and the organizations that work with them recognize the significance of occupational injuries and illnesses, the lack of safety regulation in the workplace, and the limited availability of health insurance or compensation, there is almost no documentation of the extent of the problem, and few identified strategies for reducing illnesses and injuries in this employment sector.

Day laborers are employed through several venues in the Seattle area. For-profit employment agencies such as Labor Ready supply workers to employers for short term work contracts. Two non-governmental organizations (NGOs), CASA Latina and The Millionair Club, are organized to support day laborers by facilitating worker/employer contact while providing educational and other social support services to workers and their families. Day laborers are also hired completely informally "on the street" at selected locations in the area, including a large home improvement store in South Seattle. Employers needing workers usually visit or contact these sites early in the morning, although work can arise throughout the day. Negotiation of the type and length of work, transportation to the worksite, and wages happens through a formal process at sites operated by for-profit and NGOs, while such details are worked out informally at other hiring locations. Finally, day laborers can be hired directly by a previous employer, by another day laborer, or by a friend. Homeowners hiring day laborers for home renovation projects do not generally pick up day laborers on the street; only employers do this.

Although the population of day laborers in the Puget Sound fluctuates somewhat by season, there appear to be at least 2-5,000 day laborers in the area, with approximately 50% of these workers doing day labor work consistently throughout the year, and the other half doing day labor work briefly or in an intermittent fashion (personal communications: Hilary Stern of CASA Latina, Brent Herman of the Millionair Club, May 17, 2005). The day laborers who obtain work through CASA Latina are solely Hispanic, and almost all are undocumented (personal communication, Hilary Stern of CASA Latina, May 17, 2005). The day laborers who obtain work through the Millionair Club are documented workers who meet low income criteria and are homeless (personal communication, Brent Herman, May 17, 2005). Day laborers who obtain work through Labor Ready are all documented workers, and many meet low income criteria. The number of workers obtaining work through Labor Ready is not readily available, as the

company tracks employment by hours, not by individual employees (personal communication, Steve Conkle of Labor Ready, May 17, 2005).

Most of the previous research on day laborers has focused on describing the nature of day labor, identifying hiring locations, evaluating reasons workers opt for this type of employment, assessing demographic characteristics of the workers, studying common types of work and wages, and determining how often day laborers suffer abuses (including non-payment for work, violence, robbery, threats, and other human rights violations) (Smith and Emsellem, 2002; Peck and Theodore, 2001). However, while these factors have been relatively well-characterized, there is a paucity of data regarding occupational safety and health issues around day labor.

There is some evidence that contingent workers (including day laborers) are at elevated risk of suffering an occupational injury (Foley, 1999; Kivimaki et al, 2003; Benavides et al, 2000; Morris, 1999) compared to the overall workforce. Pransky et al (2002) found an injury rate of 12.2/100 full-time workers among a group of non-agricultural immigrant Latino workers, much higher than the overall US rate of 7.1. Occupational injuries have been shown to be common among contingent and informal workers in Brazil, with some subgroups of contingent workers having more than twice the risk of injury than workers with employment contracts (Santana and Loomis, 2004). Day laborers are often employed in industries such as construction which involve heavy manual labor, work at heights, and many other risk factors for occupational injury, illness, and death. Construction, for instance, has one of the highest rates of occupational fatalities among all US industries, with laborers (the group most likely to include day labor workers), among the highest in construction (Dong et al, 2004). Construction, moving, landscaping, and other labor-intensive industries which are known to employ day laborers are associated with high rates of injuries, including slips, strains, sprains, and falls, and contingent workers have been found to suffer from these injuries at higher rates than do noncontingent workers (Benavides et al, 2000). Construction and demolition jobs may involve exposure to toxic air contaminants, as can janitorial and cleaning jobs. A recent study of immigrant non-agricultural Latino workers, a group of workers likely to participate in day labor work, found that only one-third of workers had received safety training, while nearly one-fifth thought that they had received harmful exposures at work (Pransky et al, 2002). Other authors have shown that contingent workers are less likely to receive safety training and more likely to

be exposed to safety deficiencies (Quinlan and Bohle, 2004). However, only one study has attempted to quantify the risk of occupational exposures or injuries among day laborers.

One metric by which trends in occupational injuries for specific segments of the workforce are often tracked is workers compensation claims, which have dropped in the US over the last decade (Azaroff et al, 2004). It is tempting to attribute this drop to the presence of more effective occupational safety and health programs. However, some researchers have suggested that the actual rates of injury have not changed, but rather that reported injuries have declined as an ever-larger fraction of the US workforce is employed in contingent work and day labor. Contingent workers have been demonstrated to file claims at lower rates than workers with more stable employment (Azaroff et al, 2004; Quinlan and Mayhew, 1999). Day laborers and contingent workers who are injured on the job may not report this injury for a variety of reasons, including: lack of knowledge regarding their occupational health rights; lack of knowledge of occupational risks; fear of reprisal from the employer if they report an injury; fear of jeopardizing future employment opportunities; fear of reporting personal data to governmental agencies due to lack of proper documentation; and lack of knowledge regarding possible workers' compensation benefits (Morris, 1999; Valenzuela, 2000; Worby, 2000; Quinlan et al, 2001; Quinlan and Mayhew, 1999). In the case of workers' compensation benefits, some workers may not have coverage due to the informal nature of their employment, or may be covered by homeowner's insurance during home renovation work and not be aware of it. Even among those workers who do have nominal coverage, the responsibility of who should pay for claims may be unclear. Pransky et al (2002) found that more than half of non-agricultural immigrant Latino workers surveyed had no workers' compensation coverage. Workers may also avoid reporting injuries because they cannot afford to take time off of work to recover from the injury (due to potential loss of income, need to provide for dependents, feelings of shame [Walter et al, 2004], lack of health insurance, and other reasons) (Walter et al, 2002), and therefore find reporting to be unnecessary and pointless. Twenty-seven percent of the workers with a recent occupational injury surveyed by Pransky et al in 2002 reported difficulty in obtaining treatment. Ninety-one percent lost time from work, and 29% had to find another job as a result of the injury. Under-reporting of injuries is common in occupational settings, and even more common among contingent workers; true rates of injuries have been shown to be much higher than reported rates (Quinlan and Bohle, 2004).

Even considering the under-reporting of occupational injuries among day laborers and other contingent workers, a study in Washington state found that contingent and temporary workers had higher rates of injuries, costlier claims, more time lost per injury than did workers doing contract work (Foley, 1998). In 2004, temporary help positions in the state of Washington were associated with 3,492 accepted state fund workers' compensation claims, accounting for approximately 37% of the total accepted state fund claims (Washington state Bureau of Labor Statistics Information, 2005). In 2004, the 88 temporary help companies employing 50 or more workers in the state of Washington had an average claims rate of 13.08 per 200,000 hours worked, putting them in the 75th percentile of claims rates across all industry classifications. Only five of 88 companies in this category did not have a single workers' compensation case filed during 2004. These companies did have an average experience modification rating (EMR, which takes into account the number of workers' compensation claims and number of hours worked at each company) of 0.99, essentially identical to the average of 1.0 across all Washington state employers. There were 548 total employers providing temporary help services in Washington state in 2004; firms with fewer than 50 employees had lower EMRs than those employing more workers (0.63 for firms employing 1-5 workers, and 0.89 for firms employing 6-50 workers), although the smallest firms had a higher claims rate (16.5 per 200,000 hours worked) than the largest firms.

In summary, day laborers represent a group which has substantial exposure to occupational safety and health hazards, has little access to compensation mechanisms in the event of an occupational injury, and has received little attention from the public health community.

DESCRIPTION AND CAPABILITIES OF POTENTIALLY INTERESTED AGENCIES/INDIVIDUALS

A number of organizations with expertise in occupational safety and health or interest in day labor issues were identified as part of this project. These are listed below, along with a brief description of the capabilities of each organization.

State of Washington University and Governmental Organizations

There are a number of university and governmental groups in Washington with interests relating to day labor health and safety. These are briefly described below.

UW School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

The dozen or so faculty in the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences (DEOHS) Industrial Hygiene and Occupational Medicine programs have experience in conducting field-based occupational exposure and health studies, which are clearly needed for day laborers. Lecturer Rick Gleason designed an eight-hour basic safety and health training class for supervisors at Labor Ready, Inc. in 2001, and trained approximately 60 trainers at a Labor Ready training facility in Northern California. Prior to this effort, Labor Ready supervisors had received no safety training. This training allows supervisors to assess safety and health issues and basic personal protective equipment needs at sites where workers will be placed by Labor Ready. Dr. Matt Kiefer has conducted a variety of occupational health surveys and interventions among agricultural workers, many of whom have demographic characteristics similar to those of day laborers and face similar health and safety challenges. Dr. Michael Silverstein has expertise in occupational health policies, an area where improvements are needed with regards to day laborers.

UW School of Nursing, Department of Psychosocial & Community Health

Several faculty in the Department of Psychosocial and Community Health conduct research on a number of issues relevant to day labor, including marginalized and underserved populations and community health promotion. Dr. Patricia Butterfield has also worked with Seattle-King County Public Health, placing nursing students at several Public Health clinics, and has observed that these clinics are where many contingent workers receive their primary health care, making them a potential recruitment, data collection, and/or intervention site for day laborers. Dr. Butterfield has extensive contacts in the public health community. Dr. Jenny Hsin-Chun Tsai is conducting research focusing on Chinese restaurant workers in and around Seattle. Dr. Tsai's research is exploring personal knowledge and skills, cultural issues, economic aspects, and injuries in this workforce. Her surveys assess immigration stress, health and safety risks and experience, and psychosocial health effects. Portions of this research are directly applicable to investigation of issues concerning day labor.

UW College of Arts and Sciences, History and Geography Departments

Limited research on the history of labor in Washington state, and particularly on day labor, has been conducted within the History and Geography Departments. Alex Morrow is conducting

social science research in the History Department on immigrant workers in Seattle, with a focus on immigration concerns. He has written several papers on day labor, and has focused on day labor work conducted through CASA Latina in particular. His research interests also include the relationship between day labor and unionized workers, how employment information is passed among day laborers, and how statistical employment figures underestimate day labor. Nick Velluzzi in the Geography Department is examining the relationship between contingent work and workforce development and the contribution of temporary and contingent workers to regional economic development. He has previous experience working at the University of California, Los Angeles Labor Occupational Safety and Health Center on an inter-agency workplace lead exposure project which focused on industries employing contingent workers with high occupational exposures to lead.

UW Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies

Several dozen UW faculty associates of the Center for Labor Studies conduct research on issues facing workers. Dr. Dan Jacoby is the chair of the Center for Labor Studies, which is a joint project of the UW Political Sciences and History Departments. The center has traditionally focused on labor policies and history in unionized environments, but is currently exploring issues related to home-care labor and contingent workers' issues in the "knowledge economy." The Center's associates come from a wide variety of UW departments and programs.

UW Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center

The 40-some researchers in this injury-control center conduct a variety of research on the causes of, and possible preventive solutions for, a variety of traumatic and injurious events. High-risk groups, which include underserved workers such as day laborers, are targeted in much of the research conducted at the center. Two particularly relevant focuses of researchers at the center include the use of epidemiological tools to identify risk factors for injury and the development and evaluation of new injury-prevention programs.

Washington Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention program (SHARP)

This small (less than 20 full-time staff) group is located within the Washington Department of Labor and Industries Washington Industrial Safety and Health Administration. The focus of this group is promoting healthy work environments and preventing workplace injuries and illnesses among Washington workers. SHARP employees conduct long-term, industry-wide studies to

determine the relationships between workplace exposures and the occurrence of injuries and illnesses, and coordinate with both business and labor on these studies. Michael Foley has published a manuscript on the effects of temporary work on occupational health and safety in Washington state.

Other non-governmental organizations in Washington state

There are several non-governmental organizations with direct interest in day laborer health and safety. These are described in detail below, since they work directly with day laborers and have at the greatest opportunity to influence the safety and health of day laborers.

CASA Latina

CASA Latina, founded in 1994, specializes in helping undocumented and immigrant Latino workers in Seattle find day labor work. It is part of a nationwide association called the National Day Labor Organizing Network which consists of 28 day labor organizations. CASA Latina is a very small (2 full-time staff) organization has a mission of empowering workers through economic opportunities, which it achieves through four main programs. The first provides roughly 200 regular and 800 transient or irregular day laborers (95% of which are male) with a mechanism to find work by operating an employer/employee referral service and hiring center; the second provides education to workers and their families; the third is a women's leadership program; and the fourth is a wage claim project (designed to help workers who have not been paid for their efforts recover their wages). The organization is funded by the City of Seattle, the United Way, individuals, and corporations. Day laborers hired through CASA Latina register upon arriving at the hiring center, and receive a lottery ticket. Lottery drawings are held regularly throughout the day, and workers with "winning" tickets are placed on the list of workers from which employers can choose. New lotteries are run after all workers from the previous lottery have been placed. Hired day laborers are then usually transported to and from the job site by their temporary employer.

CASA Latina does not check the immigration/documentation status of its clients, which are all Latino. If workers are hurt while working for a business, they may be able to file a workers' compensation claim, although many are too fearful of the government to do so. The organization has relationships with a core group of employers that regularly hire day laborers (about 50% of day labor jobs hired through CASA Latina are with construction contractors). If

workers are injured while employed by a homeowner, they're considered independent contractors and are not covered by workers' compensation. Most workers injured on the job receive a one-time emergency-room visit (at most) and no follow-up care. CASA Latina is working with the American Society of Safety Engineers Puget Sound chapter to offer a two-hour health and safety training (delivered in Spanish) for day laborers. The organization does not issue safety equipment to workers it refers for employment, although day laborers who complete the organization's recently-developed "guaranteed worker program" (a fee-for-employer service designed to provide a higher-quality, more reliable pool of labor for participating employers) may receive limited safety equipment. Participation in this new program requires individual day laborers to attend the CASA Latina/ASSE safety training.

Millionair Club

The Millionair Club, founded in 1921, is a small (3 full-time job placement staff) organization which specializes in helping the homeless change and improve their lives by obtaining employment as day laborers. The organization, which is funded entirely by individual and corporate donations, operates a day labor/job placement program, hygiene and vaccine center, and eyeglass clinic for registered clients, as well as a kitchen that servers 10,000 meals per month. The Millionair Club fills, on average, 2,500-3,000 day labor positions with employers per month, and in the summertime can have as many as 4,000 workers registered, with around 1,500 of these actually placed in jobs per month. Ninety-five percent of its clients are male. Clients are matched with employers based on their chronological position on the worker registry; workers who have not worked recently are given priority when employment opportunities arise. Clients are also placed according to their self-reported job skills where possible. Once selected, clients are transported to and from the site of employment by their employer, unless a longer-term employment situation is arranged, in which case transportation is the client's responsibility. Approximately 50% of Millionair Club clients are long-term, repeat clients, with the remainder being short-term, transient users of the organization's services. There is limited exchange of clients between CASA Latina and The Millionair Club.

The Millionair Club requires that workers have proper documentation to work in the US (confirmed through a Washington State Patrol background check) before registering them for the available services. Workers can use these services for up to one year. Approximately 60% of clients of The Millionair Club are Caucasian, and roughly 50% are homeless. As with CASA

Latina, the Millionair Club day labor program is a referral service only; the organization does not bond, license, or assume liability for workers it assists. About 70% of referrals are to homeowners doing home renovation.

Safety training for clients of The Millionair Club is essentially non-existent, though the job dispatchers the organization employs try to understand safety issues on jobs that workers are being sent out to. As with CASA Latina, the organization does not issue safety equipment to the day laborers it places. The Millionair Club offered several types of safety training (forklift driver and construction flagger) for nearly two decades, but discontinued this service several years ago due to competition from community colleges.

Labor Ready, Inc.

Labor Ready, founded in 1989, is the largest for-profit labor company in the world, and has corporate headquarters in Tacoma, WA. The company provides temporary employees to employers with short-term labor needs. The company provides approximately 600,000 workers from 880 branch offices to nearly 320,000 employers each year, and had annual revenue of more than \$1 billion in 2004, according to the company's 2004 annual report. Many workers are employed for as little as several hours, although some have relatively long-term employment. First-time Labor Ready workers complete a brief pre-employment survey designed to identify their job skills and previous training, and all work assignments are based on the results of this exam. Work assignments are on a first-come, first-served basis, and workers are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the worksite. Many workers only work for Labor Ready for a short period. Unlike CASA Latina and the Millionair Club, Labor Ready workers are actually employed by Labor Ready, even though the work they do is at another location. This provides a different workers' compensation situation, in which Labor Ready provides coverage for all of its employees, and the company or location that they work at has little or no injury liability. Labor Ready has been investigated by a number of states in the US for various labor law and workers' compensation violations, including misclassifying high risk work, which results in lower workers' compensation premiums for the company. The company's experience modification rating in Washington state in 2005 was 0.87, which is somewhat less than the average of 1.0 across all Washington employers. However, with the exception of a single year, Labor Ready's EMR has increased each year from 1996 and 2005 (from 0.64 to 0.87, Washington state online Worker's Compensation Verification service, 2005).

Labor Ready workers receive little safety training, although, as with The Millionair Club, the dispatchers who work directly with the employer needing labor are at least nominally responsible for identifying safety and health issues on each contract job. Each branch office manager is also expected to visit new contract job locations to evaluate them for hazards. The training program developed by the UW Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences in 2001 was designed to help these managers identify hazards. The company has also recently begun to hire field safety specialists to provide technical expertise on safety to Labor Ready branch offices, has implemented safety screening criteria for worksites where it places workers. According to the company's 2004 annual report (available on the Labor Ready website), these and other efforts reduced the company workers' compensation claims rates 10% between 2003 and 2004.

Workers report to the Labor Ready office early in the morning, sign in, and wait for a job assignment to become available. A safety video plays constantly in the worker waiting area, though there is no obligation on the part of the workers to watch it, and the waiting areas also contain safety posters and other written safety materials. Labor Ready does provide basic personal protective equipment (hard hats, steel-toed boots, gloves, back braces, earplugs, and safety goggles) to hired workers in most states, though workers are charged for these items if they do not return them at the end of the day. The site where the work occurs is expected to provide more specialized protective equipment if needed.

Organizations outside of Washington state

A recent report by the US General Accounting Office (Anonymous, 2002) identified a total of 84 non-profit and governmental agencies serving day laborers in 14 states, including Washington. A number of other agencies and universities are conducting related research in the US, and have faculty and staff who may be of assistance in developing future research projects.

University of California, San Francisco, Community Occupational Health Project

The Community Occupational Health Project works primarily with Latino workers in the Oakland area. Dr. Nan Lashuay is director of the COHP workers clinic in Oakland. The Center is giving thirty day laborer "health promoters" health and safety training on the risks associated with asbestos exposures, ladders, and falls. The training is delivered at a local day labor center. The health promoters will promote occupational health and serve as resources among the day

labor community. The Center also has a weekly lunch program offered in conjunction with other community organizations, which is typically attended by 30-80 workers. This program includes English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, and a public health clinic run by a nurse. Participating workers are informed of their basic rights and how to deal with abusive employers on particular issues like safety and health.

University of California, Los Angeles, Center for the Study of Urban Poverty

Dr. Abel Valenzuela at the Center for the Study of Urban Poverty has conducted the most sophisticated and comprehensive studies of day laborers in the US. Previous studies done at the Center, which was established in 1989, have examined day laborers in New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC. The Center will also be releasing the results of a nationwide survey (which included the Seattle area) in the near future. The previous studies done by the Center have not focused on safety and health, but rather on worker demographics and social issues. Nevertheless, the survey tools used in the previous studies can provide guidance for future research efforts.

National Day Labor Organizing Network (NDLON)

This network was founded in 2000 to advance the rights of low-wage and immigrant workers by linking and strengthening local day labor and contingent worker organizing groups. NDLON consists of 18 community-based collaborators in 11 US states, including CASA Latina in Seattle. The network has five primary priorities: legalization of undocumented workers, strengthening of existing work center; educational and organizing activities; promotion and protection of day laborers' civil rights; and strengthening of NDLON itself. NDLON has a National Assembly which meets approximately annually to discuss current events, recent and ongoing research, and future initiatives. NDLON also serves as a public clearinghouse for a variety of information related to day labor, including research, best practices recommendations, work center suggestions, and draft legislation.

The Jefferson Center for Education and Research

This center is a small non-profit organization located in Portland, OR which has an ongoing research program focusing on contingent workers in rural areas. Executive Director Sarah Loosé has experience coordinating educational research projects in the Pacific Northwest and El Salvador. The Center, which was founded in 1994, co-sponsors a bi-monthly "Contingent Labor

Forum" long with the Labor Studies Center at Evergreen State College in Washington. This forum consists of community organizations, unions, legal advocates, and others entities involved with day laborers. Participants discuss strategies, policies, and legal issues affecting day labor in all industries, although the current focus is on natural resources industries (i.e., fishing, silviculture, agriculture).

MEETING BETWEEN UW RESEARCHERS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

On June 8, 2005, a number of individuals from within and outside the University of Washington met to discuss day labor safety and health issues. The attendees were: Dr. Noah Seixas, Rick Neitzel, Rick Gleason, Susan Brower, and Dr. Michael Silverstein, all from the UW DEOHS; Michael Foley from SHARP; Dr. Dan Jacoby from the UW Center for Labor Studies; Brent Herrman from The Millionair Club; and Hilary Stern from CASA Latina. Representatives from Labor Ready and the UW Harborview Injury Prevention Center were not able to attend.

The meeting participants discussed a variety of topics, and explored how the issues discussed could be framed and evaluated in research terms. One primary issue which became apparent immediately was the need to design any research study with the assistance of at least one individual with Spanish language skills and access to and credibility with the Hispanic community. The UW DEOHS has very limited Spanish language capability, as does SHARP, and both organizations have experienced language and population access barriers in the past. Partnering with one or more of the NGOs was therefore identified as a logical solution. Any survey on CASA Latina workers specifically would have to be oral, and in Spanish, to account for language barriers, mistrust, and low literacy rates. Surveys conducted on clients of The Millionair Club could be either oral or written, as the majority of clients of that organization speak English, there aren't as many mistrust issues, and clients already complete some written forms as part of their registration.

Another major issue identified was the very limited data currently available regarding day labors. Certain pieces of information need to be known in order to better understand the day labor market, including:

- How many day laborers are there in Seattle, and what are their demographic characteristics?

- What is the distribution of day labor jobs available doing home renovation work, construction work, household moving, etc?
- How many day laborers get hired through for-profit labor companies like Labor Ready, off the street, or through non-governmental organizations like CASA Latina and The Millionair Club?

Day laborer training was brought up repeatedly as a potential research intervention. However, the CASA Latina and The Millionair Club representatives both noted that such training would have to occur on or very nearby the hiring sites to be feasible and acceptable to the day laborers. Combined training of workers from both organizations would be possible due to their proximal locations, and The Millionair Club could potentially provide room from training and research staff. Resources at CASA Latina are extremely limited; the facility essentially consists of a paved parking lot and a portable trailer unit. Basic training needs were explored, and it was agreed that such training would need to be general enough to cover many jobs, but at the same time specific enough to address the most common (and as-yet-unidentified) occupational injuries. The ASSE training currently being provided by CASA Latina could server as a useful for model for the development of additional training materials.

The representatives from both The Millionair Club and CASA Latina reported that workers do occasionally refuse unsafe work, or at least become uncomfortable with certain work situations. This discomfort is sometimes great enough to cause the workers to refuse to go back to the same job. The frequency with which this situation occurs is unknown. The Millionair Club and CASA Latina representatives also noted that any research efforts need to be sensitive to the reasons that workers are doing day labor work in the first place, e.g., lack of documentation and/or fear of government. Any study conducted on these workers must not have an adverse effect on their ability to get work, nor on their immigration status.

Suggested questions for future research projects which arose during the meeting included:

1. What are the dangers and resulting injuries that day laborers face? What is the incidence of these injuries?
2. What kind of safety training (if any) do day laborers get through agencies and at their worksites? What kind of safety equipment do workers receive at their worksites?
3. What happens when and if workers ask about safety issues onsite?

4. What are insurance options for day laborers in the event of injury? Homeowner's insurance doesn't appear to be a viable option, and workers' compensation insurance may not be available. Can day labor organizations take on the insurance role themselves, or can the workers do so through some form of unionization?
5. What sort of information could be developed for employers telling them about day labor safety and health issues and what to do if a worker becomes injured on their jobsite?
6. Is it possible to influence safety and health hazards on worksites where day laborers are employed through consultation or compliance efforts aimed at employers? If so, how would this effort address homeowners?
7. What is the relationship between workers employed through day labor organizations, workers obtaining day laborer work on the street, and unionized workers? If the relationship is poor, is it possible that certain groups of workers end up in more dangerous jobs?

FUTURE RESEARCH

The lack of occupational injury and illness data for day laborers, the amount of expertise in occupational health studies available from faculty and staff within the University of Washington, and the interest of two NGOs allowed us to develop a field-based study of day labor workers. This survey will address research questions one through three from the June 8, 2005 meeting. The survey will collect baseline information on the nature and severity of the occupational injury and illness problem. The UW will partner with CASA Latina and The Millionair Club and survey workers through their organizations and day laborers at 'street' hiring locations. The survey is intended to characterize the frequency and severity of injuries or illnesses, the nature of work and work hazards faced by day laborers, the level of training and safety equipment provided by employers, experience with obtaining and paying for medical treatment and the barriers to improving safety on the job. The results of this survey will be useful in identifying potential interventions to reduce occupational hazards and injuries among day labor workers.

An executive committee, made up of principle investigator Noah Seixas, organizational collaborators Hilary Stern (CASA Latina) and Brent Herrmann (The Millionair Club), and faculty members Michael Silverstein (occupational health policy), Dan Jacoby (labor history and policy) and Thomas Wickizer (Health Services) will provide oversight and guidance to the study. UW student Joyce Tseng will manage sampling, interview administration, data entry and analysis and report preparation. Day laborers identified by the collaborating organizations and bilingual UW work-study students will be trained and hired on a daily basis to conduct interviews.

An electronic (PDA-delivered) survey instrument will be designed in collaboration with organizers and workers from CASA Latina and The Millionair Club. Draft questions will be proposed to a series of focus groups (in which the interviewers will participate) to ensure that relevant issues are addressed, the questions are comprehensive and understandable, and the survey is technically and culturally acceptable. The questionnaire will be translated into Spanish and delivered orally in the preferred language of the subject. The survey will be designed to take less than one hour. To the extent possible, questions will be designed to be consistent with those used by previous day labor surveys to insure comparable data. The survey will include questions regarding demographic information, work history on the workers' three most recent jobs, job hazards encountered in those jobs, use and availability of safety equipment and

training, injury and illness experience, medical treatments and method of payment for those treatments, and the barriers workers perceive concerning occupational safety and health.

The sample survey will be designed to represent day laborers in Seattle, stratified by the type of organization with which they work. Our focus will be on the informal day labor market through 'street' hiring locations and organized hiring through CASA Latina and The Millionair Club.

Because the demographics and hazards associated with day labor work may vary with season, we will collect data in both high (summer) and low (winter) employment seasons. Both CASA Latina and the Millionair Club have registries of available workers, from which we will take a random sample and approach each identified worker to ask for participation. Recruitment will be conducted at the hiring location, and interviews will be conducted immediately. If workers are hired for a job before completing the survey, they will be scheduled for completion at a later time. For street day laborers, a team of surveyors will go to the hiring location, survey the number of workers present, and randomly sample the group for recruitment. This methodology was used by Valenzuela (1999) and resulted in excellent participation (6% refusal rate). To obtain this high participation, a flyer (English and Spanish) will first be distributed to all people present explaining affiliations of the surveyors and the purpose of the survey. Individuals will then be selected and approached for recruitment.

We will target a total of 70 worker interviews from each of the three locations (CASA Latina, The Millionair Club, and street hiring). Thus, we will interview 35 workers at each location in each season. Each interviewer should be able to complete three interviews in four hours. All subjects completing a survey will be given a \$20 incentive. These procedures will be submitted to the UW IRB prior to initiation of the project.

Data collected on paper forms will be entered into a database and checked for errors. Each survey item will be scored and described by organization, type of work, and other demographic factors. A preliminary report will be developed and delivered as a presentation to small groups of workers from each of the participating organizations. Participant feedback and potential strategies for addressing the problems will be solicited through brain storming, and discussion focus groups. The final report will include proposals for methods of addressing the problems identified, including a strategy for funding an intervention project if it is deemed feasible.

CONCLUSIONS

Day laborers represent an occupational group that is underserved and clearly at risk of occupational injury and illness. However, because of the inherent difficulties in conducting research on such a transient group of workers, there are few data available on the safety and health experience of day laborers. The limited existing data identified in the literature review conducted as part of this project suggests that day laborers are exposed to a wide variety of safety and health hazards in the course of their work, that they are frequently injured on the job, and that they have little or no access to traditional occupational injury support systems such as workers' compensation.

This project identified a number of organizations in Washington state that have an interest in protecting the health of day laborers, and in evaluating and addressing occupational injury risk factors. Several of these organizations were brought together to discuss the problems facing day laborers, and to discuss possible issues that can be addressed through research. A variety of possible research questions were identified and several of these topics will be addressed with an occupational safety and health survey that was also designed as part of this project. This study will occur in 2006, and the results of this research will be useful in developing and implementing future intervention studies which will improve the working conditions of day laborers. The results of this study will also be delivered to the WISHA Policy and Technical Services Division of the Washington Department of Labor and Industries for informational purposes and possible use in future regulatory activities.

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CASA Latina (Centro de Ayuda Solidaria a los Amigos)
<http://www.casa-latina.org/>

Jefferson Center for Education and Research
<http://jeffctr.org/>

Labor Ready
<http://www.laborready.com/home/common/homemain.asp#>

Millionair Club
<http://www.millionairclub.org/index.htm>

National Day Laborer Organizing Network
<http://ndlon.org/indexenglish.htm>

National Employment Law Project
<http://nelp.org/nwp/initiatives/day/index.cfm>

New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health Immigrant Worker page
http://www.nycosh.org/immigrant_and_other/immigrant-vulnerable.html

Seattle-King County Public Health
<http://www.metrokc.gov/health/>

University of California, Los Angeles Center for Study of Urban Poverty
<http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/issr/csup/index.php>

University of California, Los Angeles Labor Occupational Safety and Health program
<http://www.losht.ucla.edu/woshtep/index.html>

University of Washington Dept. of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences
<http://depts.washington.edu/envhlth/>

University of Washington Center for Labor Studies
<http://depts.washington.edu/pcls/>

University of Washington Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center
<http://depts.washington.edu/hiprc/>

Washington Dept. of Labor and Industries Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention
<http://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Research/About/default.asp>

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