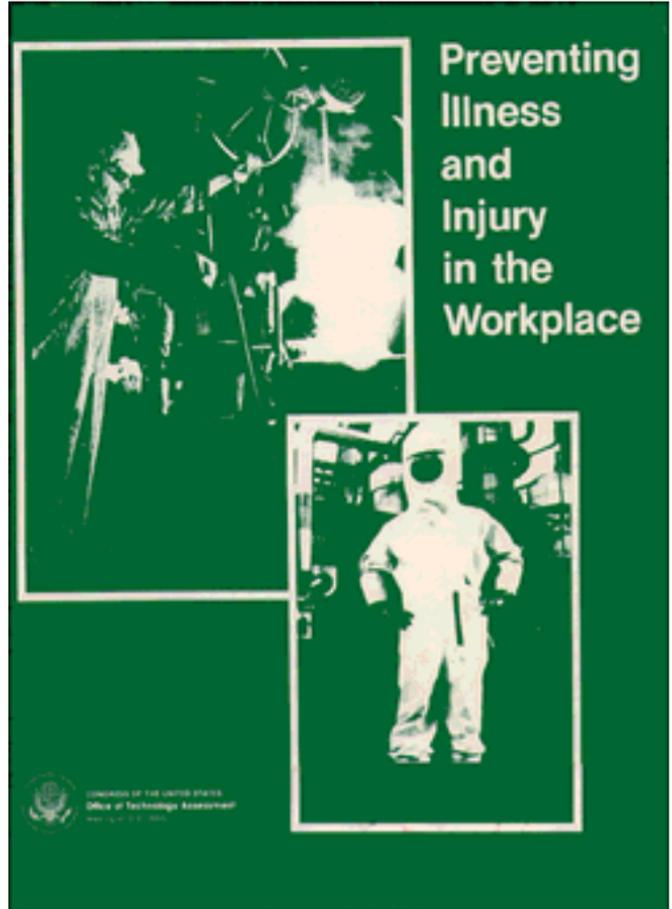


*Preventing Illness and Injury in the
Workplace*

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Foreword

Congressional interest in work-related disease and injury led to the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1970. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health were created to administer that Act, which stated an ambitious goal: "to assure so far as possible every working man and woman in the Nation safe and healthful working conditions. "

This report responds to a request from the Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce and a supporting letter from the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources. In this report, OTA examines three main topics: identification of occupational hazards, including the available data on injuries and illnesses; development of control technologies for reducing or eliminating workplace hazards; and the incentives and imperatives that influence decisions to control hazards.

Workers, employers, health and safety professionals, and government officials have all contributed to progress in this field. But improvements can still be made. More concerted effort and better use of existing methods would enhance hazard identification. Further research could improve health and safety control technologies and contribute to their incorporation in U.S. workplaces. Employers' decisions to control hazards might be fostered by changing the incentives and imperatives that affect those decisions.

In preparing this report, OTA staff drew upon the expertise of members of the assessment advisory panel and contractors, as well as other experts in the field of occupational health and safety. Contractors' reports are available from the National Technical Information Service. In some cases, contractors' opinions and viewpoints differ from those in this report. Drafts of the final report were reviewed by the advisory panel, chaired by Dr. Morton Corn; executive branch agencies, congressional staff, and other knowledgeable individuals and groups. We are grateful for their assistance. Key OTA staff involved in this assessment were Michael Gough, Karl Kronebusch, Hellen Gelband, Gwenn Sewell, and Beth Bergman. Denny Dobbins worked on this report while on detail from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.



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