



STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP



As the holiday shopping season kicks into high gear, it's important to remember to exercise kindness - and, more importantly, patience - with the retail workers helping you track down that perfect gift.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics [reported last month](#) the number of non-fatal workplace injuries had stagnated for the first time in years. For the first time since 2012, the number of total recordable cases didn't decline and actually increased for private retail trade employees.

In total, the BLS reported there were 2.8 million non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses in 2018, unchanged from 2017. Retail trade was the only private industry to see an increase in injuries and illnesses reported in 2018 at 3.5 cases per 100 full-time equivalent workers, up from 3.3 in 2017.

[Others have speculated](#) that the increase could be due to the increase in seasonal workers - often young and inexperienced - hired during the 2018 holiday season, with retailers projected to add even more holiday workers during the 2019 season.

And in more recent news, if you're planning to order from Amazon.com, maybe try to get those orders placed well in advance to help slow the break-neck pace that warehouse workers and delivery drivers are expected to keep in order to meet the holiday influx.

[A comprehensive report published last week](#) by *The Atlantic* and *Reveal from The Center for Investigative Journalism* showed Amazon's warehouse workers had more than double the injury rate of the rest of the warehousing industry with 9.6 serious injuries per 100 full-time workers in 2018 compared to the industry average of 4.

A warehouse in Eastvale, Calif., had an injury rate four times higher than the industry average while a Tracy, Calif., warehouse had a rate of 11.3. The increased rates at Amazon facilities are attributed to grueling quotas and the introduction of robots to help with product picking at many warehouses, the report said.

So while most of us are looking to find those special somethings for the special people in our lives, try to keep in mind those workers on the other side of the counter - or online order - helping you fulfill your holiday wish list. Chances are, they're just struggling to keep up.