

Evaluation of Data Submitted to the American Public Power Association's 2020 Safety Awards of Excellence



Table of Contents

- Introduction..... 3
- Section I – General Overview 4
- Section II – Award Groups 8
- Section III – Award Region13
- Section IV – DART Rate19
- Section V - Summary22
- Appendix.....23

Introduction

This report provides both tabular and graphical evaluations of the data submitted to the American Public Power Association's (APPA) annual Safety Awards of Excellence for 2020.¹ The purpose of compiling this data is to offer a benchmark for individual municipal utilities. The intent of this report is to help safety professionals analyze their utility's yearly performance in relation to others in the public power community. Through the data presented in this report, APPA aspires to help safety professionals create a context for the review of safety program efficacy at their individual utilities.

Each year, the Safety Awards are open to any APPA member utility, Joint Action Agency, Federal Agency, and State Association/Agency that wishes to participate.² Since participation is voluntary, the rules are set up to encourage consistent involvement. Thus, to be eligible to win an award, participants must submit data for three consecutive years; in the third year, the participant will be considered eligible for an award. Consistent submission helps to minimize selection bias and skewing of yearly data.

Entries are sorted into groups according to the total number of hours worked by all electric utility employees at that particular utility in the designated year. The group categories are the same from year to year; a group-specific analysis is presented in section II of this report.³

Awards are given out to the participating eligible utilities with the lowest incidence rate within each group. The incidence rate is calculated by using a standardized U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) formula. This formula was developed to give a relative number of accidents that an organization might expect if it had 100 employees. Since the incidence rate is based on a ratio, any utility that has fewer hours worked will experience a larger proportional impact of any incident (or "case") on the final incidence rate. Conversely, a utility with more hours worked will experience a smaller proportional impact of any incident on the final incidence rate.

The incidence rate calculation is demonstrated below (note the weighting factor of 200,000 worker hours representing 100 typical employees).

$$\text{Incidence Rate} = \frac{(\text{Total Reported Incidents} * 200,000 \text{ Work Hours})}{\text{Number of Work Hours}}$$

¹ The American Public Power Association's Safety Awards of Excellence program was formerly referred to as APPA's Safety Contest.

² Starting in 2010, JAAs, Federal Agencies, and State Associations/Agencies were incorporated into a group based on their worker-hours. These organizations did not displace any utility winners in each group; rather, when applicable, they were recognized by lowest incidence rate within their worker-hour category group.

³ Group categories were changed slightly by APPA's Safety Committee in 2003 to account for utility growth.

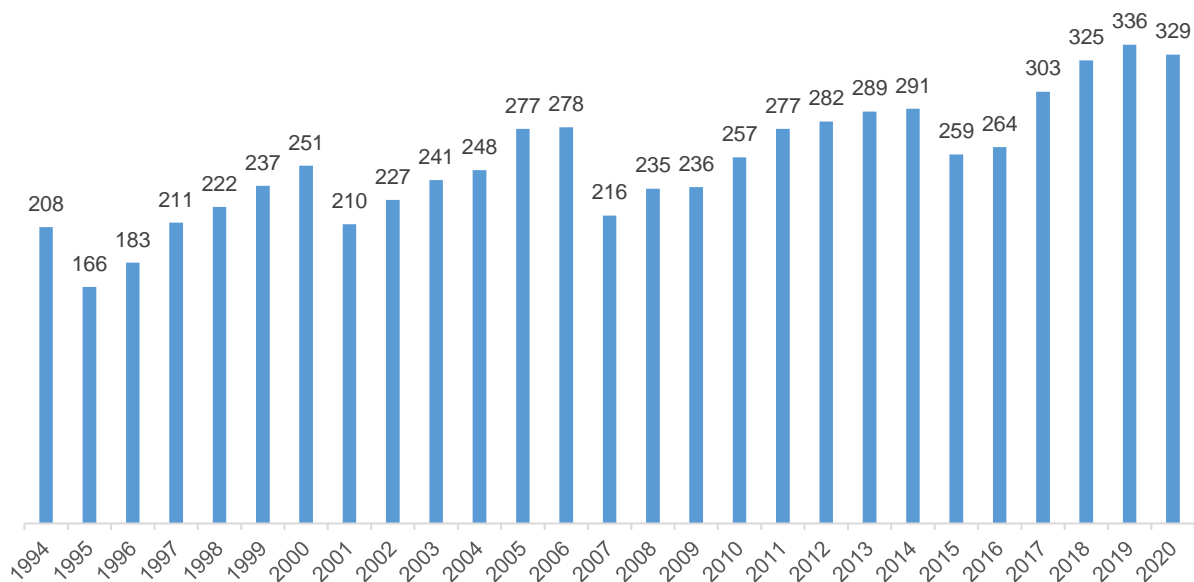
Along with the group-by-group and regional (according to the APPA regions) analyses of data, this report shows data averaged for all groups combined over the history of the awards.⁴

Section I – General Overview

This section provides a general overview of data submitted from 1994 through 2020 and provides the basis of benchmarking comparison for 2020 data. The data in this section of the report is taken from the “Reportable Injuries and Illnesses” section of the entry form. All entries received are incorporated into the following graphs. For reference purposes, the Safety Awards entry form is included as Appendix A of this report.⁵

Overall participant data consisting of all worker-hour category groups combined across all years are shown below in bar graphs. The data submitted by participants covering 2020 is mostly in line with the historical data set. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show the number of entries, overall average incidence rate, and total number of fatalities by year. Entries are accepted for the prior complete year each January; e.g., 2020 data is collected in January 2021.

Figure 1: Total Entries per Year – All Respondents



⁴ APPA regions are defined in Section III

⁵ While the Safety Awards entry form has been updated slightly over the years, the essential information that has been gathered in each annual cycle has remained consistent.

Figure 2: Incidence Rate per Year – All Respondents

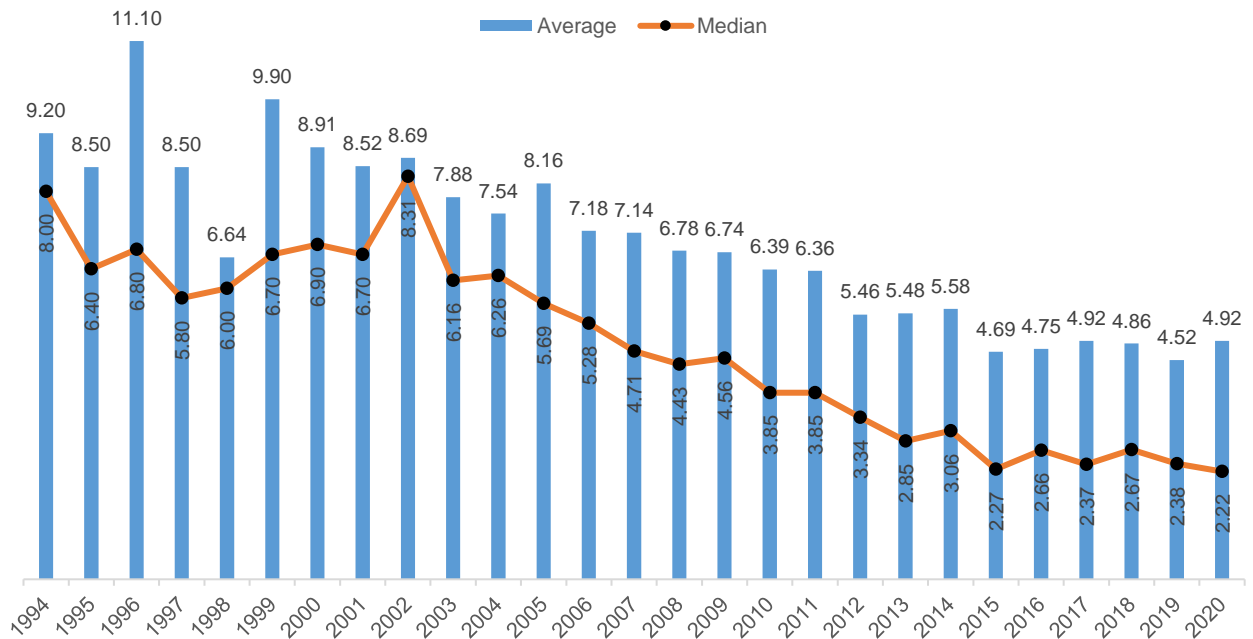
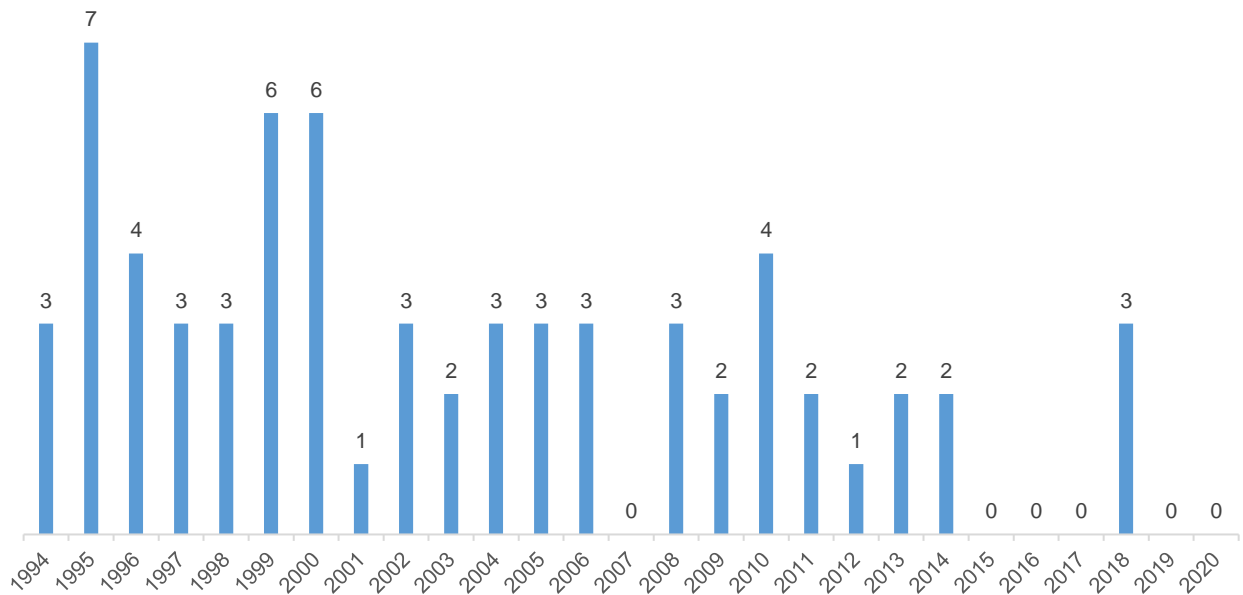


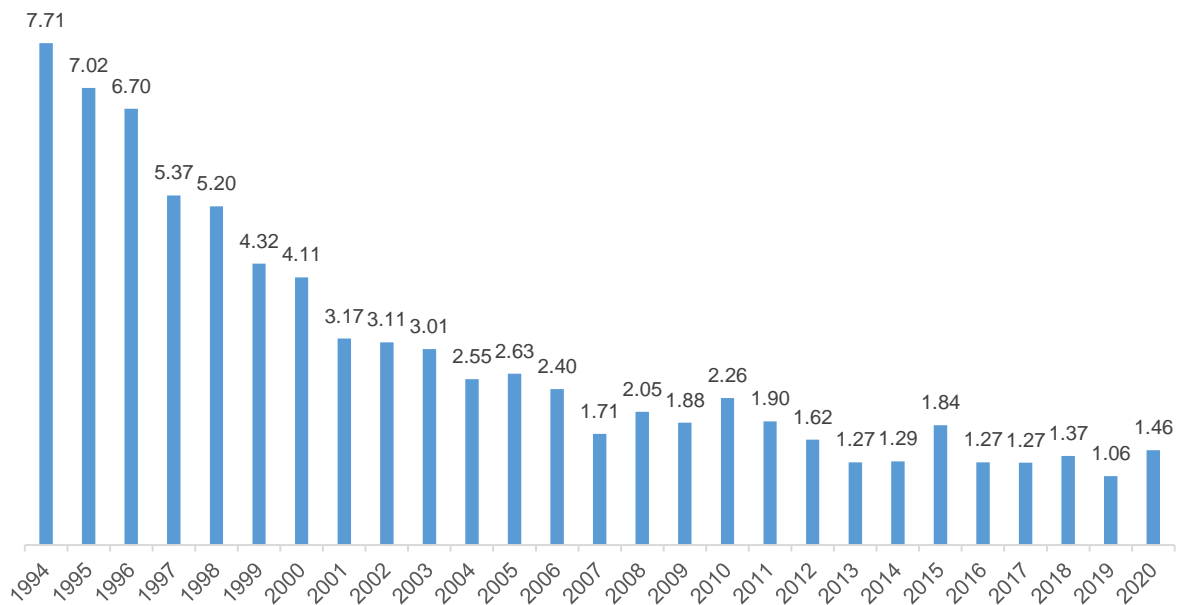
Figure 3: Total Number of Fatalities per Year – All Respondents



It is important to note that Figures 4, 5, and 6 are based on the number of **cases** reported in the “Reportable Injuries and Illnesses” section of the entry form and not the actual number of **days** away from work or **days** of restricted or job transfer as reported in the “Time Charges” section of the entry form. This information helps safety personnel focus on the number of incidents that occurred.

For example, an injury at one utility that required an employee to remain “Away from Work” for 45 days (due to one incident) is equivalent to an injury at another utility where the employee remained “Away from Work” for 2 days (also from one incident) — in each example, the **incident** would be considered as one **case**, regardless of the **number** of resulting **days** away from work. The type or duration of the injury is not considered, only that the incident resulted in reportable injury.⁶ Figures 4, 5, and 6 are presented with data from all respondents.

Figure 4: Average Number of Days Away from Work Cases per Year – All Respondents



⁶ For further explanation of “cases” and case reporting, please see APPA’s Safety Awards of Excellence Rules and Regulations document in the Appendix of this report.

Figure 5: Average Number of Restricted or Job Transfer Cases per Year – All Respondents

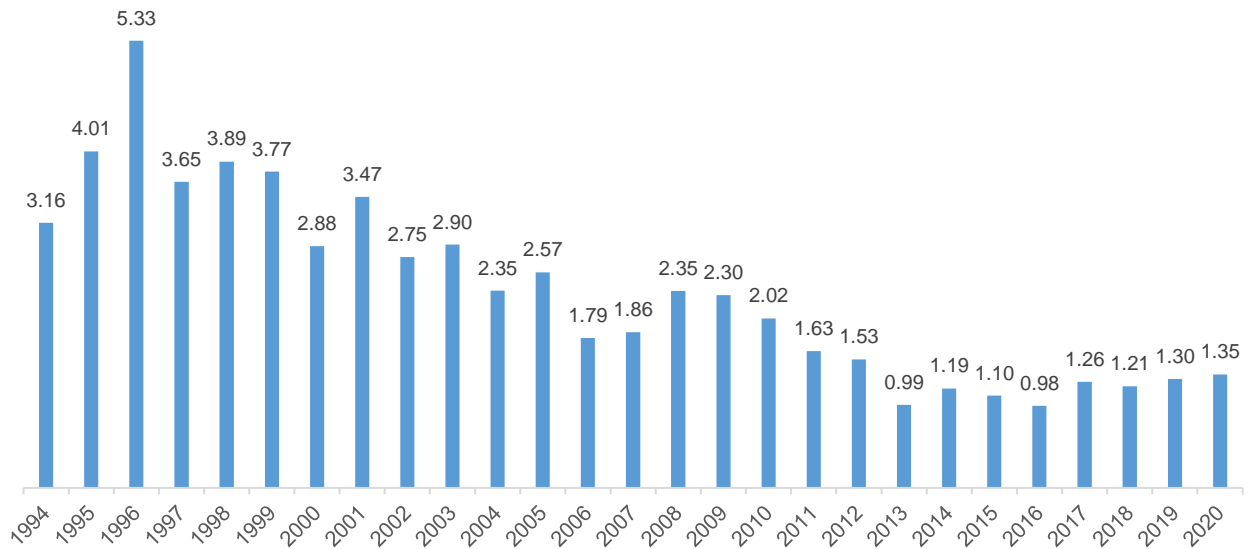
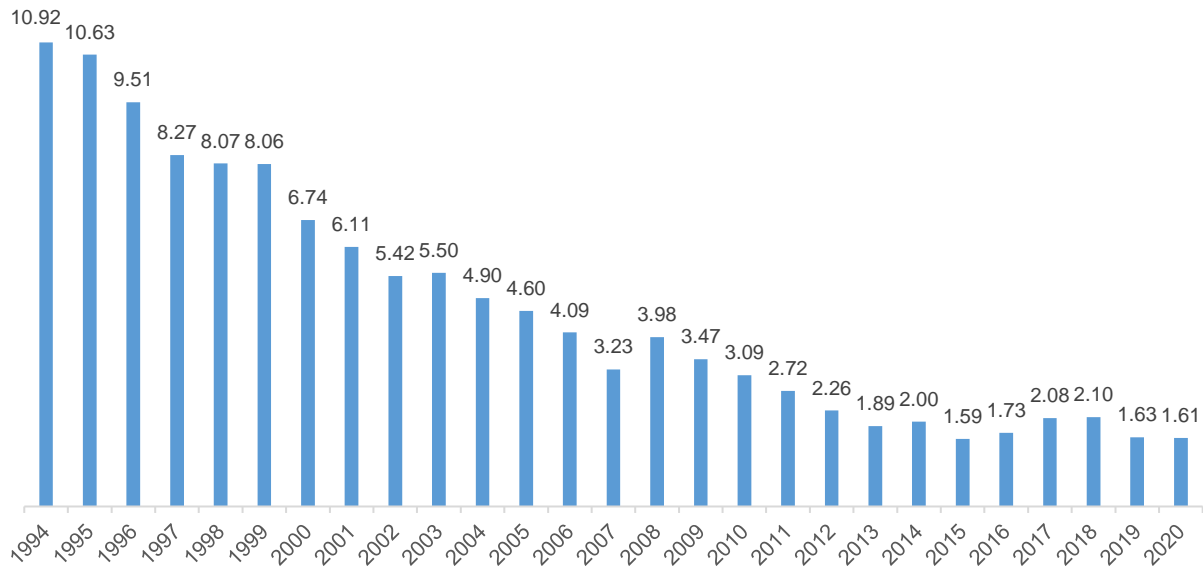


Figure 6: Average Number of Medical Treatment Cases per Year – All Respondents



Section II – Award Groups

Once data is submitted to the American Public Power Association, the entries are sorted into groups according to the total number of hours worked by all electric utility employees at that particular utility in the designated year. The group categories are the same from year to year; the table below shows the current groups used in the Awards.⁷

Table 1: Award Groups by Number of Worker-Hours of Exposure in One Calendar Year

Groups	Worker-Hour Categories
Group A	Less than 15,000 worker-hours of exposure
Group B	15,000 to 29,999 worker-hours of exposure
Group C	30,000 to 59,999 worker-hours of exposure
Group D	60,000 to 109,999 worker-hours of exposure
Group E	110,000 to 249,999 worker-hours of exposure
Group F	250,000 to 999,999 worker-hours of exposure
Group G	1,000,000 to 3,999,999 worker-hours of exposure
Group H	More than 3,999,999 worker-hours of exposure

The information provided in this section is based on the data gathered for the year 2020 from the “Reportable Injuries and Illnesses” and “Time Charges” sections of the entry form broken out by group. The incidence rates along with average number of cases from the case types recorded on the entry form are displayed by utility group.

⁷ Group categories were changed slightly by APPA’s Safety Committee in 2003 to account for utility growth.

Figure 7: Count of all Respondents in 2020 by Group

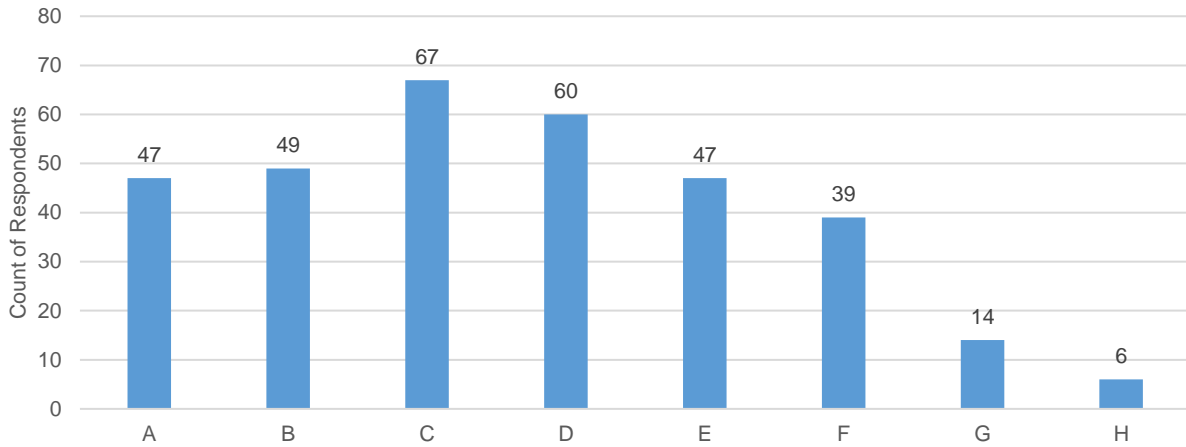


Figure 8: Average Number of Electrical Employees in 2020 by Group

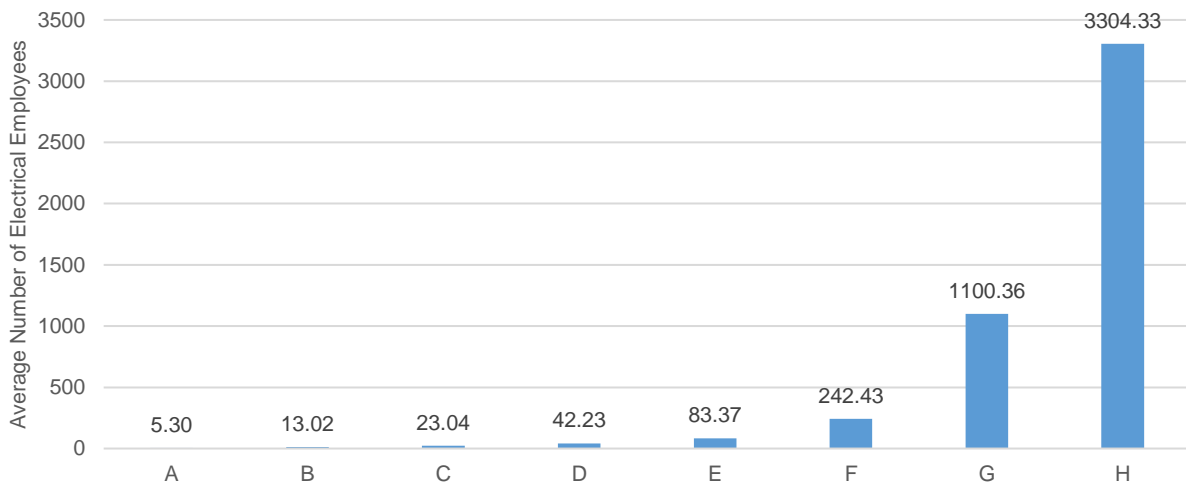


Figure 9: Average Total Worker Hours in 2020 by Group

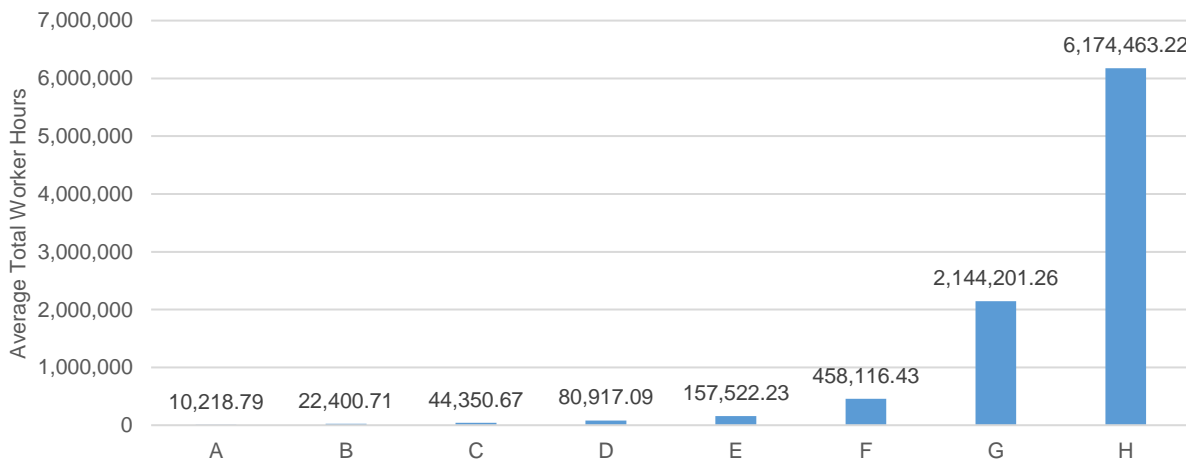


Figure 10: Average and Median Incidence Rates in 2020 by Group

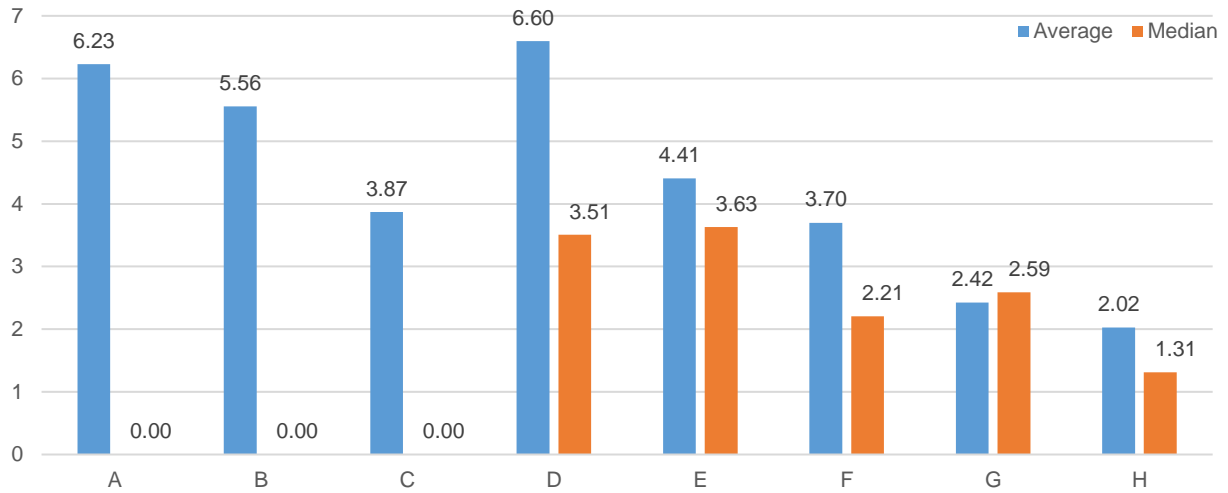


Figure 11: Average Number of Days Away from Work Cases in 2020 by Group

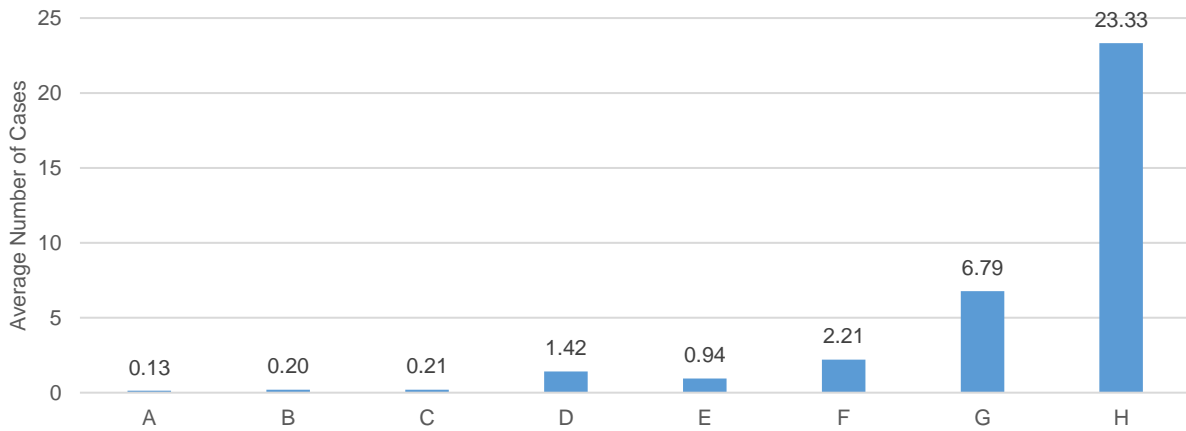


Figure 12: Average Number of Restricted or Job Transfer Cases in 2020 by Group

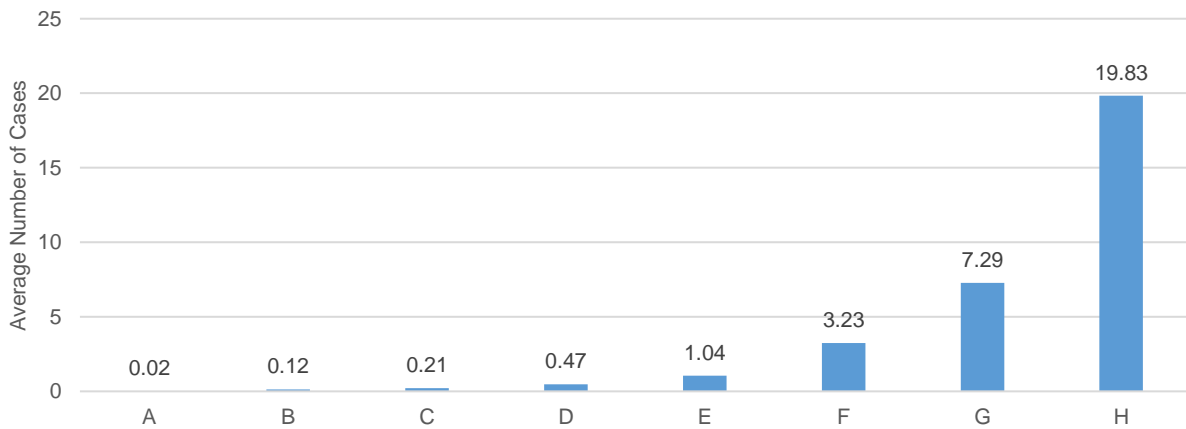


Figure 13: Average Number of Medical Treatment Cases for 2020 by Group

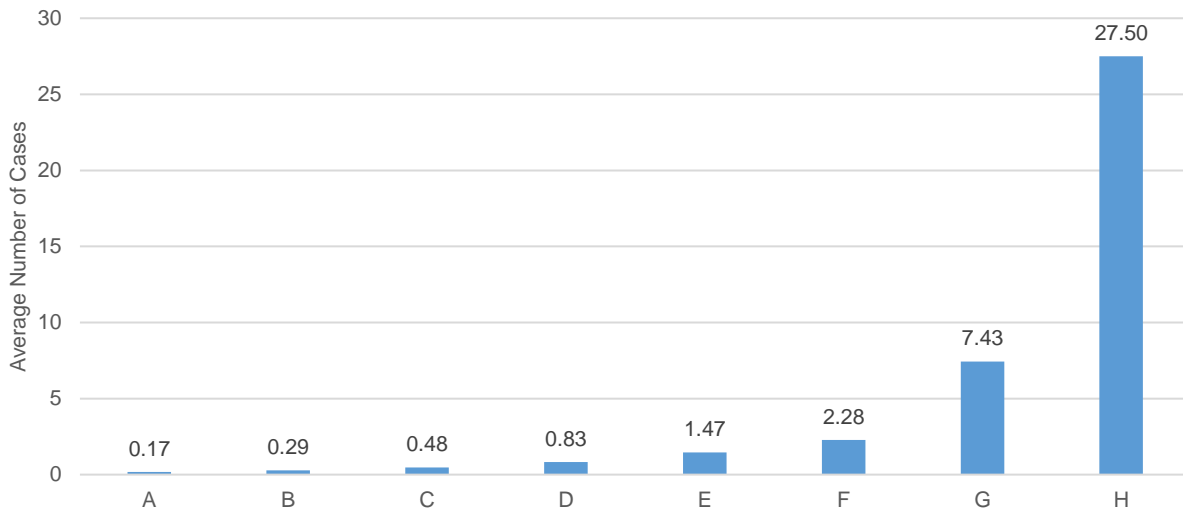
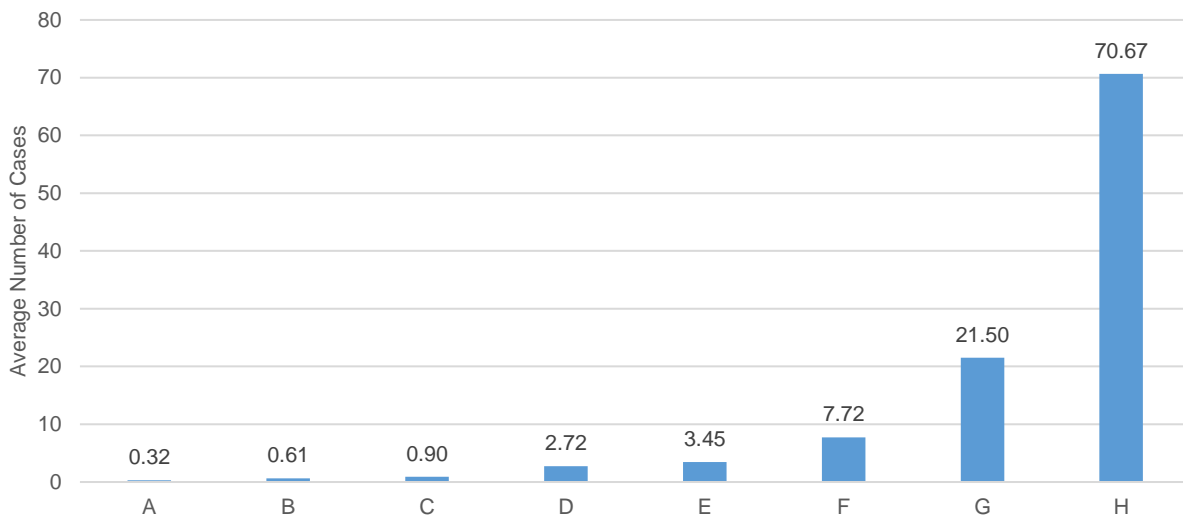


Figure 14: Average Number of Total Cases for 2020 by Group



While systems with more worker-hours tend to have lower incidence rates (see Figure 10), they are also more likely to have higher average numbers of cases (days away from work, restricted or job transfer, and/or medical treatment). More worker-hours of exposure create more opportunities for incidents to occur; likewise, a utility with fewer worker-hours (employees) is likely to have fewer cases than one with more worker-hours (employees).

In the “Time Charges” section of the entry form, utilities record the cumulative days from cases that resulted in days away from work or restricted duty for all employees. When assigned, these days can be taken by employees or mandated by managers, and they can be due to either injuries or illnesses. As expected, Figures 15 and 16 show that the average number of days away increases as electrical worker-hours increase.

Figure 15: Average Number of Days Away from Work by Group

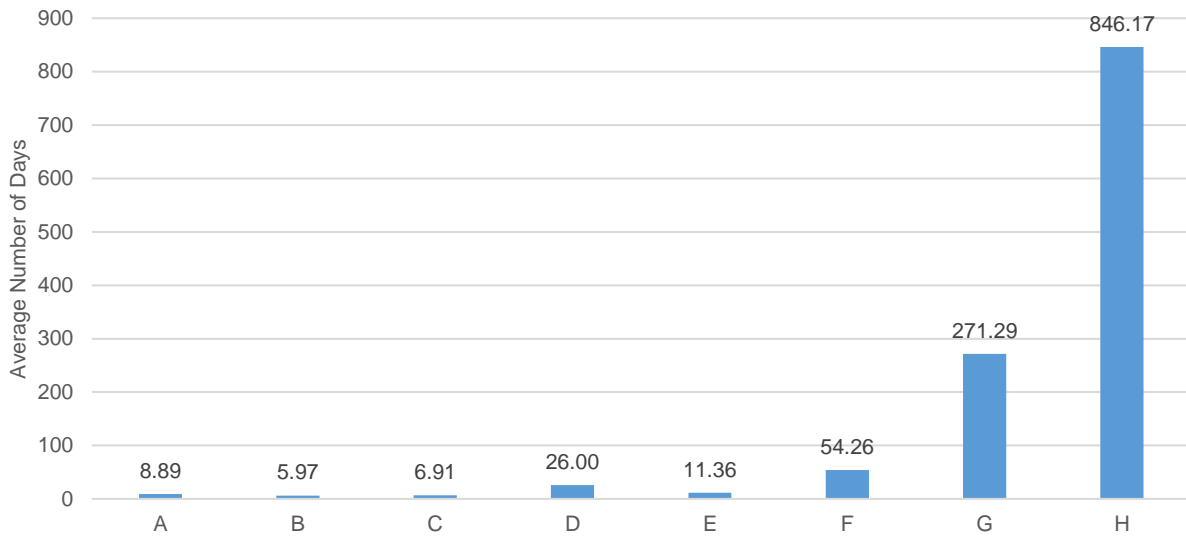
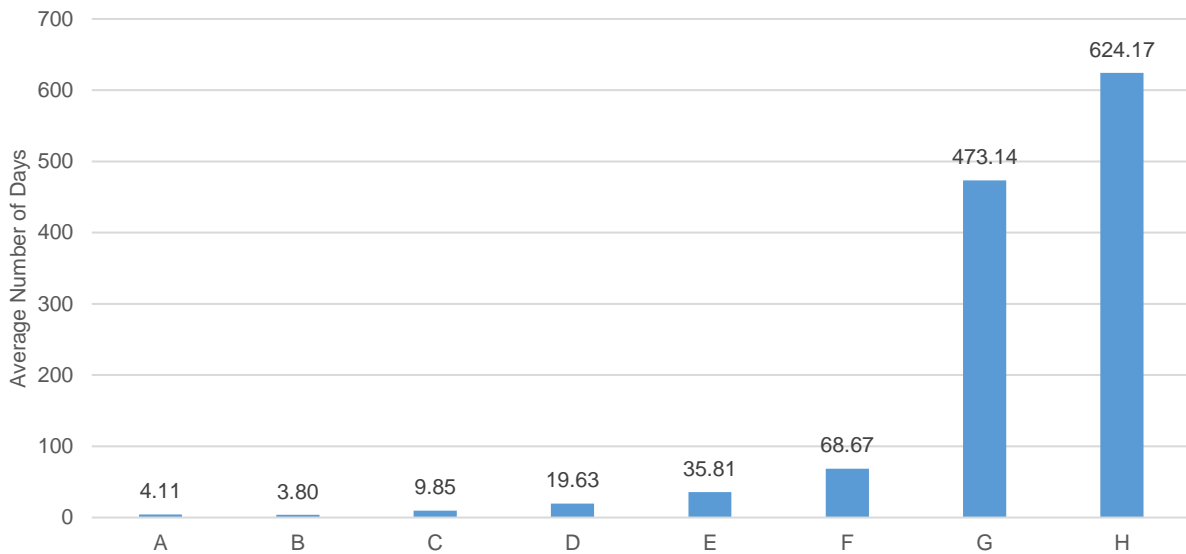


Figure 16: Average Number of Restricted Duty or Job Transfer Days by Group



Section III – Award Region

This section provides an additional analysis of the Section I data by regions. The regions were established by the American Public Power Association’s Board of Directors in the 1980s. A breakdown of the regions can be found below.

- Region 1:** Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah
- Region 2:** Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
- Region 3:** Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota
- Region 4:** Oklahoma, Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana
- Region 5:** Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida
- Region 6:** Nevada, Arizona, California
- Region 7:** Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama
- Region 8:** Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
- Region 9:** Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Alaska
- Region 10:** American Samoa, Federal States of Micronesia, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands⁸

As shown in Section II, utility size, as grouped by worker-hours, may have an impact on average values in a given region. Thus, we have broken out the count of utility entrants with greater than 1 million worker-hours for reader consideration in Figure 20.

⁸ Region 10 data is omitted this year due to there being only two entrants.

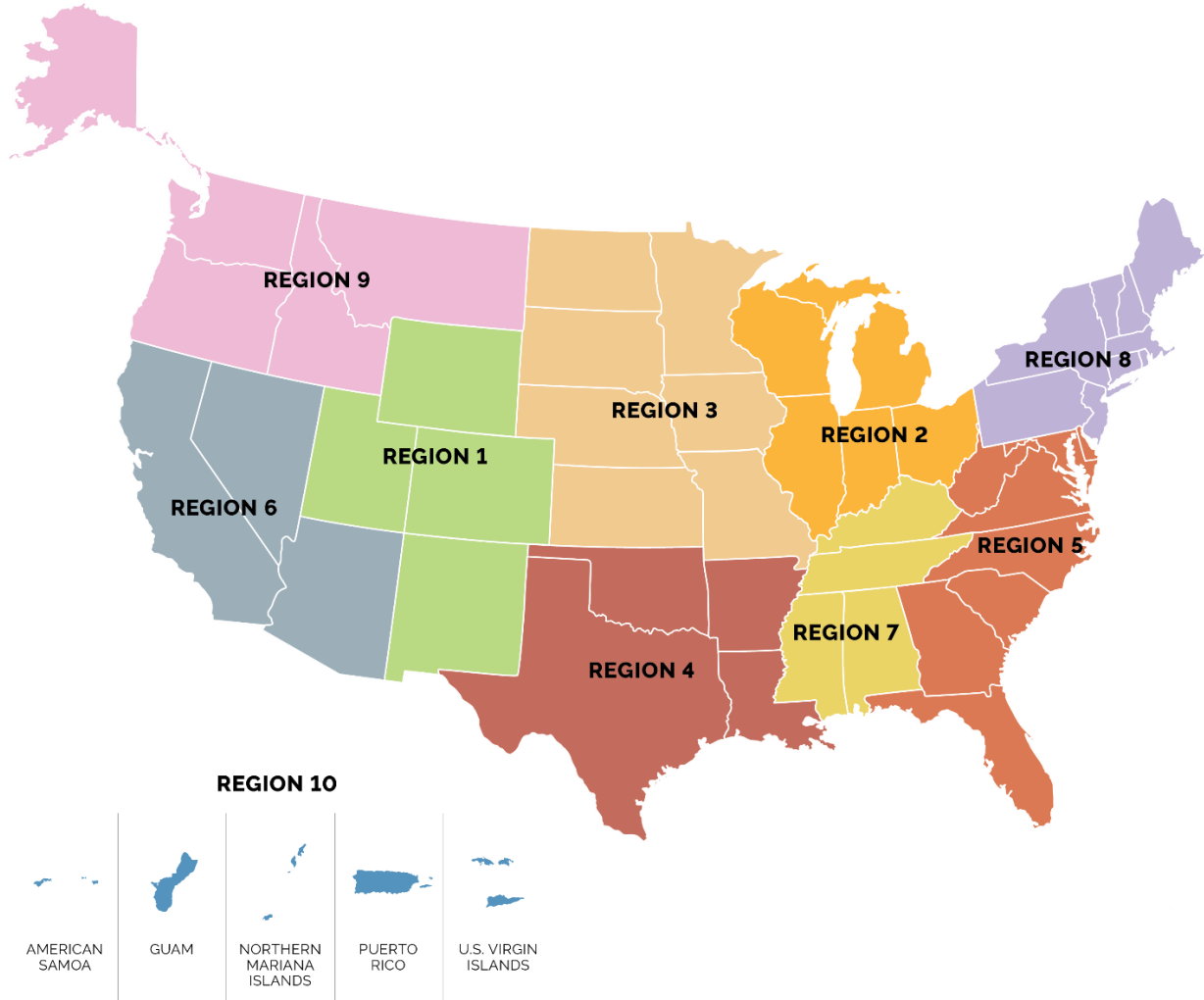


Figure 17: Count of All Respondents by APPA Region

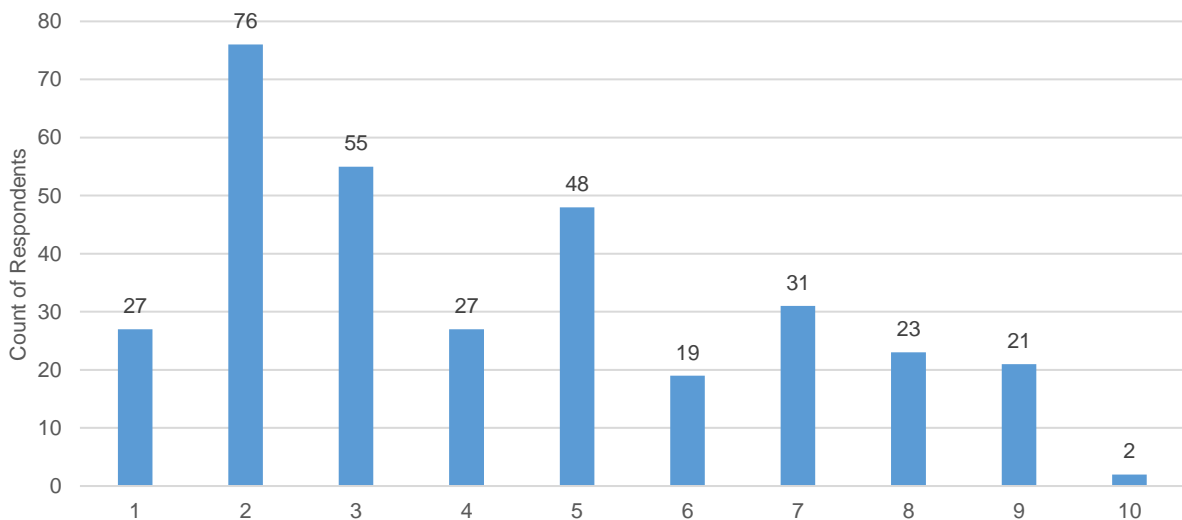


Figure 18: Average Number of Electrical Employees in 2020 by Region

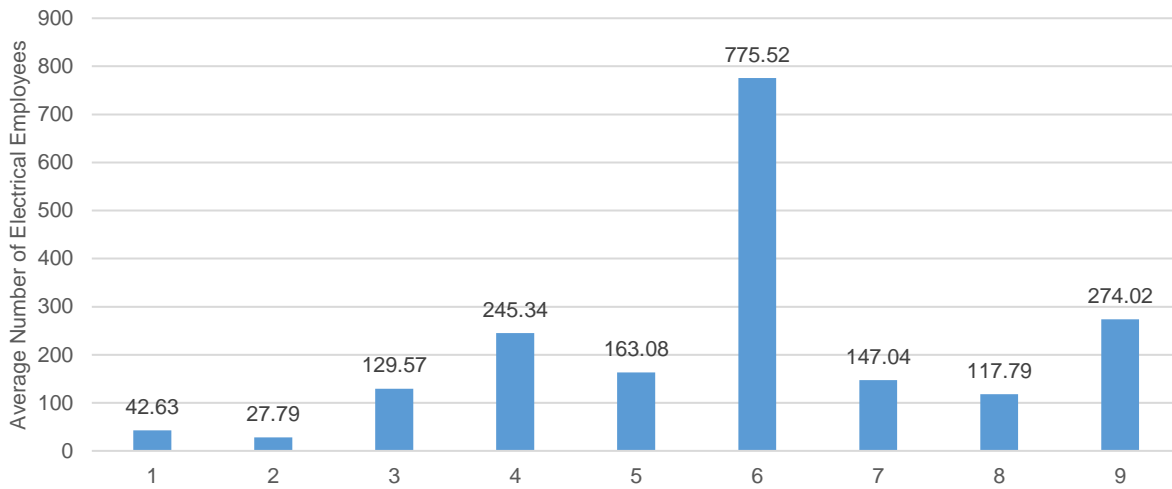


Figure 19: Average Total Worker Hours in 2020 by Region

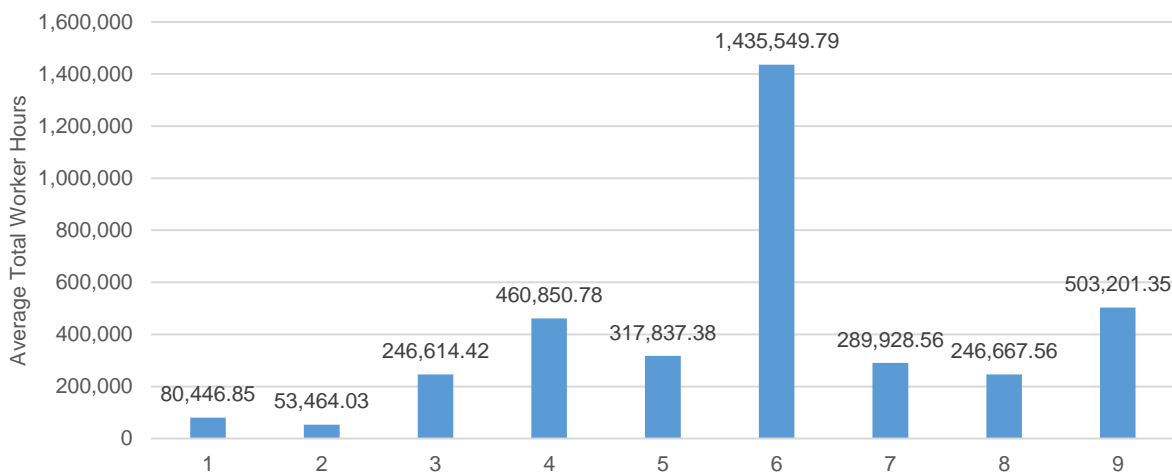
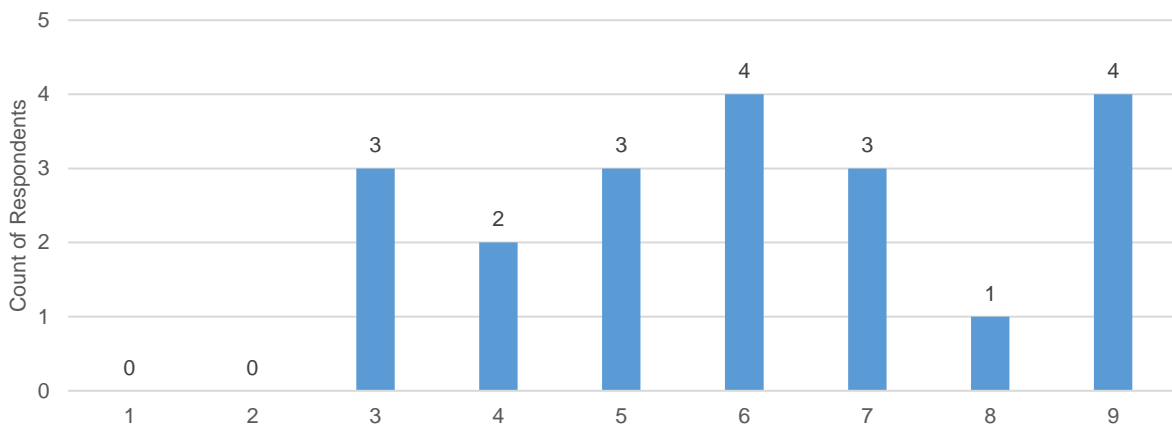


Figure 20: Count of All Respondents with More Than 1 Million Worker-hours by APPA Region



In the following graphs, it is important to keep this information in mind; while systems with more worker hours tend to have lower incidence rates, their average number of cases tend to be higher.

Figure 21: Average and Median Incidence Rates by APPA Region

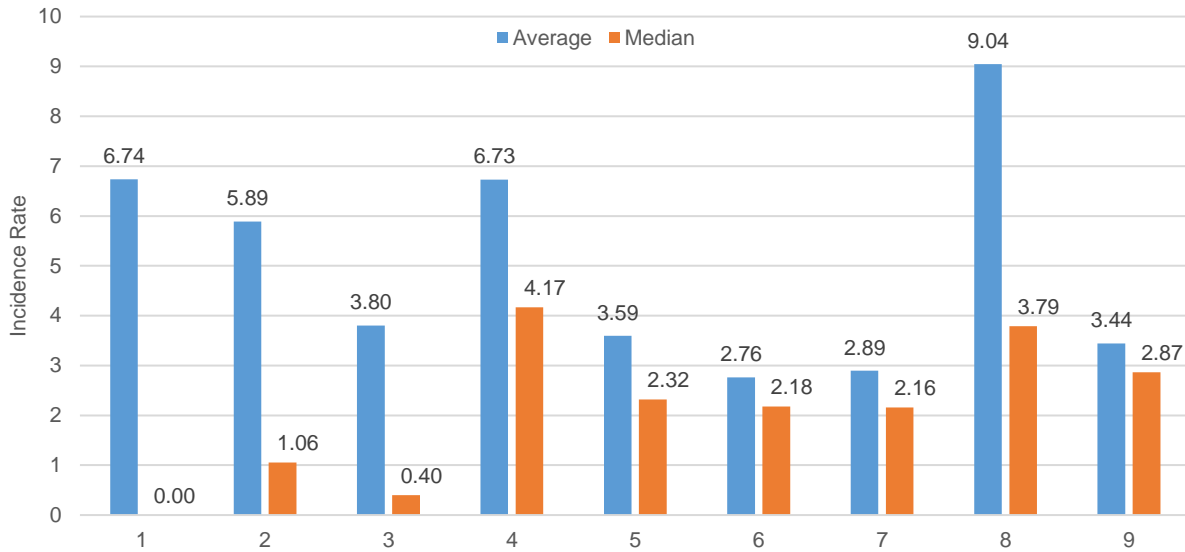


Figure 22: Average Number of Days Away from Work Cases by APPA Region

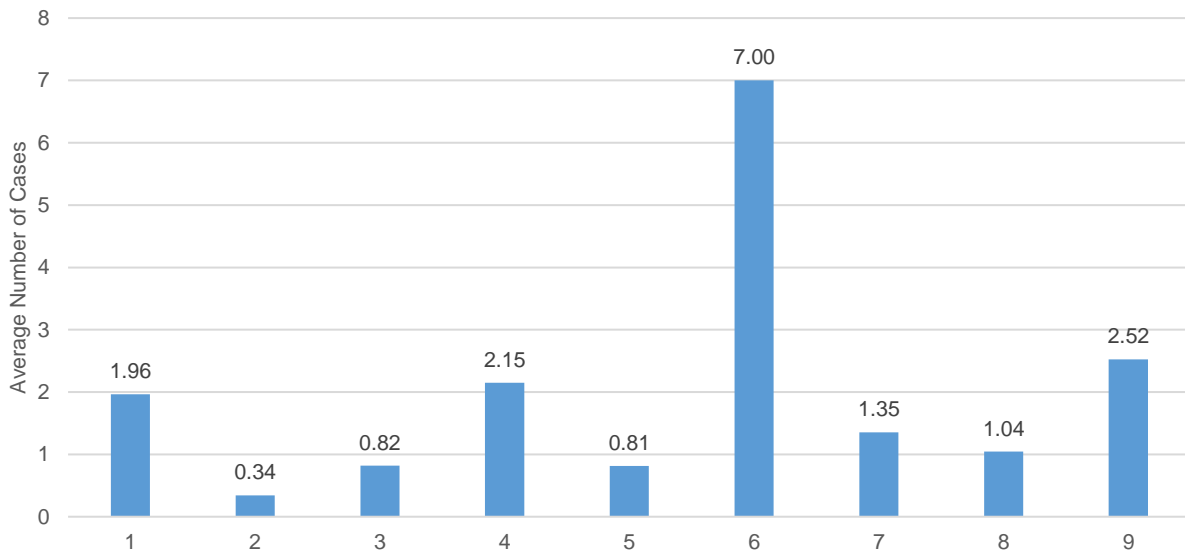


Figure 23: Average Number of Restricted or Job Transfer Cases by APPA Region

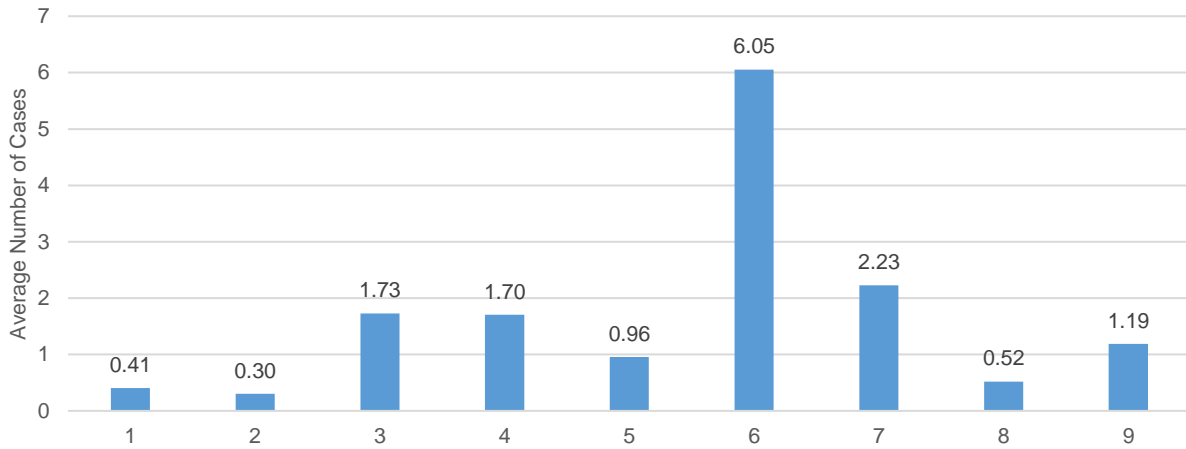


Figure 24: Average Number of Medical Cases by APPA Region

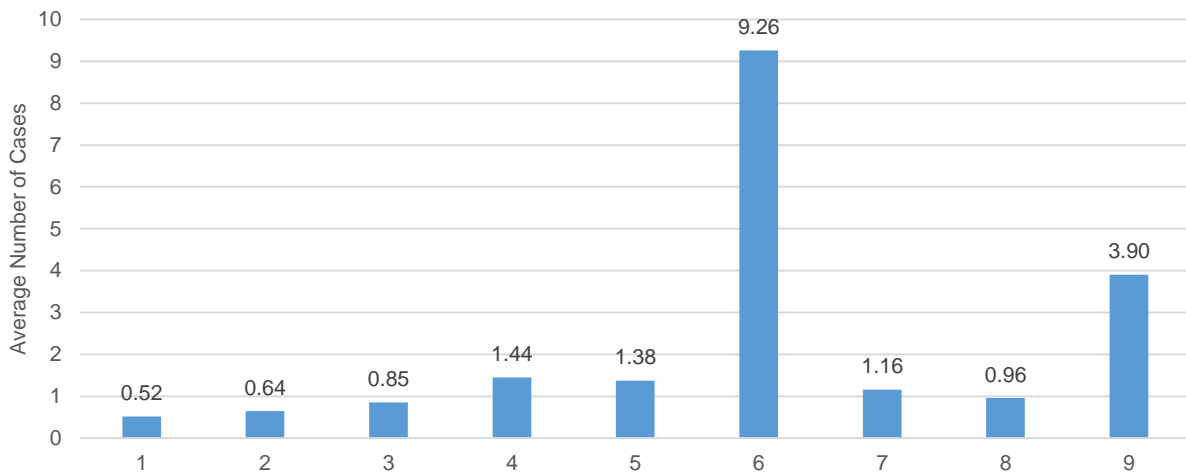


Figure 25: Average Number of Total Cases for 2020 by Region

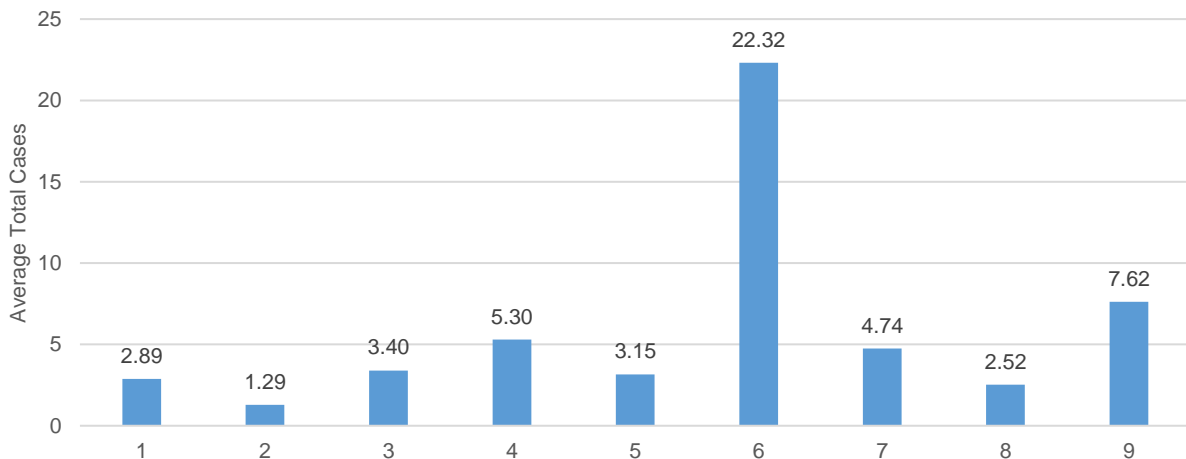


Figure 26: Average Number of Days Away from Work by Region

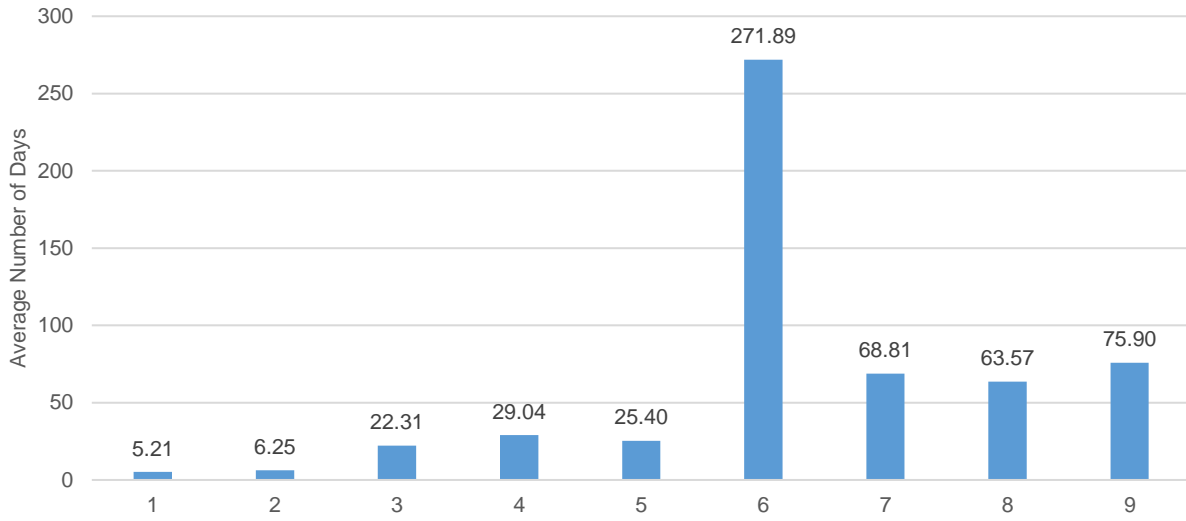
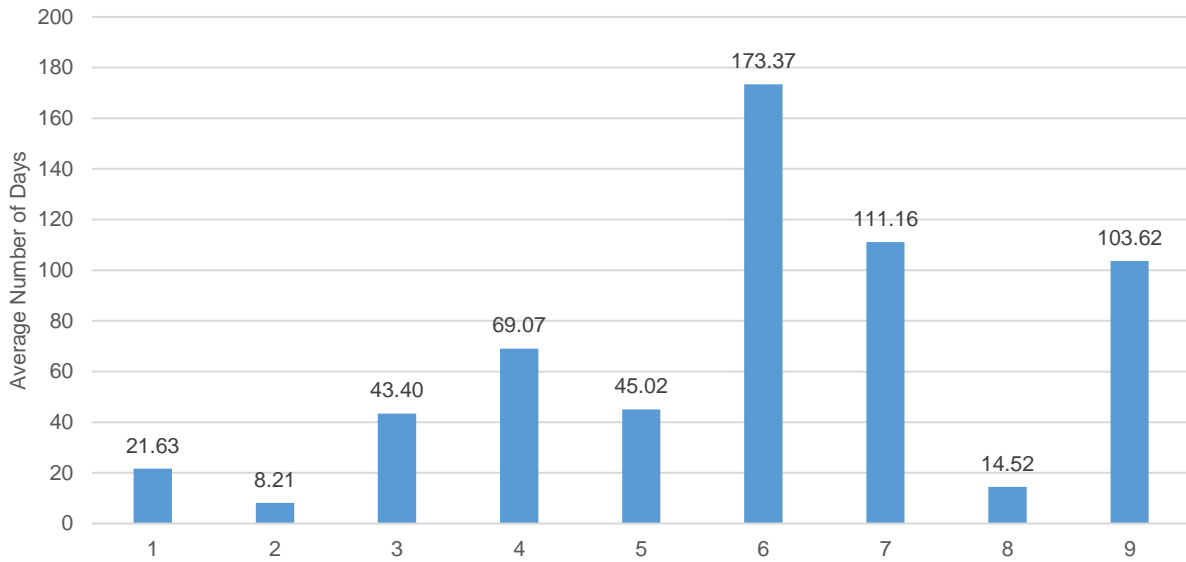


Figure 27: Average Number of Restricted Duty or Job Transfer Days by Region



Section IV – DART Rate

DART rate is short for Days Away from work, days of Restricted work activity, and/or days of job Transfer rate.

The figures in Section IV only include cases that resulted in days away from work, days of restricted work activity, and/or days of job transfer. All other recordable cases such as medical treatment and their corresponding graphs and figures can be found in Sections I, II, and III. Group and Region breakdown can be found in Sections II and III, respectively.

$$\text{DART Rate} = \frac{((\text{Days Away from Work Cases} + \text{Job Transfer or Restricted Cases}) * 200,000 \text{ Work Hours})}{\text{Number of Work Hours}}$$

Figure 28: Average Number of DART Cases by Group

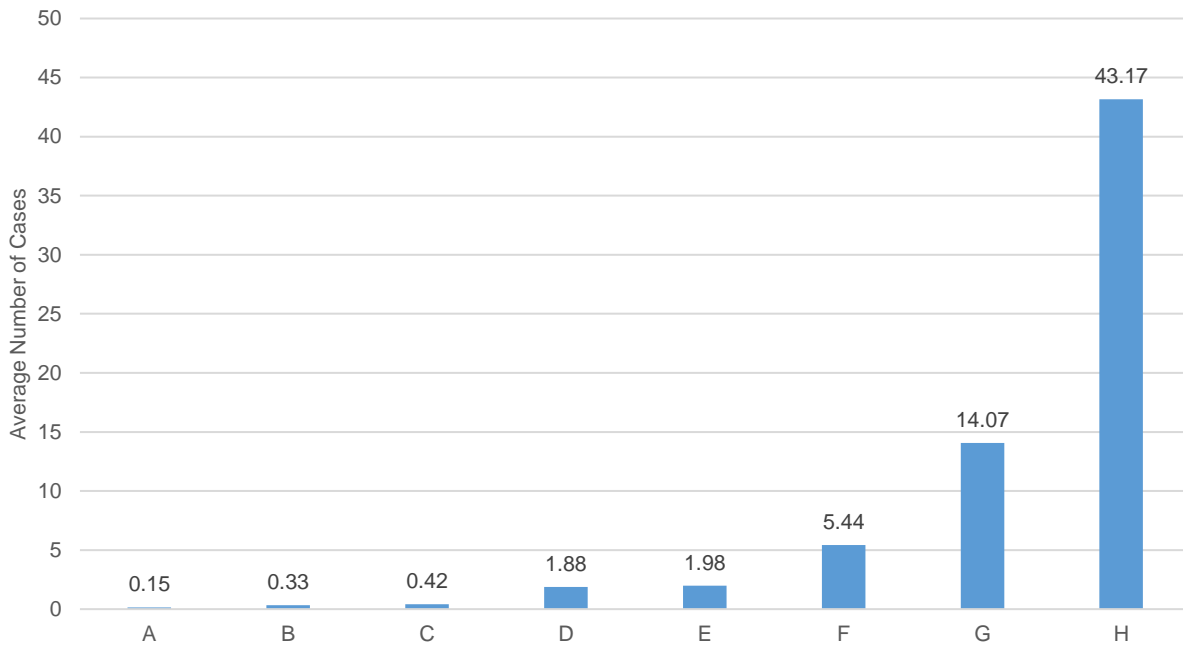


Figure 29: Average/Median DART Rate by Group

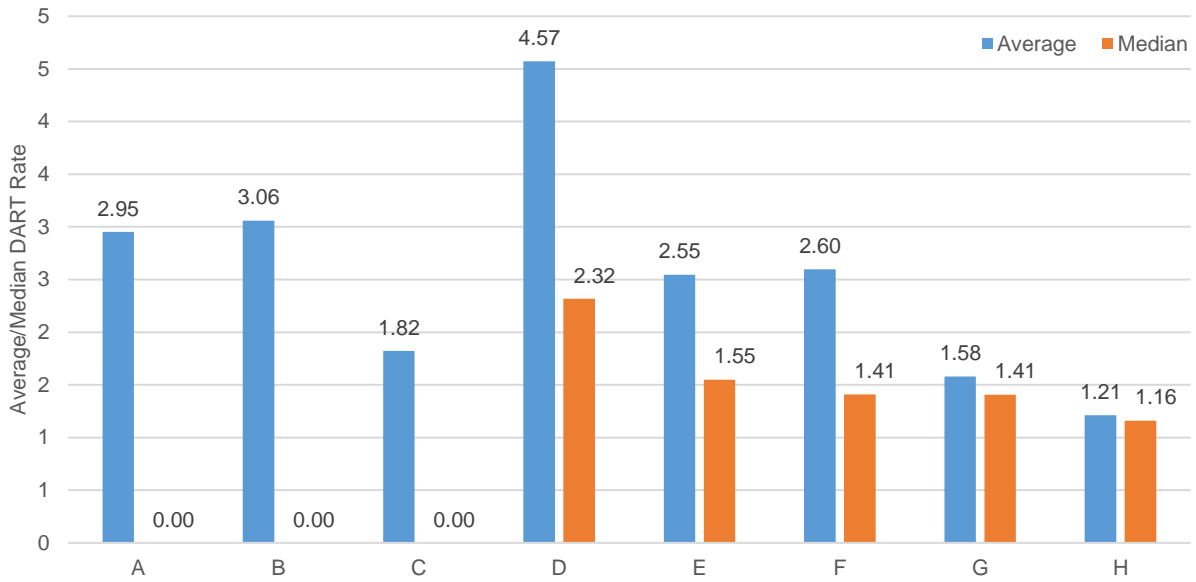


Figure 30: Average Number of DART Cases by APPA Region

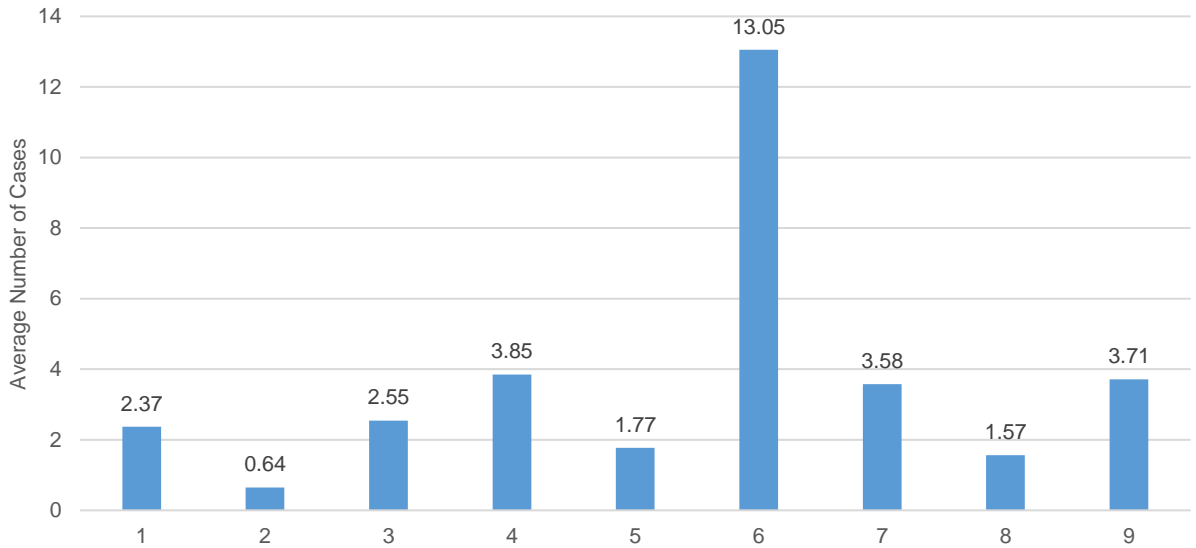
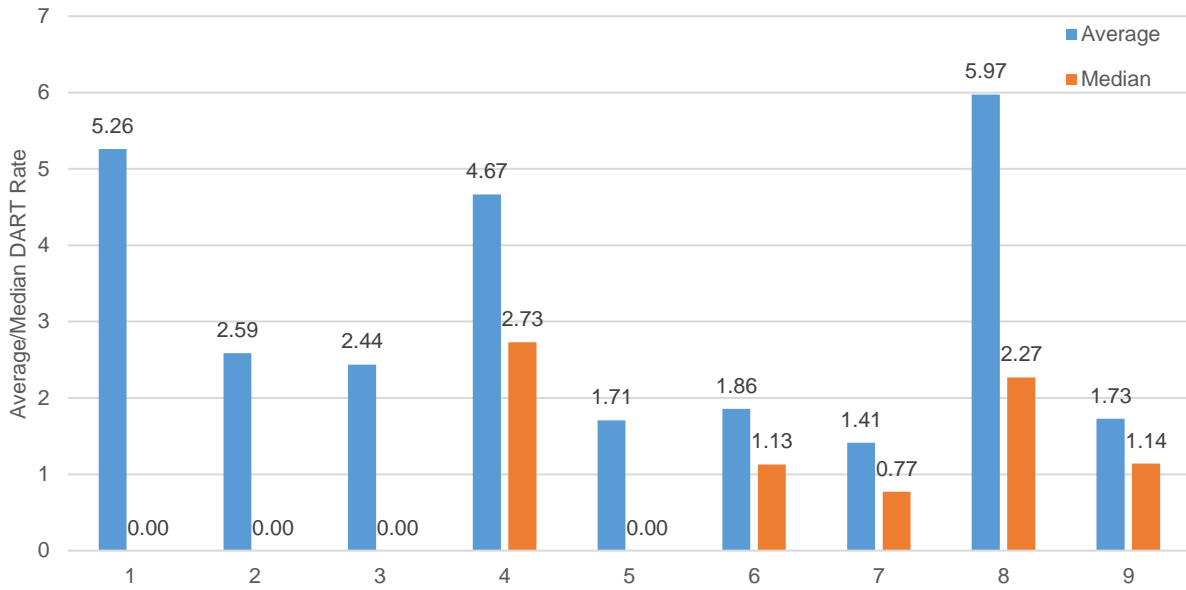


Figure 31: Average/Median DART Rate by APPA Region



Section V- Summary

The American Public Power Association encourages each utility to review the overall combined utility statistics along with the statistics for their utility grouping. For example, a small utility that falls into Group A may find it useful to compare itself to the overall combined data to track their safety performance against all public power utilities across the United States, but this same utility may not find the actual breakdown of Group H data to be of interest. (A comparison of a 15,000 worker-hour utility to a 4,000,000 worker-hour utility may not provide any insightful information.) However, the 15,000 worker-hours of exposure per year utility should find value in comparing itself directly to any data provided for Group A.

The American Public Power Association provides the data presented in this report for use by its members in aggregate form only. The individual names of the utilities that have entered the Awards are confidential. Each year, APPA releases only the names of those utilities that have received Awards recognition, in addition to their calculated incidence rate and worker-hours for the given year.

Since greater numbers of entrants enhance the value of the Safety Awards for all utilities involved, APPA encourages all members to continue submitting data on a yearly basis, regardless of the number of accidents/injuries that have occurred over the calendar year.

We welcome comments and suggestions on how to make this report better, as we strive to improve the accuracy and readability with each edition. You may reach Technical and Operations Services staff directly via e-mail or phone:

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Appendix

- [2020 Safety Awards of Excellence Annual Report Form](#)
- [American Public Power Association Safety Awards of Excellence Rules and Regulations](#)
- [OSHA Forms for Recording Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses](#)