



IRIS Regional Score Cards use subsets of accident year (AY) 2005-2015 claims data from CWCI's Industry Research Information System (IRIS) database to measure and analyze various aspects of claims experience within 8 regions of California. Over a period of several months, CWCI will issue Score Cards for all 8 regions of the state, each profiling claimant characteristics and showing distributions of claims within the region broken out by industry sector; premium size; claim type; common "nature" and "cause" of injury categories; and primary diagnoses. Several exhibits compare results for the highlighted region against all other regions in the state, and in many cases the exhibits also show the statewide results, providing a wealth of detailed data not only on claims within the region, but within all of California.

The first four Score Cards in the series focused on claims filed by residents of Los Angeles County, the Inland Empire/Orange County, the Central Valley, and the Bay Area. This Score Card looks at claims filed by residents of San Diego County, a region that encompasses 4,526 square miles in the southwestern corner of the state. Home to 3.3 million Californians, San Diego County is the second most populous county in the state and the fifth most populous county in the U.S. Together, residents of this region account for 8.1% of all California workers' compensation claims and 6.2% of paid losses in the state.

A list of the exhibits included in the Score Card is provided below. Click the title to go directly to an exhibit.

Interactive Table of Contents

Regional Claim and Payment Distributions	2
San Diego Claims as a Percent of All California Claims by Accident Year	2
Claim Distribution by Premium Size	2
Injured Worker Profile	3
Distribution by Industry Sector	3
Cause of Injury	4
Nature of Injury	4
Claim and Payment Distributions by Diagnosis	5
Claim and Payment Distributions by Claim Type (Med-Only, TD, PD, Death)	6
Median and Average Notice and Treatment Time Lags	7
Average Claim Duration (Closed and Resolved Claims)	8
Claim Closure Rates by Claim Type at 24 Months Post Injury	8
Attorney Involvement Rates for Indemnity (TD & PD) Claims	9
Attorney Involvement Rates for PD Claims ≥ 36 Months Old	9
Permanent Disability Rates at 36 Months Post Injury	10
Average Number of Visits and Average Amounts Paid at 12 and 24 Months by Fee Schedule Section	11
PPO/MPN Utilization	12
Regional Distribution of Claims with Sleep Studies, Nerve Conduction Tests, and MRIs/Diagnostic Tests	13
Loss Development at 12, 24, and 36 Months Post Injury	14
Regional Distribution of Prescription Drugs by Drug Category (CY 2014 Prescriptions)	15
Regional Distribution of Prescription Drug Payments by Drug Category (CY 2014 Prescriptions)	15
Top 20 Prescription Drugs by Volume (CY 2014 Prescriptions)	16
Top 20 Prescription Drugs by Total Payments (CY 2014 Prescriptions)	17
Distribution of California Workers' Compensation Claims With Lien Payments by Region	18
Distribution of California Workers' Compensation Lien Dollars Paid by Region	18



Regional Claim and Payment Distributions

AY 2005 – AY 2015 Claims



Region	% of Claims	% of Payments
Los Angeles County	25.6%	31.9%
Inland Empire/O.C.	19.0%	21.0%
Central Valley	18.1%	15.0%
Bay Area	17.5%	15.4%
San Diego	8.1%	6.2%
Central Coast	6.7%	6.3%
North Counties	3.3%	2.5%
Sierras	1.7%	1.7%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%

IRIS Regional Score Cards analyze data from California workers' comp claims that have been grouped into eight regions based on the injured workers' home ZIP codes. Each Score Card contains accident year (AY) 2005-2015 claims data from CWCI's Industry Research Information System (IRIS) database, plus IRIS data on prescription drugs filled in calendar year 2014; sleep studies, MRIs/diagnostic tests, and nerve conduction studies from calendar years 2013-2015; and data on claims through 2015 that had lien payments. This Score Card focuses on claims filed by workers from San Diego County, the second most populous county in the state, a region bordered by Orange and Riverside Counties to the north, Imperial County to the east, the Pacific Ocean to the west and Mexico to the south. About 1.6 million workers live in San Diego County -- 8.2% of the California workforce -- and during the 11-year period covered by the Score Card, the IRIS database captured data on nearly 154,000 job injury claims filed by San Diego County residents, or 8.1% of the nearly 1.9 million claims in the Score Card sample of California claims, resulting in \$1.83 billion in loss payments, or 6.2% of the \$29.5 billion in benefits paid on those claims.

San Diego Claims as a Percent of All California Claims by Accident Year

AY 2005 – 2015

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
San Diego	8.0%	8.0%	7.9%	7.9%	8.0%	8.1%	8.1%	8.3%	8.0%	8.1%	8.3%
All Other	92.0%	92.0%	92.1%	92.1%	92.0%	91.9%	91.9%	91.7%	92.0%	91.9%	91.7%

From AY 2005 through AY 2015, the percentage of California work injury claims filed by San Diego County residents ranged from a low of 7.9% in AY 2007 and AY 2008 to a high of 8.3% in AY 2012 and 2015. The percentage of claims from San Diego has been relatively stable compared to some other areas of the state, never varying by more than 0.2 percent from year to year during the 11-year period covered by the Score Card, even during the recession years of 2008 and 2009. The most recent data show that San Diego residents accounted for 8.3% of the claims filed in the state in AY 2015.

Claim Distribution by Premium Size – San Diego vs. Other Regions

AY 2005 – 2015 Claims

	Under \$1,000	\$1,000 to \$9,999	\$10,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$499,999	\$500,000 to \$999,999	Over \$1,000,000
San Diego	2.0%	8.9%	18.5%	11.5%	30.2%	10.9%	18.0%
Other Regions	1.9%	9.4%	19.0%	12.1%	30.4%	10.0%	17.3%

A slightly higher share of San Diego claims involved employers paying more than \$500,000 in annual premium (28.9% vs. 27.3% in other areas), while a lower share of San Diego claims involved employers with under \$100,000 in premium (40.9% vs. 42.4%).



Injured Worker Profile			
AY 2005 – AY 2015 Claims			
	San Diego	All Other	Statewide
Average Age	38.5	38.3	38.3
Average Tenure	4.3	4.7	4.6
Gender			
% Male	58.9%	63.9%	63.5%
% Female	41.1%	36.1%	36.5%
% of Claims			
All Claims Statewide	8.1%	91.9%	100.0%
% of Calif WC Translation Svcs.*	6.3%	93.7%	100.0%

* CY 2013-2015 service dates only. Translation services identified by procedure code.

Injured workers from San Diego County averaged 38.5 years at the time of injury, similar to the average of 38.3 years noted for injured workers from other parts of the state. Their average tenure on the injury date, however, was about 10 percent less than that of other California injured workers, 4.3 years vs. 4.7 years. Notably, females accounted for 41.1% of the San Diego claims, which was the highest percentage in the state, and 5 percentage points more than in all other regions. From 2013-2015, 6.3% of California workers' comp medical translation services were for injured workers from San Diego, which was disproportionately low percentage given that 8.1% of all California claims came from the county, and somewhat surprising given its proximity to Mexico.

Distribution by Industry Sector			
San Diego vs. All Other (AY 2005-2015 Claims)			
Industry	San Diego	All Other	Statewide
Health Care	15.2%	12.0%	12.3%
Hotel and Food Services	12.7%	8.3%	8.7%
Retail Trade	12.6%	11.7%	11.8%
Construction	10.8%	10.4%	10.4%
Manufacturing	10.7%	13.2%	13.0%
Clerical Workers	6.8%	7.3%	7.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	4.1%	5.9%	5.7%
Professional, Science & Tech Services	3.8%	2.2%	2.3%
All Other	23.3%	29.0%	29.6%
Grand Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Health care is the number one industry for work injuries in San Diego County, as health care workers account for 15.2% of claims in this region, the highest level in the state. In comparison, 12% of all claims from other regions come from the health care sector. The claim distribution by industry also shows that San Diego has a higher percentage of claims from hotel and food service employees (12.7% vs. 8.3% elsewhere); retail workers (12.6% vs. 11.7%); and professional, science and technical service workers (3.8% vs. 2.2%). On the other hand, compared to the rest of the state, a significantly smaller share of the San Diego claims come from the manufacturing sector (10.7% vs. 13.2%), and from transportation and warehousing workers (4.1% vs. 5.9%).

**Cause of Injury**

Claim Distributions for San Diego, All Other Regions and Statewide (AY 2005 – 2015 Claims)

Cause of Injury	Percent of Claims		
	San Diego	All Other Regions	Statewide
Strain/Injury: Lifting	10.9%	10.7%	10.7%
Strain/Injury: Not Otherwise Classified (NOC)	9.7%	8.8%	8.9%
Miscellaneous Cause: Other Injury (NOC)	4.8%	5.6%	5.5%
Fall/Slip: Miscellaneous	4.5%	4.8%	4.8%
Struck/Injured by: Falling or Flying Object	4.0%	4.2%	4.2%
Strain/Injury: Pushing or Pulling	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%
Fall/Slip: On Same Level	4.3%	4.1%	4.2%
Repetitive Motion (Carpal Tunnel Syndrome)	3.3%	3.0%	3.1%
Miscellaneous (Cut, Puncture, Scrape)	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%
Hand Tool, Utensil; Not Powered	3.2%	2.9%	2.9%
All Other	48.2%	48.7%	48.5%

The top 10 causes of injury noted in San Diego claims accounted for just over half of all claims in the region. The mix of claims by major causation categories showed a fairly similar distribution to other regions, though a slightly larger proportion of the San Diego County claims involved strains and injuries due to lifting, not otherwise classified activities, or the use of non-powered hand tools or utensils; though a slightly smaller share of the San Diego claims cited miscellaneous causes or miscellaneous falls and slips. Repetitive motion (carpal tunnel) was listed as the cause of injury in 3.3% of the San Diego claims vs. 3.0% of claims in other regions.

Nature of Injury

Claim Distributions for San Diego, All Other Regions and Statewide (AY 2005 – 2015 Claims)

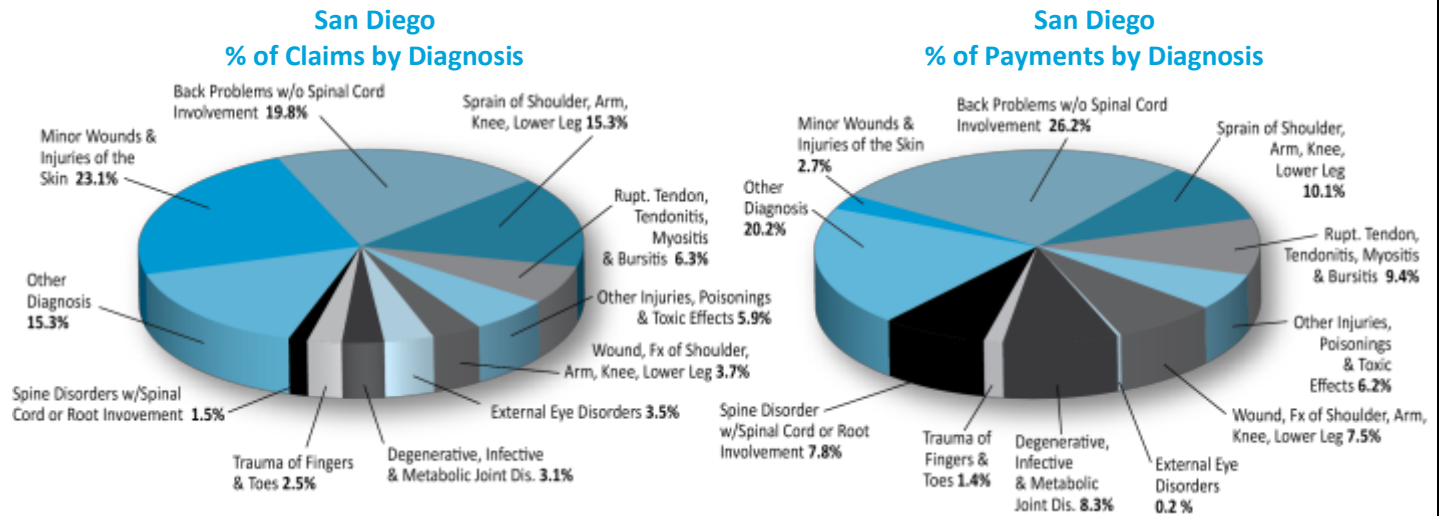
Nature of Injury	Percent of Claims		
	San Diego	All Other Regions	Statewide
Strain	29.2%	28.8%	28.9%
Laceration	12.5%	12.4%	12.4%
All Other, Not Otherwise Classified (NOC)	10.8%	10.0%	10.0%
Contusion	9.4%	10.1%	10.1%
Sprain	9.4%	9.5%	9.5%
Puncture	3.9%	3.5%	3.6%
All Other Cumulative Injuries	3.4%	5.1%	4.9%
Fracture	3.0%	3.5%	3.4%
Foreign Body	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%
Inflammation	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%
All Other	13.4%	12.0%	12.1%

Strains are the top nature of injury category in San Diego County (29.2%) and in the rest of California (28.8%), followed by lacerations, which make up about 1 in 8 claims in San Diego and elsewhere. All other, not otherwise classified injuries and punctures constitute a slightly larger share of the San Diego claims compared to the rest of the state, while all other cumulative injuries, contusions, and fractures represent a smaller share of the claims in this region. Other than those categories, overall, the mix of claims by nature of injury was similar in San Diego County to other parts of California.



Claim and Payment Distributions by Diagnosis

Claim and Payment Distributions for AY 2005-2015 Claims



	San Diego		All Other Regions		Statewide	
	% of Claims	% of Total Paid	% of Claims	% of Total Paid	% of Claims	% of Total Paid
Minor Wounds & Injuries to the Skin	23.1%	2.7%	22.4%	2.4%	22.4%	2.4%
Medical Back Problems w/o Spinal Cord Involvement	19.8%	26.2%	19.8%	26.4%	19.8%	26.4%
Sprain of Shoulder, Arm, Knee, Lower Leg	15.3%	10.1%	13.9%	9.1%	14.0%	9.2%
Ruptured Tendon, Tendonitis, Myositis & Bursitis	6.3%	9.4%	5.6%	6.5%	5.6%	6.7%
Other Injuries, Poisonings & Toxic Effects	5.9%	6.2%	7.1%	12.3%	7.0%	11.9%
Wound, Fracture of Shoulder, Arm, Knee, Lower Leg	3.7%	7.5%	3.7%	5.7%	3.7%	5.8%
External Eye Disorders	3.5%	0.2%	3.6%	0.2%	3.6%	0.2%
Degenerative, Infective & Metabolic Joint Disorders	3.1%	8.3%	4.1%	8.5%	4.0%	8.5%
Trauma of Fingers & Toes	2.5%	1.4%	3.0%	1.4%	3.0%	1.4%
Spine Disorders w/Spinal Cord or Root Involvement	1.5%	7.8%	1.6%	7.5%	1.6%	7.5%
Other Diagnosis	15.3%	20.2%	15.2%	20.0%	15.3%	20.0%

The three leading diagnostic categories in San Diego County workers' compensation claims, and in claims from other regions, are minor wounds and injuries to the skin, medical back problems without spinal cord involvement (back sprains and strains), and shoulder, arm, knee and lower leg sprains. Together, these three diagnoses represent 58.2% of the San Diego claims and 39% of the loss payments, compared to 56.1% of the claims and 37.9% of the paid losses in other regions.

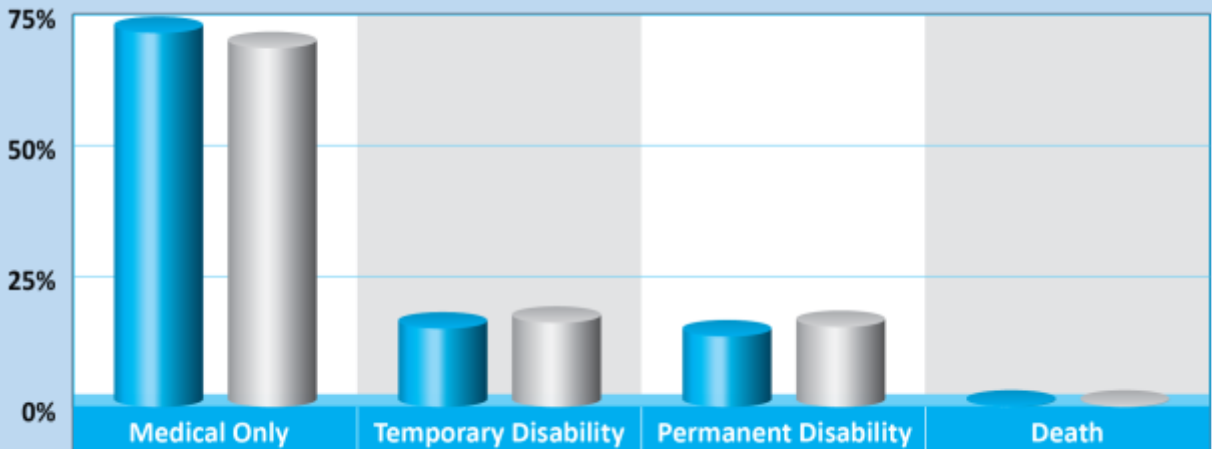
Among other common diagnoses, ruptured tendons, tendonitis, myositis & bursitis account for a slightly larger share of the San Diego claims (6.3% vs. 5.6%) and a larger share of the claim payments (9.4% vs. 6.5%), while claims with primary diagnoses of other injuries, poisonings and toxic effects or degenerative, infective and metabolic joint disorders constitute a smaller share of the San Diego claims and loss payments. Spine disorders with spinal cord or root involvement represent 1.5% of the San Diego claims, just below proportion noted in the rest of the state, though these cases, which often involve surgical procedures, consume a slightly higher share of the loss dollars in San Diego compared to other parts of the state (7.8% vs. 7.5%).



Claim and Payment Distribution by Claim Type (Med-Only, TD, PD, Death)

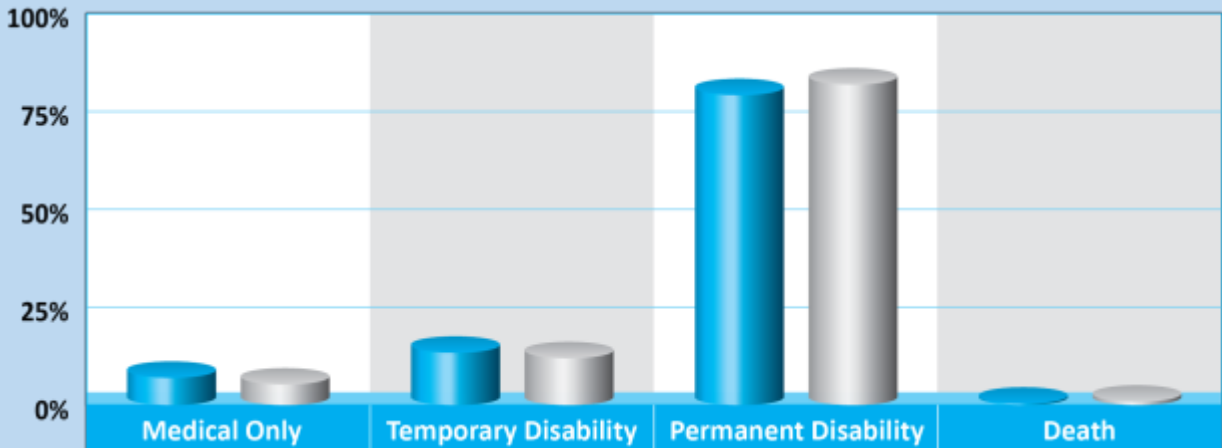
San Diego vs. All Other Regions (AY 2005 – AY 2015 Claims)

Percent of Claims



Category	San Diego	All Other	Statewide
Medical Only	71.5%	68.6%	68.8%
Temporary Disability	15.0%	16.1%	16.0%
Permanent Disability	13.5%	15.3%	15.1%
Death	< 0.1%	< 0.1%	< 0.1%

Percent of Payments



Category	San Diego	All Other	Statewide
Medical Only	7.0%	5.3%	5.4%
Temporary Disability	13.4%	12.0%	12.1%
Permanent Disability	79.2%	81.9%	81.7%
Death	0.4%	0.9%	0.8%

Medical-only and temporary disability cases, which tend to be less serious work injuries, account for a larger share of the San Diego County claims compared to other regions, while more serious permanent disability and death cases make up a smaller share of claims in San Diego. Among the factors that may be associated with the smaller percentage of the more serious claims in San Diego are the lower levels of attorney involvement, especially compared to the nearby Inland Empire/Orange County and Los Angeles regions; differences in the distribution of claims by industry sector and the types of injuries; and faster employer and claims administrator notifications, and faster initial treatment after an injury occurs.

The distribution of paid losses by claim type shows that compared to other regions, medical-only and TD claims account for 20.4% of the loss dollars in San Diego, vs. 18.3% elsewhere. On the other hand, permanent disability and death claims consume a smaller share of the paid losses in San Diego compared to other regions, 79.6% vs. 82.8% in the rest of the state.

**Median and Average Notice and Treatment Time Lags**

Injury Date to Employer Notice, Carrier Notice & First Treatment: San Diego vs. All Other Regions (AY 2005 vs. 2013)

		AY 2005		AY 2013	
		Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days	Median Number of Days	Average Number of Days
Employer Notification	San Diego	1.0	9.0	1.0	9.4
	All Other Regions	1.0	12.3	1.0	12.2
	Statewide	1.0	12.0	1.0	12.0
Carrier Notification	San Diego	7.0	28.7	6.0	30.4
	All Other Regions	8.0	36.4	7.0	34.3
	Statewide	8.0	35.8	6.0	34.0
Time to First Treatment	San Diego	1.0	22.8	1.0	32.2
	All Other Regions	1.0	29.1	1.0	35.0
	Statewide	1.0	28.6	1.0	34.8

The table above compares the time lags between the date of injury and the employer notice, carrier notice, and initial treatment for AY 2005 and AY 2013 claims filed by workers from San Diego County, other regions, and statewide. The median is the midpoint in a series of numbers – the point at which half the values are greater than amount shown, and half are less. For AY 2005 and AY 2013 claims from San Diego County, other regions and statewide, the median time to employer notice was one day, so in half of all claims the employer knew of the injury within a day. The median time to carrier notice for San Diego County claims improved from 7 days in AY 2005 to 6 days in AY 2013, while the median for other regions improved from 8 to 7 days, and the statewide median fell from 8 to 6 days. The median time to first treatment for San Diego claims remained at 1 day, matching the median for other regions and statewide.

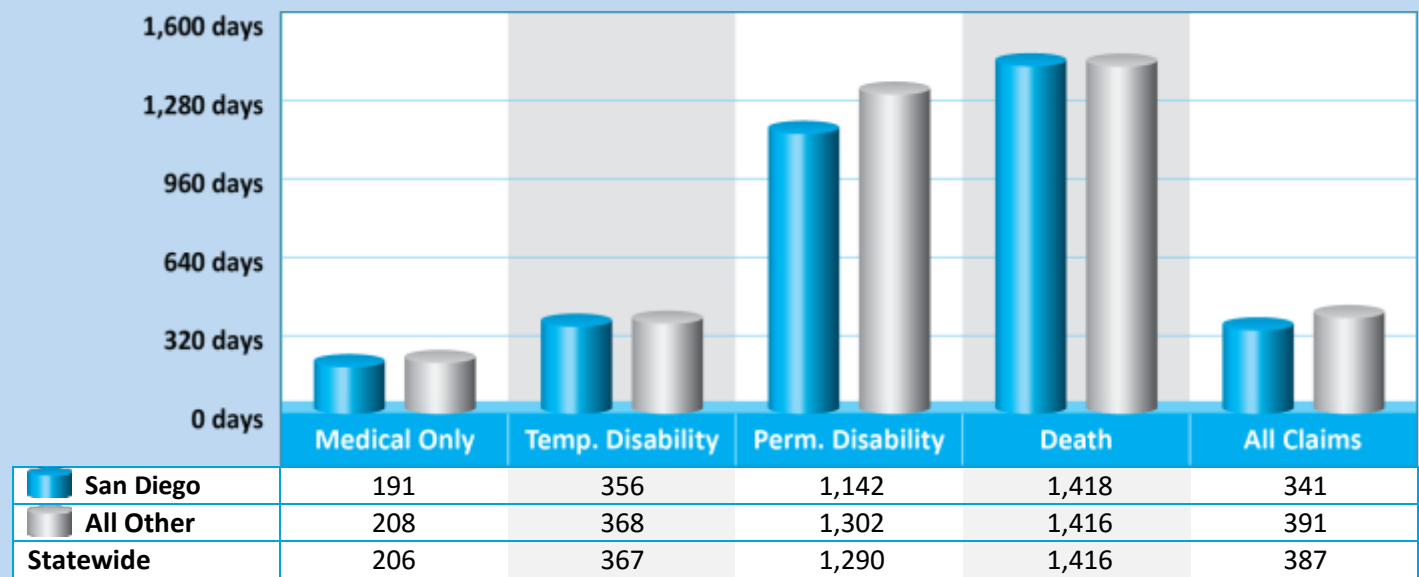
Differences between the average and median time lags for employer and carrier notifications and to first treatment were less for San Diego County claims than for claims from other regions, indicating that in San Diego the average time lags to these key claim events were less skewed by outlier claims in which the injury notifications and treatment were delayed for long periods. While employer and claims administrator notifications and initial treatment have been consistently faster for San Diego County claims than for claims from other regions, between AY 2005 and AY 2013 average notification time lags diminished in other parts of the state while they increased slightly in San Diego. Over the same 9-year period, the average time between the injury date and initial treatment increased both in San Diego County and in other parts of the state, though the median number of days between the date of injury and first medical visit remained one day.

The AY 2013 claims data show that the average time elapsed between the injury date and the employer notification was 2.8 days faster in San Diego than in the rest of the state (9.4 days vs. 12.2 days); the average time lag to claims administrator notification was 3.9 days faster (30.4 days vs. 34.3 days); and the average time to initial treatment was 2.8 days faster (32.2 days vs. 35 days).



Average Claim Duration

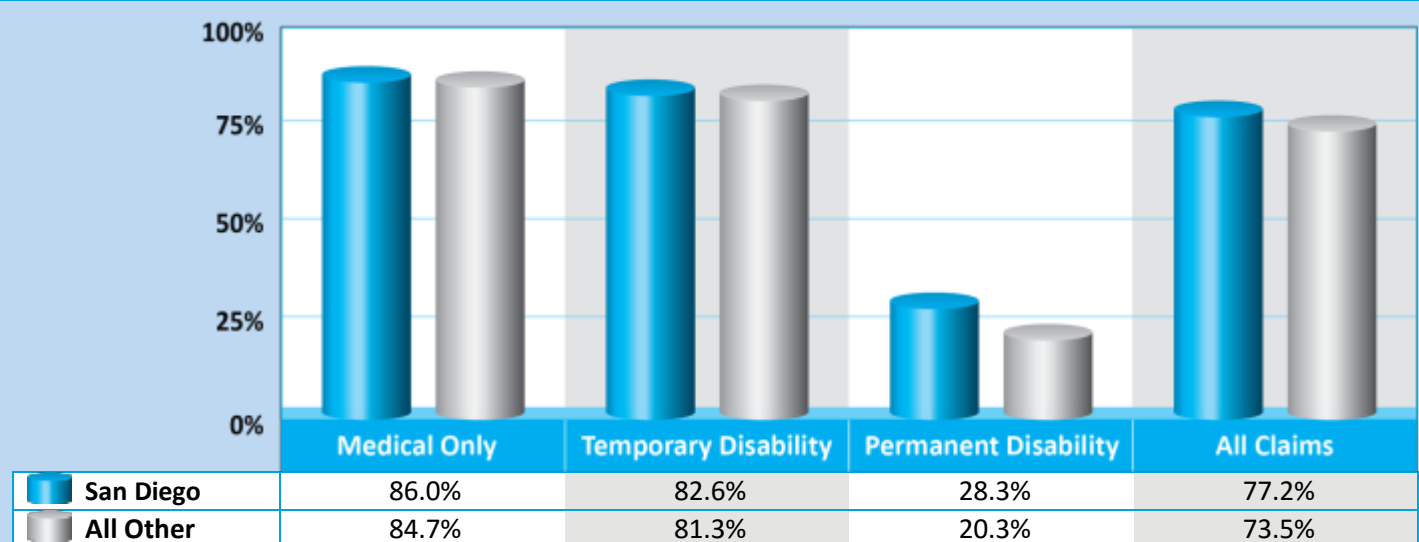
Average Number of Days (AY 2005-2015 Closed & Resolved Claims)



Average claim durations for all types of claims were shorter in San Diego County than in other parts of the state, with the exception of death claims, where claim duration was about the same. For all AY 2005-2015 claims, the average amount of time from claim filing to closure was 341 days in San Diego County, 50 days less than the average for other parts of California. Among medical-only claims, average claim duration in San Diego was 17 days less; among TD claims average claim duration was 12 days less; and among permanent disability claims average claim duration was 160 days less. Faster notifications and initial treatment likely factor into the shorter claim durations, though the demographic differences, the different mix of industries, injuries and medical services, the lower levels of attorney involvement and less lien activity may also contribute to the shorter claim durations in San Diego County.

Claim Closure Rates by Claim Type at 24 Months Post Injury

San Diego vs. All Other Regions (AY 2005 – AY 2013 Claims)

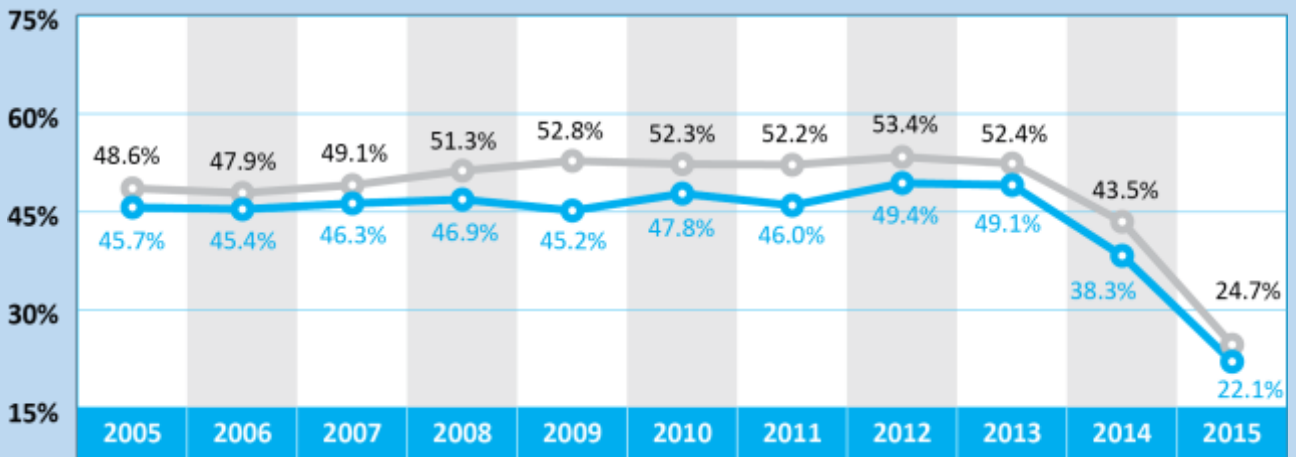


The overall claim closure rate for San Diego claims at 2 years post injury is 77.2%, 3.7 percentage points higher than the rate for claims from other parts of the state. Higher 24-month claim closure rates in San Diego are noted across all claim types, but are most prominent among PD claims, where the rate is 28.3% in San Diego County, 8 percentage points higher than in other regions.



Attorney Involvement Rates for Indemnity (TD & PD) Claims

San Diego vs. All Other Regions (AY 2005 – AY 2015 Claims)

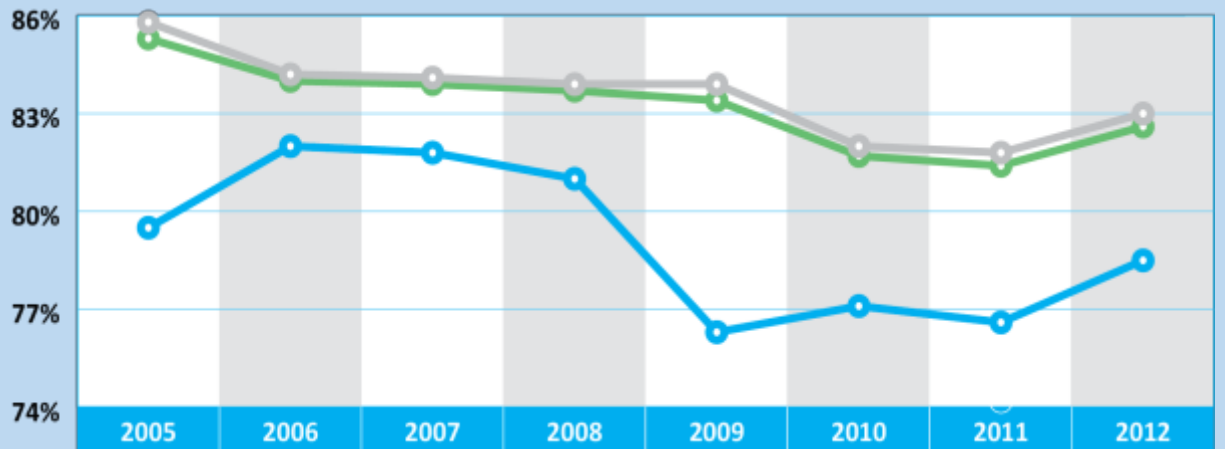


San Diego	AY 2005 – AY 2015 Average	44.9%
Other Regions	AY 2005 – AY 2015 Average	49.1%
Statewide	AY 2005 – AY 2015 Average	48.8%

Nearly 45% of AY 2005-2015 indemnity claims filed by San Diego residents involved attorneys, compared to 49.1% of indemnity claims from the rest of the state, as the attorney involvement rates in the region were below those for other parts of California in each of the 11 years studied. Looking across the years, attorney involvement rates on San Diego indemnity claims ranged from 2.5 to 7.6 percentage points less than the attorney involvement rates for indemnity claims from other regions.

Attorney Involvement Rates on PD Claims ≥ 36 Months Old

San Diego vs. All Other Regions (AY 2005 – AY 2012 Claims)



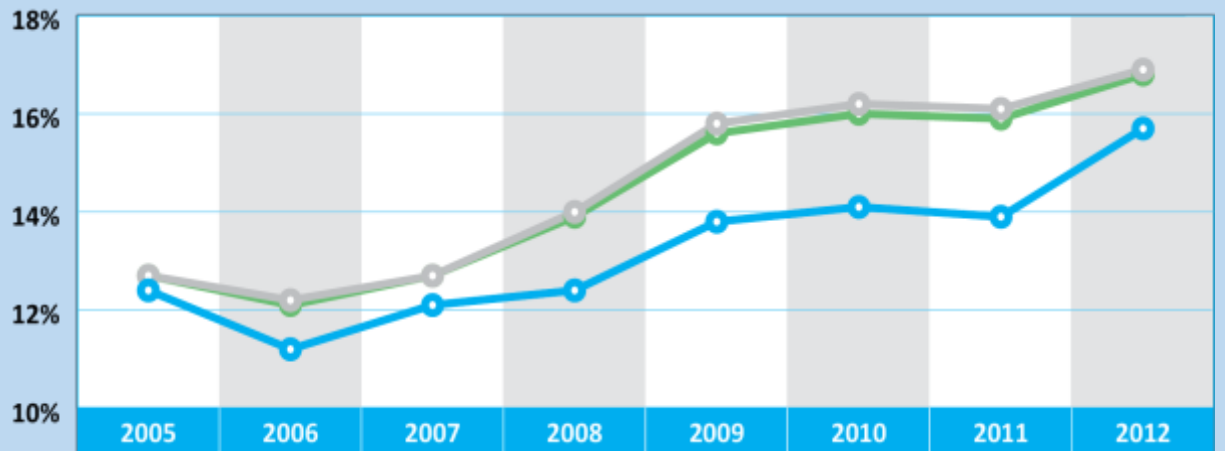
San Diego	79.5%	82.0%	81.8%	81.0%	76.3%	77.1%	76.6%	78.5%
All Other	85.8%	84.2%	84.1%	83.9%	83.9%	82.0%	81.8%	83.0%
Statewide	85.3%	84.0%	83.9%	83.7%	83.4%	81.7%	81.4%	82.6%

The complexity and expense of permanent disability claims often leads to disputes over issues such as the compensability of the injury, the nature and extent of the disability, or the appropriate medical treatment. As a result, attorney involvement rates on PD claims are higher than on other claims, though attorneys often do not become involved until well after the injury date. Among AY 2005-AY 2012 PD claims that were at least 36 months old, attorney involvement rates in San Diego were below those in the rest of the state, ranging from 2.2 to 7.6 percentage points below the attorney involvement rates for similar claims from other parts of California.



Permanent Disability Rates at 36 Months Post Injury

AY 2005 – AY 2012 Claims



	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
San Diego	12.4%	11.2%	12.1%	12.4%	13.8%	14.1%	13.9%	15.7%
All Other	12.7%	12.2%	12.7%	14.0%	15.8%	16.2%	16.1%	16.9%
Statewide	12.7%	12.1%	12.7%	13.9%	15.6%	16.0%	15.9%	16.8%

The percentage of claims from San Diego County residents that involved a PD award at 3 years post injury claims increased from 12.4% of AY 2005 claims to 15.7% of AY 2012 claims. Over the same period, the percentage of claims from other regions that involved PD payments at 36-months post injury increased at a similar pace, climbing from 12.7 percent of AY 2005 claims to 16.9 percent of AY 2012 claims. As in the rest of the state, the proportion of San Diego claims involving PD payments at the 36-month benchmark declined immediately after the 2005 PD Rating Schedule was adopted, but began trending up beginning in AY 2007, following several court rulings (Almaraz/Guzman, Ogilvie) which allowed PD in cases where previously there had been none.

**Average Number of Visits & Average Amounts Paid at 12 & 24 Months by Fee Schedule Section**

AY 2005-2014* Indemnity Claims, San Diego vs. All Other Regions and Statewide

Visits at 12 Months

Region	E/M	Surgery	Radiology	Medicine	PT	Chiro
San Diego	8.5	1.1	2.1	1.0	9.0	1.0
All Other	8.8	1.1	2.1	1.1	8.8	1.0
Statewide	8.8	1.1	2.1	1.1	8.8	1.0

Paid at 12 Months

Region	E/M	Surgery	Radiology	Medicine	PT	Chiro
San Diego	\$925	\$1,250	\$437	\$169	\$684	\$35
All Other	\$919	\$1,259	\$467	\$250	\$698	\$36
Statewide	\$919	\$1,258	\$465	\$244	\$697	\$36

Visits at 24 Months

Region	E/M	Surgery	Radiology	Medicine	PT	Chiro
San Diego	10.7	1.4	2.6	1.4	11.2	1.2
All Other	11.3	1.4	2.6	1.7	11.0	1.2
Statewide	11.3	1.4	2.6	1.6	11.0	1.2

Paid at 24 Months

Region	E/M	Surgery	Radiology	Medicine	PT	Chiro
San Diego	\$1,183	\$1,722	\$555	\$263	\$ 848	\$44
All Other	\$1,197	\$1,734	\$612	\$414	\$ 890	\$45
Statewide	\$1,196	\$1,733	\$607	\$403	\$ 887	\$45

*12-month data is for AY 2005-2014 claims; 24-month data is for AY 2005-2013 claims.

The table above shows the average number of visits per indemnity claim at 12 and 24 months post injury for various types of medical services, and the average amounts paid for those visits, for San Diego claims and claims from the rest of the state. Compared to other regions, at both the 12- and 24-month benchmarks, San Diego County claims averaged fewer evaluation/management services (office visits) and fewer visits for Medicine Section services; the same number of visits for surgery, radiology, and chiropractic manipulation; but a slightly higher number of physical therapy visits.

Average first-year payments were slightly higher in San Diego for evaluation/management services, but were slightly lower for surgery services, physical therapy and chiropractic manipulation; and were nearly 48 percent lower for Medicine section services. The average amounts paid at 24 months post injury for all six categories of medical treatment were lower for San Diego County claims than for claims from other regions. The most significant differences in the average amounts paid per claim after 2 years were for Medicine Section services (\$151 less), radiology (\$57 less), and physical therapy (\$42 less). The lower medical costs on the San Diego claims may reflect differences in the number of visits, the number of services per visit, differences in the mix of services provided, or the availability of lower rates negotiated with network providers in the region.

**PPO/MPN Utilization – 1st Year Visits**

Network Utilization by Type of Service –San Diego vs. All Other

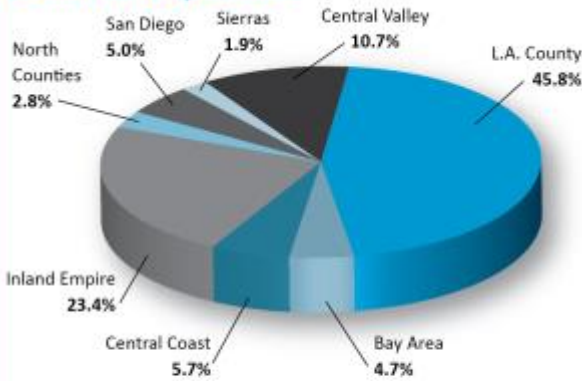
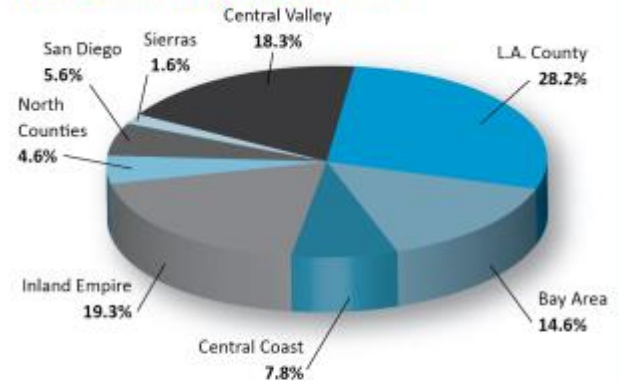
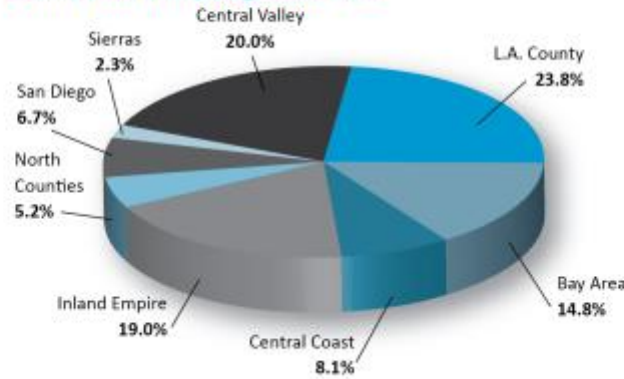
Type of Service		2005 – 2009	2010 – 2015
Evaluation/Management	San Diego	80.1%	90.6%
	All Other	79.3%	87.8%
Surgery	San Diego	71.9%	82.8%
	All Other	71.0%	77.8%
Radiology	San Diego	74.0%	84.9%
	All Other	67.7%	78.1%
Medicine Section	San Diego	70.1%	84.2%
	All Other	67.9%	76.0%
Physical Therapy	San Diego	67.5%	84.6%
	All Other	62.7%	76.9%
Chiropractic Manipulation	San Diego	66.9%	86.0%
	All Other	56.5%	78.6%
Total Visits	San Diego	74.0%	87.2%
	All Other	70.8%	81.8%

The percentage of first-year medical services rendered by network providers is higher in San Diego County than in other parts of California, and has consistently been so across all service categories since the introduction of medical provider networks (MPNs) in 2005. The table above shows the percentage of first-year medical services rendered by network providers, with AY 2005-2009 and AY 2010-2015 results for various medical service categories broken out for San Diego claims and claims from all other regions. The use of network providers has increased steadily across all regions of California since MPNs were first implemented. Among San Diego claims, the overall network utilization grew from 74.0% of all treatment visits in 2005-2009 to 87.2% in 2010-2015, while in other regions the network utilization rate grew from 70.8% to 81.8%.

Network utilization rates by type of service for the most recent six-year period (2010-2015) shows that the use of networks is greatest for Evaluation/Management services, a result that holds true for both San Diego (90.6%) and other parts of California (87.8%). Network penetration is somewhat lower for other medical service categories, but in San Diego it ranges from 82.8% for surgery services to 86.0% for chiropractic manipulation. Compared to other regions, network utilization rates in San Diego range from 2.8 percentage points higher for evaluation and management services to 7.7 percentage points higher for physical therapy services.

Regional Distribution of Claims with Sleep Studies, Nerve Conduction Tests, & MRIs/Diagnostic Tests

CY 2013 – CY 2015

Claims with Sleep Studies

Claims with Nerve Conduction Tests

Claims with MRIs/Diagnostic Tests


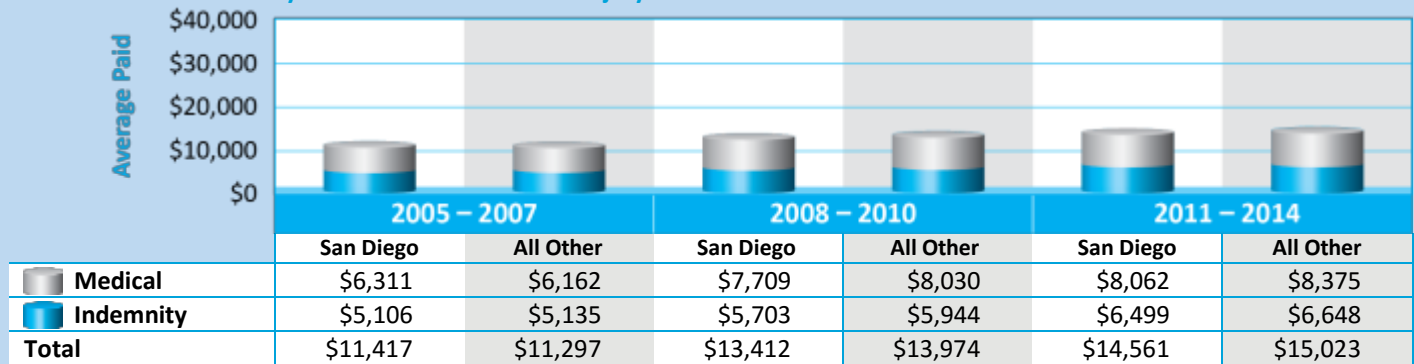
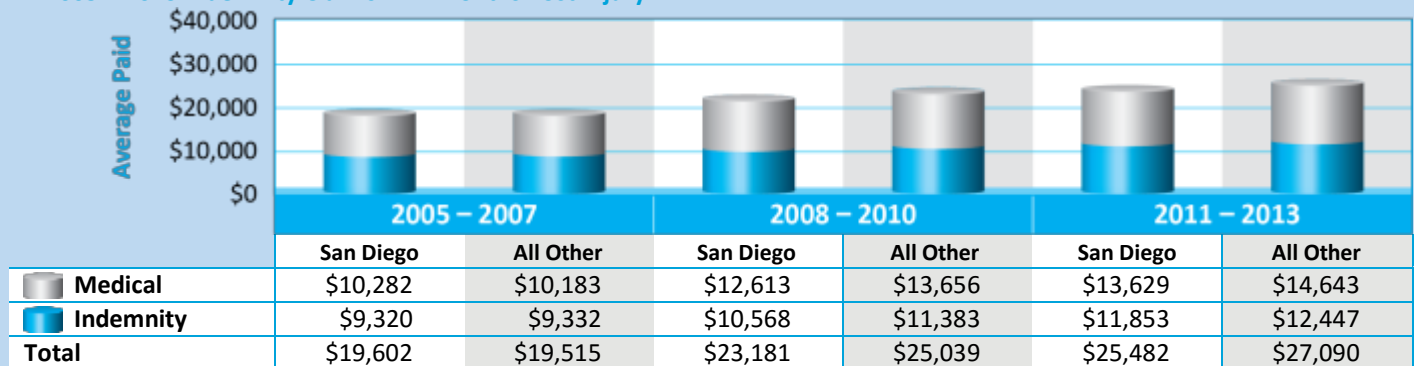
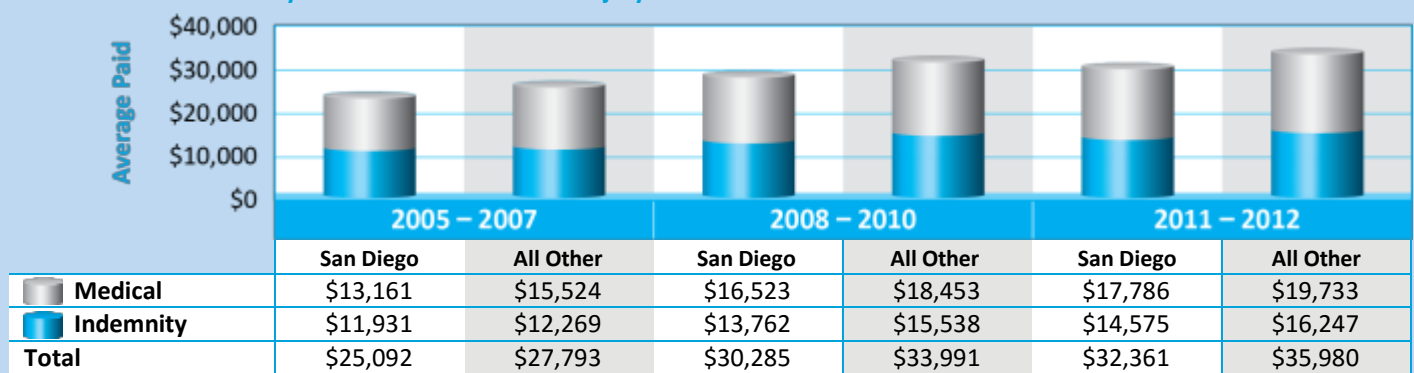
Medical services such as sleep studies, MRIs and diagnostic tests, and nerve conduction tests have been associated with high-cost workers' compensation claims. The pie charts above show the regional distributions of 2013-2015 claims that involved each of these types of services.

Injured workers in San Diego County accounted for 8.1% of California workers' comp claims during this 3-year period, but the distribution of claims with sleep studies shows the region had a disproportionately low share of the claims with sleep studies, accounting for only 5.0% of these claims, which were much more heavily concentrated in Los Angeles County, Orange County and the Inland Empire.

Similarly, the proportion of claims with nerve conduction tests that involved San Diego County residents was relatively low (5.6%) given the region's share of total claim volume during this period. Among the claims that involved MRIs and diagnostic tests, 6.7% involved injured workers from San Diego County, which was closer to their proportion of total claim volume in the state, though still disproportionately low, especially compared to the areas in around the L.A. Basin.

**Loss Development at 12, 24 and 36 Months**

Average Paid, AY 05-07, AY 08-10, AY 11-14 Indemnity Claims – San Diego vs. All Other

AY 2005 – 2014 Indemnity Claims – 12 Months Post Injury**AY 2005 – 2013 Indemnity Claims – 24 Months Post Injury****AY 2005 – 2012 Indemnity Claims – 36 Months Post Injury**

The table above compares average paid losses for San Diego County claims and claims from other regions for 3 periods (AY 2005-2007, AY 2008-2010, and AY 2011 through the most recent year available). Average amounts paid for medical and indemnity benefits, and total losses, are noted at 12, 24, and 36 months post injury to show loss development on claims from each period.

With the exception of AY 2005-2007 claims at 12- and 24-months, when slightly higher average medical payments made San Diego County claims more expensive than in other regions, over the past decade average paid losses on San Diego claims have been less than those in other regions, as both average medical and average indemnity payments have been lower on the San Diego claims. Comparing the accident year losses at the different development levels shows that the payment differentials between San Diego claims and those from other region have become even more pronounced as the claims have aged. A number of factors likely contribute to these lower costs, including the higher claim closure rates (particularly among PD claims) and shorter claim durations in San Diego County, lower medical utilization (especially Medicine Section and radiology services), the high proportion of claims that are simple medical-only cases and the small share of claims resulting in permanent disability.

The most fully developed data show average 36-month paid losses on San Diego indemnity claims increased 29.0% from \$25,092 on AY 2005-2007 claims to \$32,361 on AY 2011-2012 claims, nearly matching the 29.5% growth in average loss payments for claims from other regions, which rose from \$27,793 to \$35,980. While average 36-month medical losses on San Diego claims rose 35.1% vs. 27.1% elsewhere, average 36-month indemnity rose just 22.2%, well below the 32.4% growth in indemnity elsewhere.

**Regional Distribution of Prescription Drugs by Drug Category**

CY 2014 San Diego vs. All Other and Statewide

	San Diego	All Other Regions	Statewide
Analgesics - Opioid	27.0%	27.5%	27.4%
Analgesics - Anti-Inflammatory	21.1%	18.5%	18.6%
Musculoskeletal Therapy Agents	9.9%	9.3%	9.4%
Anticonvulsants	6.1%	6.9%	6.9%
Antidepressants	6.0%	7.0%	6.3%
Dermatologicals	5.4%	6.4%	5.0%
Ulcer Drugs	5.9%	5.0%	6.9%
All Other	18.6%	19.4%	19.5%

The distribution of 2014 workers' compensation prescription drugs by major drug category shows that as in other regions and statewide, opioid analgesics accounted for the highest share of workers' compensation prescription drugs in San Diego County, (27% vs. 27.5% in other regions and 27.4% statewide). Anti-inflammatory analgesics ranked second in terms of volume, with 21.1% of the San Diego prescriptions, which was 2.6 percentage points higher than in the rest of the state, while musculoskeletal therapy agents ranked third, representing 9.9% of the San Diego prescriptions vs. 9.3% in other regions.

Among other major drug categories, the distribution of prescriptions in San Diego showed marginal differences compared to other regions, with ulcer drugs representing a slightly larger share of the San Diego prescriptions (5.9% vs. 5.0%), while anticonvulsants, antidepressants, dermatologicals and all other drugs each represented a slightly smaller share of the prescriptions dispensed in San Diego compared to other parts of the state.

Regional Distribution of Prescription Drug Payments by Drug Category

CY 2014 San Diego vs. All Other and Statewide

	San Diego	All Other Regions	Statewide
Analgesics – Opioid	23.7%	26.0%	25.9%
Analgesics – Anti-Inflammatory	14.5%	15.0%	15.0%
Dermatologicals	11.1%	11.2%	11.1%
Ulcer Drugs	7.6%	8.6%	8.5%
Antidepressants	6.6%	6.2%	6.2%
Anticonvulsants	5.9%	6.8%	6.8%
Musculoskeletal Therapy Agents	5.5%	5.4%	5.4%
All Other	25.1%	20.8%	21.1%

Opioid analgesics were also the leading drug category in terms of the total 2014 prescription drug spend both in San Diego County, where they represented 23.7% of the prescription dollars, and in other parts of the state, where they accounted for an even bigger share (26.0%). Anti-inflammatory analgesics (i.e., Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Celecoxib) accounted for 14.5% of San Diego's total workers' comp prescription drug spend, compared to 15.0% in other regions; while about 1 out of every 9 prescription drug dollars in San Diego and elsewhere paid for dermatologicals. Among the other major drug categories, ulcer drugs (7.6%) and anticonvulsants (5.9%) each consumed a slightly smaller share of the prescription payments in San Diego compared than in other regions; antidepressants (6.6%) represented a slightly smaller share of the payments; and the proportion of the prescription drug spend paying for musculoskeletal therapy agents (5.5%) was comparable to the rest of the state.

**Top 20 Prescription Drugs by Volume**

San Diego vs. Other Regions (Calendar Year 2014)

Generic Name	Common Name	% of Total Prescriptions		
		San Diego	Other Regions	Statewide
Hydrocodone-Acetaminophen	Vicodin	11.4%	14.9%	14.7%
Ibuprofen	Advil	6.2%	5.9%	5.9%
Tramadol	Ultram	5.7%	4.5%	4.6%
Naprosyn	Aleve	5.5%	5.2%	5.2%
Cyclobenzaprine	Flexeril	4.7%	4.1%	4.1%
Omeprazole	Prilosec	4.0%	4.6%	4.6%
Gabapentin	Neurontin	3.8%	4.2%	4.1%
Diclofenac	Voltaren	3.3%	2.2%	2.3%
Oxycodone-Acetaminophen	Endocet/Percocet	2.8%	1.6%	1.7%
Tramadol-Acetaminophen	Ultracet	2.0%	1.1%	1.1%
Etodolac	Lodine	2.0%	0.6%	0.6%
Oxycodone	Oxycontin	1.9%	1.6%	1.6%
Nabumetone	Relafen	1.8%	1.6%	1.7%
Duloxetine	Cymbalta	1.8%	1.6%	1.6%
Celecoxib	Celebrex	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
Lidocaine	Lidocaine	1.7%	1.9%	1.9%
Menthol	Menthol	1.6%	0.9%	0.9%
Pregabalin	Lyrica	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%
Zolpidem	Ambien	1.3%	1.6%	1.6%
Carisprodol	Soma	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Top 20		65.9%	62.6%	62.7%

The top 20 drugs dispensed to San Diego County injured workers in calendar year 2014 are listed in the table above, along with the distribution of those drugs in other regions and statewide. The opioid combination drug hydrocodone-acetaminophen (Vicodin) was the most prescribed drug in San Diego County and in other regions, though it accounted for a smaller share of the prescriptions in San Diego County than elsewhere (11.4% vs. 14.9% in other regions). As in the rest of the state, the anti-inflammatory analgesic ibuprofen ranked second, accounting for 6.2% of the San Diego prescriptions, slightly more than the 5.9% share in other regions, but the opioid analgesic tramadol was the third most prescribed drug in San Diego County, representing 5.7% of all prescriptions vs. 4.5% in the rest of the state. The anti-inflammatory naprosyn (5.5%) and the muscle relaxant cyclobenzaprine (4.7%) rounded out the top 5 drugs used in San Diego County claims. Among drugs that accounted for a larger share of the prescriptions in San Diego than in other regions were the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories diclofenac and etodolac; the opioid combination drugs oxycodone-acetaminophen and tramadol-acetaminophen; the opioid analgesic oxycodone. On the flip side, drugs that represented a smaller share of the San Diego prescriptions included the antacid omeprazole; the anticonvulsant gabapentin, and the sleep aid zolpidem.

Two drugs often used as ingredients in compounded medications, menthol and lidocaine, were among the top 20 prescriptions in San Diego County, and their proportions were similar to those noted in Los Angeles County.

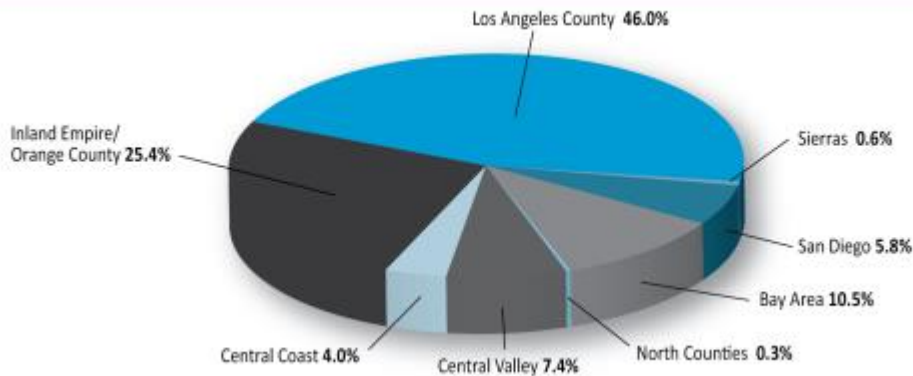
**Top 20 Prescription Drugs by Total Payments**

San Diego vs. Other Regions (Calendar Year 2014)

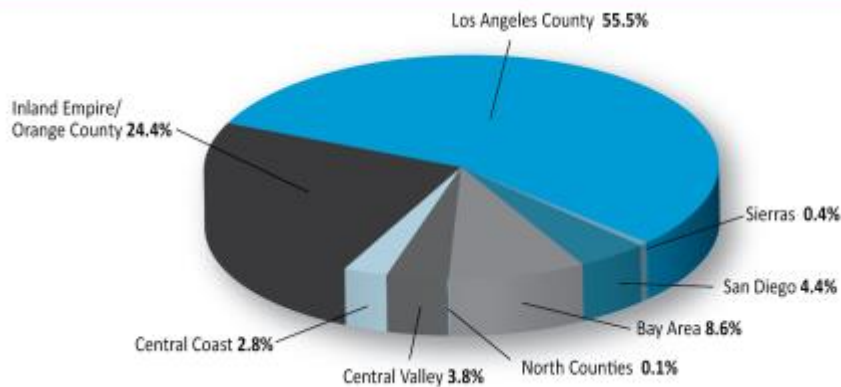
Generic Name	Common Name	% of Total Prescription Payments		
		San Diego	Other Regions	Statewide
Lidocaine	Lidocaine	5.4%	5.4%	5.4%
Omeprazole	Omeprazole	4.9%	5.4%	5.4%
Hydrocodone-Acetaminophen	Vicodin	4.6%	6.6%	6.5%
Oxycodone	Oxycontin	4.4%	5.2%	5.1%
Duloxetine	Cymbalta	4.0%	3.3%	3.3%
Oxycodone w/Acetaminophen	Endocet/Percocet	4.0%	2.2%	2.3%
Tramadol	Ultram	3.9%	3.4%	3.4%
Diclofenac	Voltaren	3.9%	2.7%	2.8%
Pregbalin	Lyrica	3.6%	4.1%	4.1%
Celecoxib	Celebrex	3.6%	3.9%	3.9%
Naprosyn	Aleve	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%
Ibuprofen	Advil	2.6%	1.5%	1.6%
Cyclobenzaprine	Flexeril	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Gabapentin	Neurontin	2.0%	2.2%	2.2%
Pantoprazole	Protonix	1.8%	1.3%	1.3%
Morphine	Morphine	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%
Flurbiprofen	Ansaid	1.4%	3.5%	3.3%
Menthol	Menthol	1.3%	1.9%	1.9%
Capsaicin	Capsaicin	1.3%	1.5%	1.5%
Etodolac	Lodine	1.0%	0.2%	0.3%
Top 20		60.1%	60.7%	60.7%

The table above shows the top 20 drugs dispensed to injured workers in San Diego County in 2014 based on total drug spend, and shows the percent of total prescription drug payments for those drugs in other parts of the state and statewide. As in the San Francisco Bay Area, the numbing agent lidocaine topped the list in San Diego, while menthol and capsaicin, which like lidocaine, are often used by drug compounders, were also on the top 20 list. Together, these three drugs accounted for 8 cents out of every dollar spent on prescription drugs in San Diego, matching the percentage in the rest of the state. Opioids and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) can cause digestive issues, so the antacid omeprazole ranked second in terms of total drug payments in San Diego County, consuming 4.9% of the prescription dollars, while another antacid, pantoprazole, consumed an additional 1.8%. Opioids also accounted for a high percentage of the San Diego workers' comp prescription dollars, with hydrocodone with acetaminophen (Vicodin), oxycodone, oxycodone with acetaminophen, and tramadol all among the top 7 prescription drugs in terms of the region's total drug spend, together accounting for 16.9% of the total, while morphine, which was also on the top 20 list, added another 1.4%.

Drugs that accounted for a higher share of the total drug spend in San Diego County than in other parts of the state included duloxetine, used as an antidepressant and for nerve pain; and the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories diclofenac, ibuprofen, and etodolac. Among the prescription drugs that consumed a smaller share of San Diego's total drug spend compared to other regions were the anticonvulsants pregbalin and gabapentin (used for neuropathic pain) and the NSAID flurbiprofen.

Distribution of California Workers' Comp Claims with Lien Payments by Region


Liens for medical care and other services have become a significant cost driver in California workers' compensation. To determine the distribution of liens across California, the author used the IRIS database to draw a sample of claims that had lien payments then used the injured workers' ZIP codes to group the claim sample into the 8 Score Card regions. The regional distribution of those lien claims is shown above. Los Angeles County and the Inland Empire/Orange County accounted for most (71%) of the claims with lien payments, while neighboring San Diego County accounted for 8.1% of all workers' comp claims in the state but only 5.8% of the claims with lien payments.

Distribution of California Workers' Comp Lien Dollars Paid by Region


The distribution of workers' compensation lien payments by region shows that these payments are heavily concentrated in and around Los Angeles, with Los Angeles County, Orange County and the Inland Empire together accounting for 79.9% of all lien payments in the state. In contrast, San Diego County, which accounts for 6.2% of paid losses in California workers' compensation, accounts for only 4.4% of the workers' comp lien payments.

IRIS Regional Scorecards are based on Industry Research Information System data, compiled and maintained by the California Workers' Compensation Institute, 1333 Broadway, Suite 510, Oakland CA 94612, (510) 251-9470, www.cwci.org.

About CWCI: The California Workers' Compensation Institute, incorporated in 1964, is a private, non-profit organization of insurers and self-insured employers conducting and communicating research and analyses to improve the California workers' compensation system.

Issue 02-17, January 2017. © 2017 California Workers' Compensation Institute. All rights reserved.