

Workplace accidents see decline

While China saw fewer total workplace accidents and deaths this year compared with 2016, the top work safety authority is asking enterprises to take precautions against risks that could grow in the year's final weeks as companies hurry to meet output targets.

According to the State Administration of Work Safety, both the number of accidents and the death toll in the first 10 months this year have decreased.

About 40,000 accidents occurred during the period, a decline of 26.9 percent year-on-year. Workplace accidents killed 29,000 people, down 20.4 percent from 2016.

The country saw 21 major accidents in which more than 10 people died, five fewer than last year. The death toll in those accidents also decreased by 110 to 293.

The declines are the result of tightened site inspections and stricter punishments, the administration said.

January to October saw year-on-year increases in fines collected from coal mines (93.1 percent), other mines (63.4 percent), hazardous chemical enterprises (65.1 percent) and industrial and trade enterprises (102.9 percent) for violations of safety regulations. The administration, however, didn't disclose the amount of the fines.

"The general situation for production safety in most industries and regions is stable, but the situation is not optimal for some industries," the administration said.

Despite the decline in total accidents, major accidents increased in the mining sector. Six major mining accidents occurred in October. Both the death toll and the number of major accidents increased from January to October, compared with last year, the administration said. Specific numbers were not disclosed.

"As the end of the year approaches, many enterprises speed up their production to finish tasks. At the same time, many areas are frequently hit by extreme winter weather. All this increases risks," it said.

While calling for government departments and enterprises to take precautionary measures, the administration said it will carry out both open and secret inspections to prevent accidents.

On Oct 31, the administration held a national conference on coal mine production safety in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, a major coal-producing region in China.

Huang Yuzhi, head of the State Administration of Coal Mine Safety, called on mine operators to use more automated processes to improve safety.