

April 27, 2005

## **Homicides More Likely at Workplaces That Allow Guns**

**By Robert Preidt**

WEDNESDAY, April 27 (HealthDay News) – Murders are three times more likely to occur in workplaces that permit employees to carry weapons than in workplaces that prohibit all weapons, new research finds.

And that risk doubles when the weapons are guns, says a University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill study.

The study, published in the May issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, compared 87 cases where employees were killed at work sites in North Carolina between 1994 and 1998 with 177 comparable work sites where there were no murders.

“We observed a small increase in the risk of homicide for workplaces that prohibited guns, but allowed other kinds of weapons,” researcher Dana Loomis, a professor of epidemiology and member of the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center, said in a prepared statement.

“In contrast, there was a nearly sevenfold increase in the risk of a worker being killed in workplaces that allowed guns and other weapons,” Loomis said.

“We don’t know employers’ reasons for allowing workers to have guns on the job, but the belief that firearms offer protection against crime is obviously a possible motive,” Loomis said.

“However, our data suggest that, like residents of households with guns who are more likely to

be victims of homicide, workers in places where the employer allows guns have a greater chance of being killed at work.”

He said the study results have a direct bearing on workplace safety policies.

“In light of these findings, employers should question the risks and benefits of permitting firearms,” Loomis said.

**More information**

The U.S. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has more about workplace violence at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/injury/traumaviolence.html>.

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