

For release 10:00 a.m. (EST) Wednesday, February 10, 2009

USDL-10-0170

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MAJOR WORK STOPPAGES IN 2009

In 2009, there were five major strikes and lockouts involving 1,000 or more workers, the lowest number since the major work stoppages series began in 1947, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The prior low for major work stoppages beginning in a calendar year was 14 in 2003. The five major work stoppages in 2009 idled 13,000 workers for 124,000 lost workdays, both record lows, and a large decrease compared to 2008 with 15 stoppages idling 72,000 workers for 1.95 million lost workdays.

Since 2007, the number of major work stoppages and the number of employees involved in major work stoppages have fallen sharply. (See charts 1 and 2.) Average annual major work stoppages have continued to decline. From 2000-2009, there were approximately 20 major work stoppages on average per year, compared with 35 per year from 1990-1999 and 83 from 1980-1989. (See table 1.)

Chart 1. Number of Major Work Stoppages, 2001-2009

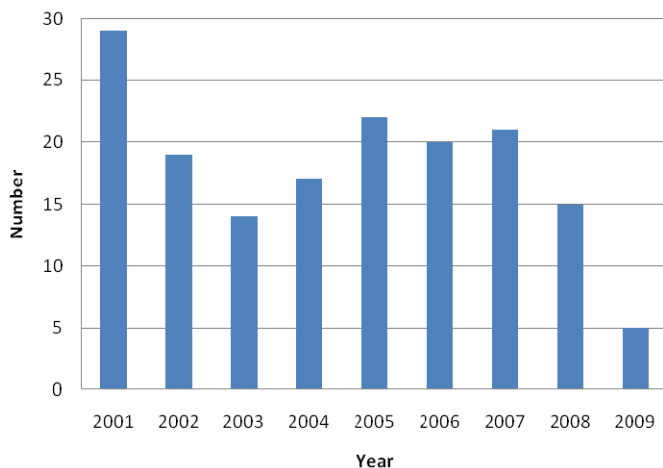
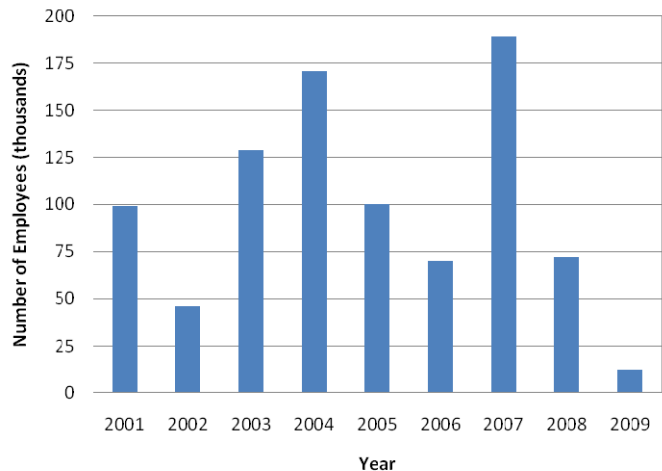


Chart 2. Number of Employees Involved in Major Work Stoppages, 2001-2009



The largest work stoppage in 2009 in terms of number of days and total workdays idle was between Bell Helicopter Textron and the United Auto Workers Local 218, lasting 27 workdays with 2,500 workers accounting for 67,500 lost workdays. The largest work stoppage beginning in 2009 in terms of number of workers was between the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority and the Transport Workers Union Local 234 with 5,500 workers involved in the work stoppage. (See table 2.)

The major work stoppages series, which dates back to 1947, covers strikes and lockouts involving 1,000 or more employees and lasting at least one shift.

TECHNICAL NOTE

The term “major work stoppage” includes both worker-initiated strikes and employer-initiated lockouts that involve 1,000 workers or more. BLS does not distinguish between lockouts and strikes in its statistics.

Information on work stoppages is obtained from reports from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, State labor market information offices, BLS Strike Reports from the Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics, and from major media sources. One or both parties involved in the work stoppage (employer or union) is contacted to verify the duration and number of workers idled by the stoppage.

Days of idleness is calculated by multiplying the number of workers involved in the strike or lockout by the number of days workers are off the job. The number of working days lost for every major work stoppage is based on a 5-day workweek (Monday through Friday), excluding Federal holidays.

Monthly major work stoppages data

The National Compensation Survey compiles detailed monthly and time series statistics on major work stoppages at <http://www.bls.gov/wsp>.

Detailed data for each major work stoppage since 1993 includes the organization involved, location, beginning and ending work stoppage dates, the number of workers, and days idle.

Monthly time series data since 1981 have been published (<http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost?ws>) for the following tables:

- Number of work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more beginning in the period
- Number of work stoppages involving 1,000 workers or more in effect in the period
- Number of workers involved in work stoppages beginning in the period
- Number of workers involved in work stoppages in effect in the period
- Days of idleness resulting from work stoppages in effect in the period
- Days of idleness resulting from work stoppages in effect in the period, as a percent of estimated working time

Major work stoppages detailed information and measures

For more information on Work Stoppages methods and measures, see *Chapter 8. National Compensation Measures* of the [BLS Handbook of Methods](http://www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch8.pdf) at: www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch8.pdf.

Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, 1947-2009

Period	Number of work stoppages beginning in period	Numbers of workers involved (thousands) ¹	Days idle ²	
			Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time ³
2009	5	13	124	(4)
2008	15	72	1,954	.01
2007	21	189	1,265	(4)
2006	20	70	2,688	.01
2005	22	100	1,736	.01
2004	17	171	3,344	.01
2003	14	129	4,091	.01
2002	19	46	660	(4)
2001	29	99	1,151	(4)
2000	39	394	20,419	.06
1999	17	73	1,996	.01
1998	34	387	5,116	.02
1997	29	339	4,497	.01
1996	37	273	4,889	.02
1995	31	192	5,771	.02
1994	45	322	5,021	.02
1993	35	182	3,981	.01
1992	35	364	3,989	.01
1991	40	392	4,584	.02
1990	44	185	5,926	.02
1989	51	452	16,996	.07
1988	40	118	4,381	.02
1987	46	174	4,481	.02
1986	69	533	11,861	.05
1985	54	324	7,079	.03
1984	62	376	8,499	.04
1983	81	909	17,461	.08
1982	96	656	9,061	.04
1981	145	729	16,908	.07
1980	187	795	20,844	.09
1979	235	1,021	20,409	.09
1978	219	1,006	23,774	.11
1977	298	1,212	21,258	.10
1976	231	1,519	23,962	.12
1975	235	965	17,563	.09
1974	424	1,796	31,809	.16
1973	317	1,400	16,260	.08
1972	250	975	16,764	.09
1971	298	2,516	35,538	.19
1970	381	2,468	52,761	.29
1969	412	1,576	29,397	.16
1968	392	1,855	35,367	.20
1967	381	2,192	31,320	.18
1966	321	1,300	16,000	.10
1965	268	999	15,140	.10
1964	246	1,183	16,220	.11
1963	181	512	10,020	.07
1962	211	793	11,760	.08
1961	195	1,031	10,140	.07
1960	222	896	13,260	.09

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, 1947-2008 — Continued

Period	Number of work stoppages beginning in period	Numbers of workers involved (thousands) ¹	Days idle ²	
			Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time ³
1959	245	1,381	60,850	.43
1958	332	1,587	17,900	.13
1957	279	887	10,340	.07
1956	287	1,370	26,840	.20
1955	363	2,055	21,180	.16
1954	265	1,075	16,630	.13
1953	437	1,623	18,130	.14
1952	470	2,746	48,820	.38
1951	415	1,462	15,070	.12
1950	424	1,698	30,390	.26
1949	262	2,537	43,420	.38
1948	245	1,435	26,127	.22
1947	270	1,629	25,720	(⁵)

¹ Number of workers involved includes only those workers who participated in work stoppages that began in the calendar year. Workers are counted more than once if they are involved in more than one stoppage during the reference period. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.

² Days idle includes all stoppages in effect during the reference period. For work stoppages that are still ongoing

at the end of the calendar year, only those days of idleness in the calendar year are counted.

³ Agricultural and government employees are included in the calculation of estimated working time; private households, forestry, and fishery employees are excluded.

⁴ Less than .005.

⁵ Data not available.

Table 2. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers beginning in 2009

Organizations involved, location, and industry type	Industry code ¹	Beginning date	Ending date	Number of workers ²	Days idle
Bell Helicopter Textron Incorporated Fort Worth, TX, United Auto Workers Local 218 Private Industry	336411	6/15/09	7/22/09	2,500	67,500
Interior Demolition Contractors Association New York, NY, Laborers International Union of North America Local 79, Mason Tenders District Council Private Industry	238910	7/01/09	7/07/09	1,500	6,000
Kent Public School District Kent, WA, Kent Education Association Local Government	611110	8/27/09	9/13/09	1,900	20,900
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority Philadelphia, PA, Transport Workers Union Local 234 Local Government	485111	11/03/09	11/09/09	5,500	27,500
University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, IL, American Federation of Teachers, Graduate Employees Organization Local 6300 State Government	611310	11/16/09	11/17/09	1,100	2,200

¹ Industry code is from the 2007 NAICS (North American Industry Classification System).

² The number of workers involved is rounded to the nearest 100.