

# News

U.S. Department of Labor  
Bureau of Labor Statistics  
Two Pershing Square Building  
2300 Main Street, Suite 1190  
Kansas City, Missouri 64108



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

(816) 285-7000

Media Contact: Jacqueline Michael-Midkiff (816) 285-7001

WWW Access: <http://www.bls.gov/ro7>

FOR RELEASE:

April 16, 2009

## COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN MISSOURI: THIRD QUARTER 2008

Five of the seven largest counties in Missouri reported declines in their employment levels from September 2007 to September 2008. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2007 annual average employment.) St. Charles County had the largest drop, down 2.1 percent, followed by Greene and Clay, down 1.6 and 1.3 percent, respectively. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that only St. Louis City experienced employment growth, up 1.6 percent, and another, Boone County, reported no change in its job count over the year. (The independent city of St. Louis has been designated a county by the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program.)

Nationally, employment decreased 0.8 percent during this 12-month period, as 207 of the 334 large counties nationwide lost jobs. The largest over-the-year percentage decline in employment in the nation was recorded in Elkhart, Ind. (-10.8 percent); Yakima County, Wash., experienced the fastest growth (3.2 percent).

Among the seven largest counties in Missouri, employment was highest in St. Louis County (605,600) in September 2008. Two other counties, Jackson and St. Louis City, had employment levels exceeding 200,000. Together, Missouri's large counties accounted for 60.9 percent of total employment within the State. Nationwide, the 334 largest counties made up 71.2 percent of total U.S. employment.

In addition to experiencing the fastest employment growth among the seven largest counties in Missouri, St. Louis City also registered the fastest wage growth and the highest average weekly wage. The average weekly wage in St. Louis City rose 5.5 percent from the third quarter of 2007 to the third quarter of 2008. Boone County had the second-fastest rate of growth at 3.6 percent. St. Louis City's average weekly wage level of \$937 was followed by the counties of St. Louis (\$890) and Jackson (\$851). (See table 1.) Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 2.8 percent over the year to \$841 in the third quarter of 2008.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 108 counties in Missouri with employment below 75,000. All of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See table 2.)

### Large County Wage Changes

Three of Missouri's seven large counties recorded wage growth above the national increase of 2.8 percent from the third quarter of 2007 to the third quarter of 2008. (See table 1.) St. Louis City's 5.5-percent wage gain placed 18<sup>th</sup> among the nation's 334 largest counties. The other two large counties in the State with above-average wage growth—Boone (3.6 percent) and Jackson (3.0 percent)—ranked 76<sup>th</sup> and 139<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Conversely, Clay County's wage declined 1.7 percent over the year, the only decrease among the large counties in the State, ranking it 319<sup>th</sup>.

Nationwide, Rutherford, Tenn., ranked first in average weekly wage growth, with an increase of 17.3 percent from the third quarter of 2007. Yolo, Calif., was second with growth of 9.7 percent, followed by the counties of Madison, Ill. (9.2 percent), Suffolk, N.Y. (8.6 percent), and Calcasieu, La. (7.8 percent).

Twenty-one large counties in the United States experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest decrease in the nation and was the only county to experience a double-digit decline (-14.6 percent). The next largest declines were recorded in Santa Clara, Calif. and Duval, Fla. (-3.4 percent each), Gwinnett, Ga. (-3.1 percent), and Rock Island, Ill. (-2.6 percent).

## Large County Average Weekly Wages

Average weekly wages in 3 of the State's large counties placed in the top one-third of the national ranking among the 334 largest counties in the United States in the third quarter of 2008. Wages in these three counties—St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and Jackson County—were above the U.S. average of \$841 and ranked 58<sup>th</sup>, 74<sup>th</sup>, and 103<sup>rd</sup>, respectively. The average weekly wages in Missouri's four other large counties placed in the bottom half of the national ranking, with Boone (\$660, 308<sup>th</sup>) and Greene (\$653, 315<sup>th</sup>) ranking among the lowest in the United States.

Nationally, average weekly wages were higher than average in 108 of the largest 334 counties. New York, N.Y., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,552. Santa Clara, Calif., was second at \$1,530, followed by Washington, D.C. (\$1,391), San Mateo, Calif. (\$1,374), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,350).

Among the 226 counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2008, Horry, S.C. (\$537), reported the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$538), Hidalgo, Texas (\$549), Webb, Texas (\$559), and Yakima, Wash. (\$580). Wages in these lowest-ranked counties were less than 40 percent of the average weekly wage reported for the highest-ranked county, New York.

## Average Weekly Wages in Missouri's Smaller Counties

All of the 108 counties in Missouri with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$841. Iron (\$755) and Platte (\$715) Counties had the highest average weekly wages among the smaller counties. Worth County reported the lowest weekly wage among the smaller counties, as well as the State, averaging \$361 in the third quarter of 2008. (See table 2.)

When all 115 counties in Missouri were considered, all but 3 had wages below the national average of \$841. Fifty-three reported average weekly wages under \$500, 44 reported wages from \$500 to \$599, 12 had wages from \$600 to \$699, and 6 had wages above \$700. (See table 3.) The three counties with above-average wages were located in the major metropolitan areas of Kansas City and St. Louis. Five of the six lowest-paid counties, those with wages under \$400, were concentrated in the southern half of the State.

## Additional Statistics and other Information

QCEW data for states has been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>.

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2007 edition of this bulletin contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2008 version of this news release. Tables and additional content from the 2007 Employment and Wages Annual Bulletin are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn07.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn07.htm). These tables present final 2007 annual averages. The tables will also be included on the CD which accompanies the hardcopy version of the Annual Bulletin. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2007* is expected to be available for sale as a chartbook by the end of the second quarter of 2009 from the United States Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250, telephone (866) 512-1800, outside Washington, D.C. Within Washington, D.C., the telephone number is (202) 512-1800. The fax number is (202) 512-2104.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Kansas City Information Office at 816-285-7000 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

## Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.2 million employer reports cover 135.2 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at [www.bls.gov/cew/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/); however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

**Table 1. Covered[1] employment and wages in the United States and the 7 largest counties in Missouri, third quarter 2008[2]**

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage [3]			
	September 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level [5]	Percent change, third quarter 2007-08 [4]	National ranking by percent change [5]
United States [6]	135,173.8	-0.8	--	\$841	--	2.8	--
Missouri	2,736.1	-0.4	--	739	31	2.8	29
Boone, Mo.	83.5	0.0	110	660	308	3.6	76
Clay, Mo.	90.2	-1.3	212	765	187	-1.7	319
Greene, Mo.	156.2	-1.6	233	653	315	2.5	176
Jackson, Mo.	370.0	-0.1	121	851	103	3.0	139
St. Charles, Mo.	123.2	-2.1	264	695	281	0.4	297
St. Louis City, Mo.	237.9	1.6	21	937	58	5.5	18
St. Louis, Mo.	605.6	-1.0	192	890	74	1.8	234

[1] Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

[2] Data are preliminary.

[3] Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

[4] Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

[5] Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

[6] Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

**Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Missouri, third quarter 2008 (2)**

Area	Employment September 2008	Average weekly wage (3)	Area	Employment September 2008	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	135,173,818	\$841			
Missouri	2,736,074	739	Lincoln	10,819	592
Adair	10,600	502	Linn	4,429	522
Andrew	2,714	493	Livingston	6,021	527
Atchison	1,868	448	McDonald	6,875	503
Audrain	9,633	573	Macon	4,753	511
Barry	15,558	560	Madison	3,483	472
Barton	3,668	483	Maries	1,396	534
Bates	3,727	478	Marion	13,220	559
Benton	3,633	435	Mercer	665	458
Bollinger	1,858	422	Miller	7,112	508
Boone	83,486	660	Mississippi	3,822	486
Buchanan	48,361	617	Moniteau	3,978	480
Butler	19,205	555	Monroe	2,342	475
Caldwell	1,564	473	Montgomery	3,127	490
Callaway	15,246	609	Morgan	4,226	425
Camden	19,021	496	New Madrid	7,634	631
Cape Girardeau	41,911	605	Newton	19,749	599
Carroll	2,533	569	Nodaway	8,992	566
Carter	1,712	377	Oregon	2,272	391
Cass	23,130	566	Osage	3,616	519
Cedar	3,271	465	Ozark	1,645	376
Chariton	1,760	487	Pemiscot	6,013	507
Christian	15,965	518	Perry	8,826	553
Clark	1,521	425	Pettis	19,569	548
Clay	90,223	765	Phelps	17,291	583
Clinton	4,583	541	Pike	6,083	545
Cole	54,542	662	Platte	40,230	715
Cooper	6,084	495	Polk	8,131	525
Crawford	6,408	578	Pulaski	14,010	579
Dade	1,711	455	Putnam	1,073	442
Dallas	3,051	423	Ralls	3,276	657
Daviess	1,748	432	Randolph	10,205	523
De Kalb	3,188	488	Ray	4,147	502
Dent	3,919	506	Reynolds	1,627	431
Douglas	2,269	488	Ripley	2,989	404
Dunklin	9,699	432	St. Charles	123,165	695
Franklin	38,315	605	St. Clair	2,069	453
Gasconade	5,533	454	Ste. Genevieve	6,052	649
Gentry	2,131	435	St. Francois	23,199	489
Greene	156,239	653	St. Louis	605,619	890
Grundy	3,437	541	Saline	9,141	516
Harrison	2,770	434	Schuyler	722	449
Henry	7,540	562	Scotland	1,216	447
Hickory	1,088	394	Scott	14,113	542
Holt	1,329	471	Shannon	1,777	398
Howard	2,454	425	Shelby	1,991	450
Howell	15,484	504	Stoddard	10,483	492
Iron	4,233	755	Stone	7,303	486
Jackson	369,950	851	Sullivan	3,544	561
Jasper	59,828	612	Taney	29,773	473
Jefferson	47,720	585	Texas	5,962	471
Johnson	15,662	558	Vernon	7,150	538
Knox	1,162	427	Warren	6,810	549
Laclede	13,597	512	Washington	4,737	456
Lafayette	9,009	500	Wayne	2,641	418
Lawrence	8,950	523	Webster	6,770	485
Lewis	2,667	510	Worth	428	361
			Wright	4,336	460
			St. Louis City	237,919	937

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

**Table 3. Covered [1] employment and wages by state, third quarter 2008[2]**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage [3]			
	September 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2007-08	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2007-08	National ranking by percent change
United States [4]	135,173.8	-0.8	\$841	-	2.8	-
Alabama	1,936.4	-1.2	730	32	3.3	17
Alaska	332.1	1.4	872	13	3.7	13
Arizona	2,570.1	-3.0	798	20	2.0	45
Arkansas	1,185.0	-0.1	649	47	3.0	22
California	15,527.1	-1.4	959	6	2.9	24
Colorado	2,322.7	0.4	877	11	3.8	12
Connecticut	1,692.5	-0.3	1,032	2	1.0	50
Delaware	420.6	-1.1	879	10	2.1	42
District of Columbia	688.2	1.4	1,391	1	1.0	50
Florida	7,546.4	-4.1	756	27	2.2	40
Georgia	4,018.6	-1.6	794	21	1.5	47
Hawaii	613.0	-2.1	774	24	1.8	46
Idaho	665.7	-1.4	643	48	1.3	49
Illinois	5,872.8	-0.7	891	9	2.9	24
Indiana	2,897.6	-1.4	718	35	2.3	37
Iowa	1,499.0	0.2	696	40	4.2	8
Kansas	1,368.9	0.0	711	38	4.6	6
Kentucky	1,795.3	-1.0	692	42	2.4	36
Louisiana	1,877.4	-0.2	756	27	5.6	4
Maine	610.8	-0.6	683	43	3.5	14
Maryland	2,543.4	-0.8	920	7	3.1	19
Massachusetts	3,265.7	0.0	1,025	4	2.3	37
Michigan	4,093.9	-3.0	820	18	1.5	47
Minnesota	2,699.6	-0.5	862	14	4.7	5
Mississippi	1,128.3	-1.3	631	49	4.0	11
Missouri	2,736.1	-0.4	739	31	2.8	29
Montana	446.4	0.1	628	50	3.1	19
Nebraska	925.7	0.2	694	41	4.2	8
Nevada	1,253.0	-2.7	809	19	2.1	42
New Hampshire	634.6	-0.5	822	16	2.8	29
New Jersey	3,952.9	-0.7	990	5	2.5	33
New Mexico	835.2	0.7	712	37	3.5	14
New York	8,633.8	0.5	1,030	3	2.2	40
North Carolina	4,064.2	-1.0	741	30	3.1	19
North Dakota	357.0	2.8	665	45	6.9	1
Ohio	5,251.1	-1.5	766	25	2.8	29
Oklahoma	1,562.8	1.2	698	39	4.5	7
Oregon	1,734.1	-1.0	766	25	2.1	42
Pennsylvania	5,679.0	0.0	822	16	2.5	33
Rhode Island	476.0	-2.0	778	23	2.5	33
South Carolina	1,874.6	-1.5	683	43	2.9	24
South Dakota	401.3	1.0	623	51	4.2	8
Tennessee	2,730.4	-1.5	745	29	2.8	29
Texas	10,438.3	1.4	850	15	2.9	24
Utah	1,229.3	-0.1	717	36	2.9	24
Vermont	304.2	-0.5	722	34	3.3	17
Virginia	3,676.1	-0.3	877	11	2.3	37
Washington	3,007.5	1.0	903	8	3.0	22
West Virginia	716.4	0.6	661	46	5.9	3
Wisconsin	2,788.7	-0.6	730	32	3.4	16
Wyoming	294.0	3.3	781	22	6.4	2
Puerto Rico	992.8	-1.6	477	[5]	5.5	[5]
Virgin Islands	44.9	-0.9	709	[5]	4.3	[5]

[1] Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

[2] Data are preliminary.

[3] Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

[4] Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

[5] Data not included in the national ranking.