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## Occupational Employment and Wages in Fargo — May 2015

Workers in the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.00 in May 2015, about 10 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 10 of the 22 major occupational groups including legal; computer and mathematical; and architecture and engineering.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups, including construction and extraction; personal care and service; and transportation and material moving. Conversely, eight groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production; education, training, and library; and protective service. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

**Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2015**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Fargo	United States	Fargo	Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Total, all occupations .....	100.0%	100.0%	\$23.23	\$21.00*	-10
Management .....	5.0	4.6*	55.30	49.47*	-11
Business and Financial Operations .....	5.1	5.1	35.48	27.80*	-22
Computer and Mathematical .....	2.9	2.7	41.43	31.08*	-25
Architecture and Engineering .....	1.8	1.5*	39.89	30.15*	-24
Life, Physical, and Social Science .....	0.8	0.7*	34.24	26.85*	-22
Community and Social Services .....	1.4	1.3	22.19	21.80	-2
Legal .....	0.8	0.5*	49.74	36.78*	-26
Education, Training, and Library .....	6.2	5.0*	25.48	25.31	-1
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media .....	1.3	1.3	27.39	19.29*	-30
Healthcare Practitioner and Technical .....	5.8	6.0	37.40	35.27	-6
Healthcare Support .....	2.9	2.8	14.19	14.40	1
Protective Service .....	2.4	1.4*	21.45	19.22*	-10
Food Preparation and Serving Related .....	9.1	8.9	10.98	10.73	-2
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance .....	3.2	3.6*	13.02	12.92	-1
Personal Care and Service .....	3.1	4.3*	12.33	12.27	0
Sales and Related .....	10.5	10.6	18.90	18.35	-3
Office and Administrative Support .....	15.8	16.5*	17.47	16.50*	-6
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry .....	0.3	0.2*	12.67	16.95*	34
Construction and Extraction .....	4.0	5.7*	22.88	21.51*	-6
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair .....	3.9	4.0	22.11	22.37	1
Production .....	6.6	5.3*	17.41	17.30	-1
Transportation and Material Moving .....	6.9	7.8*	16.90	17.29	2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Fargo is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

\* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—construction and extraction—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Fargo had 7,770 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 5.7 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 4.0-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$21.51, significantly below the national wage of \$22.88.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the construction and extraction group included construction laborers (1,080), carpenters (960), and electricians (960). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers (\$28.86) and glaziers (\$26.95). At the lower end of the wage scale were construction laborers (\$16.47) and carpet installers (\$16.48). (Detailed occupational data for construction and extraction are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to [www.bls.gov/oes/2015/may/oes\\_22020.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/2015/may/oes_22020.htm) .)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, cement masons and concrete finishers were employed at 4.1 times the national rate in Fargo, and operating engineers and other construction equipment operators, at 1.8 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, painters, construction and maintenance had a location quotient of 1.0 in Fargo, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, Job Service North Dakota and the Minnesota Department of Employment & Economic Development.

### **Notes on Occupational Employment Statistics Data**

With the issuance of data for May 2015, the OES program has incorporated redefined metropolitan area definitions as designated by the Office of Management and Budget. OES data are available for 394 metropolitan areas, 38 metropolitan divisions, and 167 OES-defined nonmetropolitan areas. A listing of the areas and their definitions can be found at [www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa\\_def.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/msa_def.htm).

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

## Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. The OES program produces employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations for all industries combined in the nation; the 50 states and the District of Columbia; 432 metropolitan areas and divisions; 167 nonmetropolitan areas; and Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. National estimates are also available by industry for NAICS sectors, 3-, 4-, and selected 5- and 6-digit industries, and by ownership across all industries and for schools and hospitals. OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm).

OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2015 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2015, November 2014, May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, and November 2012. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 73.5 percent based on establishments and 69.6 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.9 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,007 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to [www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm](http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm).

The May 2015 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/soc](http://www.bls.gov/soc) and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at [www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm).

### Metropolitan area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Fargo, N.D.-Minn. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Cass County of North Dakota and Clay County of Minnesota.

### Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at [www.bls.gov/regions/midwest](http://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest). Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at [www.bls.gov/oes/oes\\_ques.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm). Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/oes/2015/may/methods\\_statement.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/oes/2015/may/methods_statement.pdf).

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

**Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2015**

Occupation <sup>(1)</sup>	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level <sup>(2)</sup>	Location quotient <sup>(3)</sup>	Hourly	Annual <sup>(4)</sup>
Construction and Extraction Occupations .....	7,770	1.4	\$21.51	\$44,750
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers .....	740	1.5	28.86	60,020
Brickmasons and Blockmasons .....	80	1.3	26.45	55,010
Carpenters.....	960	1.5	19.42	40,400
Carpet Installers .....	(5)	(5)	16.48	34,290
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers .....	660	4.1	18.60	38,700
Construction Laborers .....	1,080	1.2	16.47	34,260
Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators ..	120	2.3	20.26	42,140
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators .....	640	1.8	23.21	48,280
Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers.....	90	1.0	17.96	37,360
Electricians .....	960	1.6	26.80	55,740
Glaziers .....	120	2.7	26.95	56,050
Insulation Workers, Floor, Ceiling, and Wall.....	(5)	(5)	18.78	39,060
Insulation Workers, Mechanical .....	80	2.7	18.98	39,480
Painters, Construction and Maintenance .....	200	1.0	19.51	40,570
Pipelayers.....	(5)	(5)	17.78	36,990
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters .....	620	1.6	21.46	44,630
Roofers.....	80	0.8	18.81	39,130
Sheet Metal Workers .....	160	1.2	20.40	42,430
Structural Iron and Steel Workers .....	130	2.1	21.53	44,780
Helpers--Carpenters .....	(5)	(5)	16.88	35,100
Helpers--Roofers .....	40	3.8	16.60	34,530
Helpers, Construction Trades, All Other .....	100	5.2	10.25	21,310
Construction and Building Inspectors.....	40	0.4	(5)	(5)
Highway Maintenance Workers.....	160	1.2	21.08	43,850
Construction and Related Workers, All Other.....	50	1.5	15.30	31,830

**Footnotes:**

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, see [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_22020.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_22020.htm)

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimates not released.