



For Release: Monday, July 27, 2015

15-1397-DAL

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Occupational Employment and Wages in Lake Charles, May 2014

Workers in the Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.45 in May 2014, about 19 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were higher than their respective national averages in 2 of the 22 major occupational groups, including production, while 18 groups had wages that were measurably lower including legal; sales and related; and computer and mathematical.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including construction and extraction; installation, maintenance, and repair; and food preparation and serving related. Conversely, 10 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including business and financial operations; office and administrative support; and computer and mathematical. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Lake Charles		United States	Lake Charles	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.71	\$18.45	* -19
Management	5.0	3.3	*	54.08	41.41	* -23
Business and financial operations.....	5.1	2.2	*	34.81	26.61	* -24
Computer and mathematical	2.8	0.5	*	40.37	29.02	* -28
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.2	*	39.19	40.24	3
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.7	*	33.69	29.19	* -13
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.0	*	21.79	19.00	* -13
Legal.....	0.8	0.5	*	48.61	26.01	* -46
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	5.7	*	25.10	20.30	* -19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	0.4	*	26.82	17.47	* -35
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.2		36.54	29.00	* -21
Healthcare support	2.9	3.3		13.86	11.52	* -17
Protective service	2.4	3.4	*	21.14	16.03	* -24
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	10.1	*	10.57	9.45	* -11
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	2.9		12.68	10.44	* -18
Personal care and service.....	3.1	4.0	*	12.01	10.12	* -16
Sales and related	10.5	10.1		18.59	13.25	* -29
Office and administrative support.....	16.0	13.7	*	17.08	13.85	* -19
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	12.09	17.02	* 41
Construction and extraction.....	3.9	9.0	*	22.40	20.40	* -9

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Lake Charles		United States	Lake Charles		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	6.1	*	21.74	21.19		-3
Production	6.6	7.6	*	17.06	24.21	*	42
Transportation and material moving.....	6.8	6.9		16.57	15.70	*	-5

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Lake Charles 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. Lake Charles had 8,040 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 9.0 percent of local area employment, more than double the 3.9-percent national share. However, at \$20.40 per hour, the local average hourly wage for this occupational group was about 9 percent below the national wage of \$22.40.

With employment of 1,270, carpenters was among the largest occupation within the construction and extraction group, as were plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters (1,080) and construction laborers (1,030). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers, as well as structural iron and steel workers, with mean hourly wages of \$29.63 and \$25.67, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were carpenters helpers (\$13.29) and construction laborers (\$15.54). (Detailed occupational data for construction and extraction workers are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of all occupations see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29340.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 Lake Charles metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, structural iron and steel workers were employed at 8.0 times the national rate in Lake Charles, and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters, at 4.4 times the U.S. average. Both location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations. On the other hand, construction and building inspectors had a location quotient of 0.9 in Lake Charles, indicating that this 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, the Louisiana Workforce Commission.

Note

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. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. 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 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 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 Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,310 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.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 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 and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

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 **Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes in Louisiana.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at 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/current/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, Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Construction and extraction occupations	8,040	2.3	\$20.40	\$42,440
First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers	580	1.8	29.63	61,620
Brickmasons and blockmasons	30	0.9	17.93	37,300
Carpenters	1,270	3.1	18.78	39,060
Tile and marble setters	50	2.5	15.18	31,570
Cement masons and concrete finishers	260	2.6	21.04	43,760
Construction laborers	1,030	1.8	15.54	32,330
Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators	100	2.9	25.26	52,550
Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators	680	3.0	21.14	43,970
Drywall and ceiling tile installers	(5)	(5)	18.72	38,940
Electricians	840	2.3	22.76	47,350
Painters, construction and maintenance	220	1.6	16.11	33,500
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	1,080	4.4	21.84	45,430
Roofers	30	0.5	16.44	34,200
Sheet metal workers	(5)	(5)	21.26	44,230
Structural iron and steel workers	320	8.0	25.67	53,390
Helpers--carpenters	120	4.6	13.29	27,640
Helpers--electricians	100	2.1	15.52	32,280
Helpers--pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	200	6.0	13.00	27,050
Construction and building inspectors	50	0.9	(5)	(5)
Fence erectors	70	4.7	16.51	34,330
Roustabouts, oil and gas	110	2.3	16.25	33,800

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Lake Charles MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29340.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.