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SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas

Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest

Media contact: (972) 850-4800

## Occupational Employment and Wages in Lake Charles, May 2015

Workers in the Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.38 in May 2015, about 21 percent below the nationwide average of \$23.23, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including legal; computer and mathematical; and sales and related. Two groups—including production workers—had wages that were measurably higher than their respective national averages, while wages in the two remaining groups were not statistically different from the U.S. averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups, including construction and extraction; installation, maintenance, and repair; and food preparation and serving related. Conversely, nine 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 2015**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage			Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
	United States	Lake Charles	United States	Lake Charles		
Total, all occupations .....	100.0%	100.0%	\$23.23	\$18.38	*	-21
Management .....	5.0	3.3	55.30	41.75	*	-25
Business and financial operations .....	5.1	2.1	35.48	26.43	*	-26
Computer and mathematical .....	2.9	0.4	41.43	27.00	*	-35
Architecture and engineering .....	1.8	1.8	39.89	40.76		2
Life, physical, and social science .....	0.8	0.9	34.24	28.67	*	-16
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.0	22.19	19.83	*	-11
Legal.....	0.8	0.4	49.74	24.35	*	-51
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	5.3	25.48	20.55	*	-19
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	0.4	27.39	16.79	*	-39
Healthcare practitioners and technical .....	5.8	6.0	37.40	27.53	*	-26
Healthcare support .....	2.9	3.2	14.19	11.27	*	-21
Protective service .....	2.4	3.4	21.45	15.67	*	-27
Food preparation and serving related .....	9.1	10.3	10.98	9.20	*	-16
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	3.3	13.02	10.62	*	-18
Personal care and service.....	3.1	4.2	12.33	10.30	*	-16
Sales and related .....	10.5	10.4	18.90	12.88	*	-32
Office and administrative support.....	15.8	12.9	17.47	14.20	*	-19
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	12.67	18.19	*	44

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 2015 - Continued**

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Lake Charles		United States	Lake Charles		Percent difference <sup>(1)</sup>
Construction and extraction.....	4.0	10.3	*	22.88	21.57	*	-6
Installation, maintenance, and repair .....	3.9	6.2	*	22.11	21.97		-1
Production .....	6.6	7.6	*	17.41	24.14	*	39
Transportation and material moving.....	6.9	6.5		16.90	15.25	*	-10

(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.

Note: \* 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 9,930 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 10.3 percent of local area employment, more than double the 4.0-percent national share. The local average hourly wage for this occupational group was \$21.57, about 6 percent below the national average of \$22.88.

Some of the larger detailed occupations within the construction and extraction group included carpenters (1,460), plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters (1,320), and construction laborers (1,180). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers, as well as plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters, with mean hourly wages of \$29.75 and \$24.48, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were electricians’ helpers (\$15.36) and construction laborers (\$15.46). (Detailed occupational data for construction and extraction workers are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations go to [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_29340.htm](http://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 nearly all of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, pile-driver operators were employed at 69.6 times the national average in Lake Charles, and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters, at 4.8 times the national rate. Both location quotients were among the highest in all metropolitan areas for these particular occupations.

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.

## 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 Lake Charles Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,326 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 **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](http://www.bls.gov/regions/southwest). 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/current/methods\\_statement.pdf](http://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 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 .....	9,930	2.6	\$21.57	\$44,860
First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers .....	600	1.7	29.75	61,880
Carpenters.....	1,460	3.3	21.09	43,870
Tile and marble setters .....	70	2.7	14.59	30,350
Cement masons and concrete finishers .....	310	2.7	22.90	47,630
Construction laborers .....	1,180	1.9	15.46	32,160
Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators .....	90	2.3	28.71	59,720
Pile-driver operators .....	180	69.6	19.64	40,840
Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators .....	760	3.0	23.35	48,560
Electricians .....	900	2.2	23.57	49,030
Painters, construction and maintenance .....	310	2.1	19.10	39,720
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters .....	1,320	4.8	24.48	50,920
Roofers.....	30	0.4	18.23	37,920
Structural iron and steel workers.....	210	4.7	24.48	50,930
Helpers-carpenters .....	210	8.0	16.63	34,590
Helpers-electricians.....	230	4.5	15.36	31,950
Helpers-pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters .....	350	8.9	15.94	33,160
Construction and building inspectors .....	80	1.2	33.91	70,540
Fence erectors .....	160	10.7	16.60	34,530
Roustabouts, oil and gas.....	260	5.1	20.97	43,610

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Lake Charles MSA, see [www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_29340.htm](http://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.