

News

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OCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN TUCSON: MAY 2008

Workers in the Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.06 during May 2008, roughly 6 percent below the nationwide average of \$20.32, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. Regional Commissioner Richard J. Holden noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 14 of the 22 major occupational groups, including management and sales and related. Only one group—personal care and service—had wages in the local area that were significantly above its respective national average. (For a comprehensive definition of the Tucson, Ariz. Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see Technical Note. For convenience, the metropolitan area is referred to as Tuscon throughout this release.)

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 9 of the 22 occupational groups, including architecture and engineering, healthcare support, and office and administrative support. Conversely, six groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including production, transportation and material moving, and sales and related. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of significance, May 2008

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Average hourly wage		
	United States	Tuscon	United States	Tuscon	
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$20.32	\$19.06	*
Management	4.6	4.9	48.23	41.43	*
Business and financial operations	4.5	3.7	31.12	27.20	*
Computer and mathematical science	2.4	2.4	35.82	35.51	
Architecture and engineering	1.9	3.1	34.34	33.72	
Life, physical, and social science	1.0	1.3	30.90	26.76	*
Community and social services	1.4	1.9	20.09	18.98	*
Legal	0.7	0.8	44.36	36.76	*
Education, training, and library	6.3	6.3	23.30	21.95	
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.2	24.36	20.49	*
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.2	5.9	32.64	32.84	
Healthcare support	2.8	3.7	12.66	12.19	*
Protective service	2.3	3.1	19.33	19.42	
Food preparation and serving related	8.5	8.8	9.72	9.56	
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.4	11.72	10.49	*
Personal care and service	2.5	2.7	11.59	12.20	*
Sales and related	10.6	9.7	17.35	13.91	*
Office and administrative support	17.2	18.1	15.49	14.41	*
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	11.32	10.73	*
Construction and extraction	4.8	5.7	20.36	17.26	*
Installation, maintenance, and repair	4.0	3.9	19.82	18.67	*
Production	7.3	4.3	15.54	15.37	*
Transportation and material moving	7.0	5.0	15.12	13.38	*

* The employment share 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, architecture and engineering, was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Tucson had 11,550 jobs in architecture and engineering accounting for 3.1 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the occupational group's 1.9-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$33.72, compared to the national wage of \$34.34.

With employment of 1,350, electrical engineers were the largest occupation within the architecture and engineering group, followed by mechanical engineers (1,190). Electronics engineers, except computer, had the highest average wage (\$47.19), followed by electrical engineers (\$42.44). At the lower end of the wage scale were landscape architects (\$20.69) and electro-mechanical technicians (\$20.96). (Detailed occupational data for the architecture and engineering group are presented in table B; a complete listing of detailed occupations is available at http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes_46060.htm.)

Table B. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, for architecture and engineering occupations, Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2008

Occupation	Employment ¹	Mean wages		Median hourly wages
		Hourly	Annual ²	
Architecture and engineering occupations	11,550	33.72	70,130	31.51
Architects, except landscape and naval	350	25.29	52,610	24.94
Landscape architects	140	20.69	43,040	15.37
Surveyors	430	21.22	44,150	21.16
Chemical engineers	70	37.24	77,450	32.00
Civil engineers	710	32.37	67,330	31.13
Electrical engineers	1,350	42.44	88,280	41.18
Electronics engineers, except computer	900	47.19	98,160	53.47
Environmental engineers	130	34.93	72,660	31.00
Health and safety engineers, except mining safety engineers and inspectors	110	29.45	61,260	29.57
Industrial engineers	980	37.94	78,920	37.99
Materials engineers	-- ³	24.30	50,540	21.51
Mechanical engineers	1,190	36.71	76,350	35.58
Mining and geological engineers, including mining safety engineers	320	32.17	66,910	32.01
Engineers, all other	310	32.71	68,040	32.29
Architectural and civil drafters	500	21.56	44,840	19.61
Electrical and electronics drafters	140	24.38	50,710	24.14
Mechanical drafters	180	22.68	47,180	21.80
Civil engineering technicians	300	23.47	48,820	24.01
Electrical and electronic engineering technicians	430	24.94	51,880	24.22
Electro-mechanical technicians	80	20.96	43,590	18.95
Environmental engineering technicians	70	22.24	46,260	21.45
Industrial engineering technicians	150	22.53	46,850	22.23
Mechanical engineering technicians	110	22.78	47,370	22.89
Engineering technicians, except drafters, all other	200	26.17	54,420	26.20
Surveying and mapping technicians	390	21.07	43,820	20.40

¹ 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.

² 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.

³ Estimate not released.

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 Arizona Department of Commerce, Research Administration. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and up to 801 non-military detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas.

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

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 also are surveyed, but their data are not included in this release. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 establishments in May and November of each year for a 3-year period. The nationwide response rate for the May 2008 estimates is 78.2 percent based on establishments and 74.3 percent based on employment. The survey included establishments sampled in the May 2008, November 2007, May 2007, November 2006, May 2006, and November 2005 semiannual panels. The sample in the Tucson Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,421 establishments with a response rate of 77 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm>.

Effective with this news release, the Occupational Employment Statistics program has switched the basis for their industry classification from the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to the 2007 NAICS. Historical data were not revised.

Metropolitan area definition

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated December 2005.

Tucson, Ariz. Metropolitan Statistical Area is composed of Pima County.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro9/home.htm. If you have additional questions, please contact the San Francisco Economic Analysis and Information Unit at 415-625-2270. 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.