

SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE
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**OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN
NEW ORLEANS-METAIRIE-KENNER – MAY 2010**

Workers in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.72 in May 2010, below the nationwide average of \$21.35, 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 measurably lower than their respective national averages in 16 of the 22 major occupational groups. Only four groups had significantly higher wages, one of which was transportation and material moving. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2010

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner	United States	New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner	
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$21.35	\$19.72	*
Management	4.7	5.0	50.69	44.13	*
Business and financial operations	4.8	3.9	32.54	27.12	*
Computer and mathematical	2.6	1.3	37.13	30.03	*
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.2	36.32	38.42	*
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.6	31.92	30.69	
Community and social service	1.5	1.3	20.76	19.13	*
Legal	0.8	1.3	46.60	38.00	*
Education, training, and library	6.7	5.3	24.25	22.65	*
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	1.3	25.14	20.14	*
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.7	34.27	31.57	*
Healthcare support	3.1	2.7	12.94	11.88	*
Protective service	2.5	3.2	20.43	17.87	*
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	10.1	10.21	9.67	*
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.1	12.16	10.66	*
Personal care and service	2.7	2.2	11.82	11.19	*
Sales and related	10.6	11.0	17.69	15.41	*
Office and administrative support	16.9	15.8	16.09	14.94	*
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1	11.70	16.16	*
Construction and extraction	4.0	5.3	21.09	18.25	*
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.9	20.58	20.09	
Production	6.5	5.3	16.24	19.23	*
Transportation and material moving	6.7	7.5	15.70	16.51	*

*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.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, New Orleans employment was more highly concentrated in 9 of the 22 occupational groups including food preparation and serving related, transportation and material moving, and healthcare practitioners and technical. Conversely, 10 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included office and administrative support as well as education, training, and library.

One occupational group – construction and extraction – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. New Orleans had 26,510 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 5.3 percent of local area employment, significantly above the national share of 4.0 percent. The average hourly wage for this occupational group was \$18.25, notably lower than the national wage of \$21.09.

With employment of 4,120, construction laborers was the largest occupation within the construction and extraction group, followed by electricians (2,930) and carpenters (2,610). Among the higher-paying jobs were oil and gas rotary drill operators and first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers, with mean hourly wages of \$32.53 and \$27.85, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were electricians' helpers (\$11.72) and roofers' helpers (\$9.12). (Detailed occupational data for the construction and extraction group are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_35380.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 New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner metropolitan area above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, oil and gas derrick operators were employed at more than 4 times the national rate in New Orleans, and pile-driver operators, at over 17 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, construction and building inspectors had a location quotient of 0.8 in New Orleans, meaning the local employment share in this particular occupation was close to the national average.

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. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and nearly 800 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 New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner 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 are also 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 2010 survey was 78.2 percent based on establishments and 74.4 percent based on employment. May 2010 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2010, November 2009, May 2009, November 2008, May 2008, and November 2007. The sample in the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area included 3,743 establishments with a response rate of 77 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2010 OES estimates mark the first set of estimates based in part on data collected using the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. Nearly all the occupations in this release are 2010 SOC occupations; however, some are not. The May 2012 OES data will reflect the full set of detailed occupations in the 2010 SOC. For a list of all occupations, including 2010 SOC occupations, and how data collected on two structures were combined, see the OES Frequently Asked Questions online at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm#Ques41.

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 **New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, La., Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes in Louisiana.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro6. If you have additional questions, contact the Southwest Information Office at 972-850-4800. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2010

Occupation	Employment		Mean wage	
	Level ¹	Location quotient ²	Hourly	Annual
Construction and Extraction Occupations	26,510	1.3	\$18.25	\$37,970
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	2,370	1.3	27.85	57,930
Brickmasons and Blockmasons	170	0.6	20.01	41,630
Carpenters	2,610	1.1	18.12	37,690
Carpet Installers	70	0.7	18.48	38,430
Floor Layers, Except Carpet, Wood, and Hard Tiles	50	1.4	12.98	26,990
Tile and Marble Setters	60	0.4	16.96	35,270
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	490	0.9	20.37	42,370
Construction Laborers	4,120	1.3	13.15	27,360
Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators	90	0.4	17.94	37,320
Pile-Driver Operators	290	17.5	15.36	31,950
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	1,940	1.5	18.97	39,470
Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	410	1.2	16.19	33,670
Electricians	2,930	1.4	20.94	43,560
Glaziers	220	1.3	16.01	33,310
Insulation Workers, Mechanical	190	1.7	18.17	37,790
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	1,240	1.6	16.93	35,220
Pipelayers	120	0.6	15.12	31,450
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	2,340	1.6	20.12	41,850
Plasterers and Stucco Masons	50	0.5	16.70	34,730
Reinforcing Iron and Rebar Workers	³	³	18.74	38,970
Roofers	270	0.7	18.93	39,370
Sheet Metal Workers	740	1.4	17.47	36,330
Structural Iron and Steel Workers	460	2.0	16.30	33,900
Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, & Tile & Marble	130	1.1	12.41	25,810
Helpers--Carpenters	370	2.0	11.82	24,580
Helpers--Electricians	470	1.6	11.72	24,380
Helpers--Painters, Paperhangers, Plasterers, and Stucco Masons	110	2.2	13.76	28,620
Helpers--Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	600	2.6	11.91	24,770
Helpers--Roofers	³	³	9.12	18,960
Helpers, Construction Trades, All Other	390	5.0	13.76	28,620
Construction and Building Inspectors	280	0.8	25.39	52,820
Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	190	1.3	13.88	28,870
Highway Maintenance Workers	³	³	13.67	28,440
Construction and Related Workers, All Other*	70	0.4	18.81	39,120
Derrick Operators, Oil and Gas	300	4.4	25.01	52,030
Rotary Drill Operators, Oil and Gas	150	1.8	32.53	67,670
Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas, and Mining	410	2.8	17.95	37,330
Roustabouts, Oil and Gas	520	2.7	16.05	33,390

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 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.

³ Estimate not released.

* This occupation has the same title, but not necessarily the same content, as the 2010 SOC occupation.