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**OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN
GRAND RAPIDS-WYOMING, MAY 2010**

Workers in the Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.72 in May 2010, roughly 8 percent below the nationwide average of \$21.35, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that, after testing for statistical significance, no wages in the local area were significantly higher than their respective national averages in 22 major occupational groups. Eleven groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including computer and mathematical, architecture and engineering, and business and financial operations.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 2 of the 22 occupational groups: production, and transportation and material moving. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including education, training, and library; construction and extraction; 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 Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2010

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Average hourly wage	
	United States	Grand Rapids	United States	Grand Rapids
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$21.35	\$19.72 *
Management	4.7	4.1 *	50.69	46.68 *
Business and financial operations	4.8	4.5 *	32.54	28.54 *
Computer and mathematical	2.6	1.8 *	37.13	29.88 *
Architecture and engineering	1.8	2.3	36.32	30.70 *
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.5 *	31.92	28.35 *
Community and social service	1.5	1.5	20.76	20.22
Legal	0.8	0.5 *	46.60	42.34 *
Education, training, and library	6.7	5.3 *	24.25	21.93 *
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	1.3	25.14	20.86 *
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.1	34.27	32.05
Healthcare support	3.1	3.3	12.94	12.88
Protective service	2.5	1.6 *	20.43	20.41
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	8.0 *	10.21	9.64 *
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.0	12.16	12.32
Personal care and service	2.7	2.1 *	11.82	11.26 *
Sales and related	10.6	10.2	17.69	17.73
Office and administrative support	16.9	16.3	16.09	15.85
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	11.70	12.27
Construction and extraction	4.0	2.8 *	21.09	20.18 *
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.4	20.58	20.07
Production	6.5	12.4 *	16.24	16.20
Transportation and material moving	6.7	7.8 *	15.70	15.61

* 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—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Grand Rapids-Wyoming had 44,600 jobs in production, accounting for 12.4 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.5-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$16.20, compared to the national wage of \$16.24.

With employment of 6,460, team assemblers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (3,310) and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers (2,500). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers and tool and die makers, with mean hourly wages of \$28.01 and \$24.83, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$10.45) and helpers--production workers (\$10.51). (Detailed occupational data for production are presented in table 1; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_24340.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 Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, tool and die makers were employed at 8.7 times the national rate in Grand Rapids, and welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders, at 5.1 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, laundry and dry-cleaning workers had a location quotient of 1.0 in Grand Rapids, 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, the Michigan Department of Technology, Management & Budget. 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 Grand Rapids 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 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 Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,732 establishments with a response rate of 75 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 **Grand Rapids-Wyoming, Mich. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Barry, Ionia, Kent, and Newaygo Counties.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro5/home.htm. If you have additional questions, contact the Chicago Economic Analysis and Information Unit at (312) 353-1880. 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.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2010

Occupation	Employment		Mean Wages	
	Level ⁽¹⁾	Location quotient ⁽²⁾	Hourly	Annual
Production occupations	44,600	1.9	\$16.20	\$33,700
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	2,500	1.6	28.01	58,250
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	260	0.5	15.05	31,310
Electromechanical equipment assemblers	150	1.1	[3]	[3]
Engine and other machine assemblers	310	3.3	15.52	32,270
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	280	1.2	16.48	34,280
Team assemblers	6,460	2.5	14.63	30,420
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	2,690	3.8	15.87	33,000
Bakers	310	0.8	12.23	25,430
Butchers and meat cutters	[3]	[3]	14.71	30,590
Meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers	380	0.8	11.66	24,250
Food batchmakers	630	2.3	14.68	30,530
Food cooking machine operators and tenders	300	3.3	13.85	28,820
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	1,160	3.3	17.98	37,400
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	150	3.3	20.49	42,620
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	460	2.1	13.98	29,080
Forging machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	200	3.1	15.73	32,730
Rolling machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	400	4.5	16.58	34,490
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	2,050	4.0	16.74	34,810
Drilling and boring machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	[3]	[3]	14.15	29,430
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	330	1.7	15.34	31,900
Lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	60	0.5	14.65	30,460
Milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	[3]	[3]	14.37	29,890
Machinists	1,940	2.0	17.02	35,400
Model makers, metal and plastic	[3]	[3]	21.90	45,560
Molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	1,370	4.2	13.50	28,070
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	220	1.1	14.54	30,250
Tool and die makers	1,630	8.7	24.83	51,650
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	680	0.8	16.54	34,410
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	560	5.1	16.86	35,060
Heat treating equipment setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	30	0.7	15.08	31,380
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	260	3.0	15.54	32,320
Metal workers and plastic workers, all other	100	1.5	15.99	33,250
Prepress technicians and workers	110	0.8	15.83	32,920
Printing press operators	560	1.0	14.40	29,960
Print binding and finishing workers	370	2.4	14.49	30,130
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	560	1.0	10.45	21,730

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Grand Rapids-Wyoming Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2010-continued

Occupation	Employment		Mean Wages	
	Level ^[1]	Location quotient ^[2]	Hourly	Annual
Sewing machine operators	190	0.5	\$11.64	\$24,220
Tailors, dressmakers, and custom sewers	[3]	[3]	14.34	29,820
Textile cutting machine setters, operators, and tenders	30	0.7	15.08	31,370
Upholsterers	100	1.2	14.94	31,080
Textile, apparel, and furnishings workers, all other	70	1.9	10.98	22,830
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	150	0.6	15.87	33,010
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood	100	0.9	13.43	27,940
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing	800	4.6	15.62	32,490
Stationary engineers and boiler operators	[3]	[3]	30.39	63,220
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	200	0.7	19.63	40,830
Separating, filtering, clarifying, precipitating, and still machine setters, operators, and tenders	[3]	[3]	21.22	44,140
Crushing, grinding, and polishing machine setters, operators, and tenders	210	2.2	15.76	32,780
Grinding and polishing workers, hand	80	1.0	13.58	28,250
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	1,400	4.0	14.89	30,970
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	270	1.6	15.46	32,160
Extruding, forming, pressing, and compacting machine setters, operators, and tenders	[3]	[3]	16.36	34,040
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	3,310	2.9	15.87	33,020
Dental laboratory technicians	150	1.3	16.15	33,600
Medical appliance technicians	[3]	[3]	20.57	42,790
Ophthalmic laboratory technicians	110	1.4	17.83	37,090
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	1,520	1.6	12.59	26,180
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	480	2.2	15.25	31,730
Painting, coating, and decorating workers	50	0.7	13.17	27,400
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	120	0.8	12.53	26,070
Cleaning, washing, and metal pickling equipment operators and tenders	60	1.2	13.52	28,110
Molders, shapers, and casters, except metal and plastic	120	1.3	18.06	37,570
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders	470	1.9	16.43	34,180
Helpers--production workers	2,160	1.9	10.51	21,850
Production workers, all other	2,440	3.8	14.41	29,970

[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.