

MIDWEST INFORMATION OFFICE
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**OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN
ROCKFORD, ILL., MAY 2010**

Workers in the Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.73 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, wages in the local area were significantly higher than their respective national averages in 4 of the 22 major occupational groups, including construction and extraction, production, and health care support. Nine groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media; computer and mathematical; and protective service.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 3 of the 22 occupational groups: production, transportation and material moving, and healthcare practitioners and technical. Conversely, 13 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including office and administrative support, computer and mathematical, and business and financial operations. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

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

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Average hourly wage	
	United States	Rockford	United States	Rockford
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$21.35	\$19.73 *
Management	4.7	4.5	50.69	42.53 *
Business and financial operations	4.8	3.8 *	32.54	27.09 *
Computer and mathematical	2.6	1.0 *	37.13	28.75 *
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.4 *	36.32	32.42 *
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.2 *	31.92	30.60
Community and social service	1.5	1.5	20.76	19.93
Legal	0.8	0.4 *	46.60	54.23
Education, training, and library	6.7	6.7	24.25	23.78
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.4	1.0 *	25.14	18.48 *
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.8 *	34.27	34.03
Healthcare support	3.1	3.1	12.94	13.52 *
Protective service	2.5	1.6 *	20.43	16.60 *
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	8.4	10.21	10.05
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	2.8 *	12.16	12.43
Personal care and service	2.7	2.1 *	11.82	10.83 *
Sales and related	10.6	9.6 *	17.69	15.97 *
Office and administrative support	16.9	14.4 *	16.09	14.90 *
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	[1] *	11.70	15.06 *
Construction and extraction	4.0	3.1 *	21.09	26.38 *
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.8	20.58	21.17
Production	6.5	13.8 *	16.24	17.23 *
Transportation and material moving	6.7	10.0 *	15.70	16.11

* 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.

[1] Indicates a value of less than 0.05 percent.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Rockford had 18,860 jobs in production, accounting for 13.8 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.5-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$17.23, measurably above the national wage of \$16.24.

With employment of 3,720, team assemblers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by machinists (2,470) and inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers (1,110). Among the highest paying jobs were first-line supervisors of production and operating workers; and tool and die makers with mean hourly wages of \$27.88 and \$21.44, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$9.94) and bakers (\$10.16). (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_40420.htm)

Location quotients allow for the exploration of a metropolitan area's occupational make-up 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 Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the production group. For instance, lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders of metal and plastic were employed at 8.0 times the national rate in Rockford, and tool and die makers, at 7.8 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, printing press operators had a location quotient of 0.9 in Rockford, 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 Illinois Department of Employment Security. 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 Rockford 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 Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,710 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 **Rockford, Ill. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Boone and Winnebago 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, Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2010

Occupation	Employment		Mean Wages	
	Level ^[1]	Location quotient ^[2]	Hourly	Annual
Production occupations	18,860	2.1	\$17.23	\$35,830
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,060	1.8	27.88	58,000
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	90	0.4	13.93	28,970
Engine and other machine assemblers	40	1.1	18.76	39,020
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	160	1.8	18.72	38,930
Team assemblers	3,720	3.7	17.12	35,600
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	560	2.1	16.96	35,270
Bakers	70	0.5	10.16	21,130
Butchers and meat cutters	170	1.3	13.67	28,430
Slaughterers and meat packers	40	0.4	11.54	24,010
Food cooking machine operators and tenders	[3]	[3]	12.26	25,510
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	580	4.3	18.19	37,840
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	70	3.8	20.01	41,620
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	50	0.6	16.37	34,050
Forging machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	[3]	[3]	20.63	42,920
Cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	780	4.0	14.74	30,660
Drilling and boring machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	30	1.3	14.28	29,710
Grinding, lapping, polishing, and buffing machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	290	3.9	15.87	33,000
Lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	350	8.0	17.31	36,000
Milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	160	7.2	19.66	40,890
Machinists	2,470	6.5	17.04	35,440
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	[3]	[3]	16.61	34,540
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	340	4.6	13.47	28,020
Tool and die makers	560	7.8	21.44	44,590
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	400	1.2	17.39	36,180
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	60	1.5	17.61	36,640
Heat treating equipment setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	140	7.1	16.39	34,100
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	[3]	[3]	13.13	27,320
Tool grinders, filers, and sharpeners	30	2.5	17.34	36,080
Metal workers and plastic workers, all other	100	3.9	15.88	33,030
Prepress technicians and workers	110	2.2	16.33	33,960
Printing press operators	180	0.9	18.11	37,660
Print binding and finishing workers	[3]	[3]	15.24	31,700
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	260	1.2	9.94	20,680
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials	[3]	[3]	9.34	19,430
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	80	0.8	16.84	35,030
Sawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, wood	[3]	[3]	11.52	23,970
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing	30	0.5	14.67	30,510
Stationary engineers and boiler operators	[3]	[3]	31.63	65,800
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	50	0.4	23.06	47,960
Crushing, grinding, and polishing machine setters, operators, and tenders	[3]	[3]	17.87	37,170
Grinding and polishing workers, hand	50	1.7	14.24	29,610
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	200	1.5	17.51	36,430
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	100	1.4	15.36	31,940
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	1,110	2.5	18.24	37,930
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	480	1.3	13.55	28,170
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	330	4.0	14.35	29,850
Painters, transportation equipment	130	2.7	20.23	42,070
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	90	1.4	10.77	22,410
Cleaning, washing, and metal pickling equipment operators and tenders	30	1.5	11.38	23,670
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders	120	1.2	14.24	29,620
Helpers--production workers	690	1.6	13.22	27,490
Production workers, all other	310	1.2	16.56	34,440

[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.