

# News

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## COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN UTAH: FIRST QUARTER 2008

### Utah County records fastest growth in wages Salt Lake County has highest average weekly wage

The average weekly wage in Utah County rose 4.3 percent from the first quarter of 2007 to the first quarter of 2008, well above the 2.4-percent national increase and the largest increase among Utah's four counties with employment of 75,000 or more (as measured by the 2007 annual average employment), according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Salt Lake County's 3.0-percent wage growth also exceeded the national average and was the second fastest in the State. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that Salt Lake County had the highest average weekly wage in Utah at \$811; even so, that level was below the national average of \$905. (See table A.)

Two of the four large counties in Utah recorded employment growth that surpassed the national average of 0.4 percent from March 2007 to March 2008. Salt Lake County and Weber County reported employment growth rates of 1.9 and 1.6 percent, respectively. Among the four large counties, Salt Lake

**Table A. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and the 4 largest counties in Utah, first quarter 2008(2)**

Area	Employment		Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	March 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2007-08(5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (4)	Percent change, first quarter 2007-08 (5)	National ranking by percent change (4)
United States (6)	134,761.1	0.4	\$905	--	2.4	--
Utah	1,220.2	1.4	718	37	3.2	27
Davis, Utah	101.7	-0.6	671	305	2.1	204
Salt Lake, Utah	587.6	1.9	811	160	3.0	136
Utah, Utah	173.1	-0.3	651	314	4.3	52
Weber, Utah	95.0	1.6	617	323	2.5	177

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

(5) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(6) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

## Average Weekly Wages in Utah, First Quarter 2008 (continued)

County had the highest March 2008 employment level (587,600) and Weber County, the lowest (95,000).

### Wage levels in large counties

Salt Lake County's average weekly wage of \$811 was the highest among the four large counties in Utah and placed it in the top half (160<sup>th</sup>) among the 334 largest counties in the nation in the first quarter of 2008. However, the county's wage level was \$94 below the national average of \$905. The three remaining large counties recorded below-average wage levels ranking them in the bottom 10 percent nationwide--Davis County (\$671, ranking 305<sup>th</sup>), Utah (\$651, 314<sup>th</sup>), and Weber (\$617, 323<sup>rd</sup>).

Average weekly wages were higher than the national average in 92 of the largest 334 U.S. counties. New York County, N.Y., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$2,805. Fairfield, Conn., was second with an average weekly wage of \$1,905, followed by Somerset, N.J. (\$1,765), Suffolk, Mass. (\$1,708), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,639). Four of the 10 counties with the highest wages in the U.S. were located in the greater New York metropolitan area (New York, N.Y., Fairfield, Conn., Somerset, N.J., and Hudson, N.J.), 3 others were located in or around the San Francisco area (San Francisco, Santa Clara, and San Mateo, all in California), while 2 more were located in or around the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (Washington, D.C. and Arlington, Va.). Rounding out the top 10 was Suffolk County, Mass., part of the Boston metropolitan area.

Of the large counties in the United States, 241 had an average weekly wage below that for the nation in the first quarter of 2008. The lowest average weekly wage was reported in Cameron County, Texas (\$523), followed by the counties of Hidalgo, Texas (\$532), Horry, S.C. (\$534), Webb, Texas (\$554), and Yakima, Wash. (\$587).

### Wage changes in large counties

Three of Utah's four large counties recorded wage growth greater than or close to the national increase of 2.4 percent from the first quarter of 2007 to the first quarter of 2008. Utah County's 4.3-percent wage gain was the largest increase in the State, ranking 52<sup>nd</sup> in the nation among the 334 largest counties, followed by Salt Lake County (3.0 percent/136<sup>th</sup>). Weber County recorded wage growth close to the national average (2.5 percent/177<sup>th</sup>) while Davis County's gain was less than average (2.1 percent/ 204<sup>th</sup>).

Among the 334 largest counties in the United States, Westmoreland County, Pa., near Pittsburgh, led the nation in average weekly wage growth with an increase of 14.9 percent from the first quarter of 2007. Williamson, Texas, was second with growth of 10.8 percent, followed by the counties of Somerset, N.J. (9.0 percent), San Luis Obispo, Calif. (8.3 percent), and Jefferson, Texas (7.9 percent).

Thirty-four large counties experienced over-the-year declines in average weekly wages. Trumbull, Ohio, led the nation in declines (-17.2 percent), followed by the counties of Saginaw, Mich. (-4.4 percent), Rockingham, N.H. (-3.9 percent), Fairfield, Conn. (-3.8 percent), and Mecklenburg, N.C. (-3.4 percent).

## Average Weekly Wages in Utah, First Quarter 2008 (continued)

### State average weekly wages

At the state level, Utah's weekly wage of \$718 was about 20 percent below the national average in the first quarter of 2008, ranking 37<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. (See table 1.) Four neighboring states had average weekly wages higher than Utah—Colorado (\$920/10<sup>th</sup>), Nevada (\$839/21<sup>st</sup>), Arizona (\$820/22<sup>nd</sup>), and Wyoming (\$779/25<sup>th</sup>). Two other neighboring states had average weekly wages close to or lower than Utah's—New Mexico (\$717/38<sup>th</sup>) and Idaho (\$635/48<sup>th</sup>).

Utah's wage growth of 3.2 percent from the first quarter of 2007 to the first quarter of 2008 outpaced the national average, ranking 27<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Across the nation, Wyoming had the fastest wage growth (6.7 percent) while Connecticut was the only state to record a decline in average weekly wages (-0.6 percent) over the year.

### Employment in large counties

Among the four large counties in Utah, employment was highest in Salt Lake County at 587,600 and lowest in Weber County at 95,000 in March 2008. Both counties' over-the-year employment growth rates exceeded the national average of 0.4 percent: Salt Lake County rose 1.9 percent (ranking 48<sup>th</sup> among the 334 largest counties nationwide) and Weber County grew 1.6 percent (ranking 60<sup>th</sup>). Utah and Davis Counties recorded employment declines of 0.3 and 0.6 percent, respectively.

Of the 334 largest counties in the United States, 146 had over-the-year rates of growth in employment above the national average of 0.4 percent in March 2008 and 178 experienced changes below the national average. Orleans County, La., which includes the city of New Orleans, recorded the largest over-the-year percentage increase in employment with a gain of 5.0 percent. Fort Bend, Texas, and Montgomery, Texas, tied for the next largest increase, 4.7 percent, followed by the counties of Williamson, Texas (4.6 percent), and Douglas, Colo., and Potter, Texas (4.1 percent each).

### Employment and wage levels in small counties

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 25 small counties in Utah, those with employment of less than 75,000 as measured by the 2007 annual average employment. These counties accounted for 21.5 percent of statewide employment. Among the small counties, Washington County reported the highest job total in March 2008 with 51,700 employees, followed by Cache County (47,600), Summit County (25,700), and Box Elder County (21,100). Cache, Summit, and Box Elder Counties are all located in northern Utah, while Washington is located in the southwest corner of the State. Piute and Daggett Counties had the fewest jobs, 300 and 400, respectively. (See table 2.)

Uintah County had the highest average weekly wage among Utah's small counties at \$819 in the first quarter of 2008, \$86 below the nationwide average. Piute County, with the smallest number of jobs in the State, recorded the lowest average weekly wage at \$432—less than half of the national average.

When all 29 counties in Utah are considered, two counties had average weekly wages above \$800 and 11 counties posted average weekly wages in the \$600 to \$799 range. Most of the counties with average weekly wages above \$600 were located in the northern half of the State. Eight counties reported average weekly wages below \$500 in the first quarter of 2008 and were predominantly located in the southern half of Utah.

## Average Weekly Wages in Utah, First Quarter 2008 (continued)

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.1 million employer reports cover 134.8 million full- and part-time jobs. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing total quarterly wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or States for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas, counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>; however, data in QCEW press releases have been adjusted (see Technical Note below) and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

### Additional statistics and other information

An annual bulletin, *Employment and Wages*, features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2006 edition of this bulletin contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2007 version of this news release. As with the 2005 edition, this edition includes the data on a CD for enhanced access and usability with the printed booklet containing selected graphic representations of QCEW data; the data tables themselves have been published exclusively in electronic formats as PDFs. *Employment and Wages Annual Averages, 2006* is available in a PDF on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn06.htm>.

QCEW-based news releases issued by other regional offices have been placed at one convenient BLS Web site location, <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewregional.htm>.

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.

For personal assistance or further information on the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Kansas City Information Office at 816-285-7000 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

### **County Changes for the 2008 County Employment and Wages News Releases: Six Counties Added**

Large counties are defined as having employment levels of 75,000 or greater. For 2008, six counties have been added: Shelby, Ala., Boone, Ky., St. Tammany, La., Yellowstone, Mont., Warren, Ohio, and Potter, Texas.

#### TECHNICAL NOTE

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review, and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

**Table 1. Covered (1) employment and wages by state, first quarter 2008(2)**

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	March 2008 (thousands)	Percent change, March 2007-08	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, first quarter 2007-08	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	134,761.1	0.4	\$905	-	2.4	-
Alabama	1,947.0	-0.2	740	34	3.2	27
Alaska	303.0	1.0	866	16	4.2	11
Arizona	2,639.7	-1.3	820	22	2.4	34
Arkansas	1,178.4	-0.1	667	46	4.1	12
California	15,561.5	0.1	1,008	6	2.1	41
Colorado	2,300.0	1.7	920	10	3.6	16
Connecticut	1,683.9	1.2	1,254	3	-0.6	51
Delaware	418.4	0.5	987	7	0.1	49
District of Columbia	680.8	1.1	1,488	1	4.3	9
Florida	7,918.6	-2.2	777	26	1.8	43
Georgia	4,060.9	0.1	847	20	1.3	44
Hawaii	628.1	0.2	773	28	3.5	19
Idaho	645.3	0.2	635	48	0.3	48
Illinois	5,796.1	0.1	980	8	2.6	33
Indiana	2,858.7	-0.7	757	33	2.4	34
Iowa	1,469.8	0.9	710	40	3.6	16
Kansas	1,363.2	1.0	737	35	2.4	34
Kentucky	1,794.0	0.1	714	39	2.4	34
Louisiana	1,887.3	1.3	765	30	4.8	4
Maine	584.1	0.5	701	42	3.5	19
Maryland	2,530.3	0.0	963	9	2.8	31
Massachusetts	3,203.1	0.9	1,143	4	3.3	23
Michigan	4,058.8	-1.8	857	18	0.9	47
Minnesota	2,644.8	0.6	908	12	4.0	13
Mississippi	1,138.2	0.8	634	49	3.3	23
Missouri	2,708.0	0.0	768	29	3.5	19
Montana	432.4	0.9	625	51	4.3	9
Nebraska	912.2	1.4	687	44	3.2	27
Nevada	1,266.3	-1.2	839	21	4.7	5
New Hampshire	621.2	0.3	863	17	3.4	22
New Jersey	3,939.9	0.5	1,133	5	3.3	23
New Mexico	823.8	0.6	717	38	4.7	5
New York	8,555.0	1.3	1,399	2	0.1	49
North Carolina	4,069.1	0.9	788	24	1.3	44
North Dakota	343.3	2.6	652	47	6.2	2
Ohio	5,189.1	-1.0	798	23	1.0	46
Oklahoma	1,560.0	1.6	707	41	4.7	5
Oregon	1,713.1	0.3	776	27	2.9	30
Pennsylvania	5,608.8	0.5	869	15	2.4	34
Rhode Island	464.8	-1.5	851	19	2.3	39
South Carolina	1,888.3	0.1	695	43	2.8	31
South Dakota	389.4	2.0	632	50	5.2	3
Tennessee	2,746.4	0.6	761	31	3.3	23
Texas	10,420.8	2.8	903	13	3.6	16
Utah	1,220.2	1.4	718	37	3.2	27
Vermont	300.8	-0.3	735	36	4.4	8
Virginia	3,653.5	0.2	918	11	2.0	42
Washington	2,928.6	2.1	899	14	3.7	15
West Virginia	700.3	0.3	679	45	4.0	13
Wisconsin	2,734.3	0.2	760	32	2.2	40
Wyoming	277.2	2.9	779	25	6.7	1
Puerto Rico	1,004.5	-1.6	489	(5)	2.7	(5)
Virgin Islands	46.5	1.1	708	(5)	3.4	(5)

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(5) Data not included in the national ranking.

**Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Utah, first quarter 2008 (2)**

Area	Employment March 2008 (thousands)	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	134,761.1	\$905
Utah	1,220.2	718
Beaver	2.5	496
Box Elder	21.1	780
Cache	47.6	546
Carbon	9.0	667
Daggett	0.4	627
Davis	101.7	671
Duchesne	8.0	785
Emery	3.9	715
Garfield	2.0	458
Grand	4.5	502
Iron	16.3	499
Juab	3.3	529
Kane	2.8	469
Millard	4.4	591
Morgan	1.9	650
Piute	0.3	432
Rich	0.6	470
Salt Lake	587.6	811
San Juan	4.1	540
Sanpete	7.3	493
Sevier	8.0	538
Summit	25.7	610
Tooele	15.3	736
Uintah	14.5	819
Utah	173.1	651
Wasatch	6.5	550
Washington	51.7	557
Wayne	1.0	491
Weber	95.0	617

(1) Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

(2) Data are preliminary.

(3) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.