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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN ROCKFORD, ILL. MSA — MAY 2011

Workers in the Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$19.77 in May 2011, about 9 percent below the nationwide average of \$21.74, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. 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 2 of the 22 major occupational groups: construction and extraction; and production. Eleven groups had significantly lower wages than their respective national averages, including management; computer and mathematical occupations; 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 office and administrative support; computer and mathematical occupations; 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 2011

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Rockford	United States	Rockford	Percent difference ^[1]
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$21.74	\$19.77 *	-9
Management	4.8	4.5	51.64	43.80 *	-15
Business and financial operations	4.8	3.4 *	33.05	26.54 *	-20
Computer and mathematical	2.7	1.0 *	37.85	30.06 *	-21
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.6	37.08	31.61 *	-15
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.2 *	32.44	31.15	-4
Community and social service	1.5	1.3 *	21.07	19.20 *	-9
Legal	0.8	0.4 *	47.30	47.17	[3]
Education, training, and library	6.6	6.5	24.46	24.06	-2
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.1	25.89	18.05 *	-30
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.9	7.0	34.97	33.51	-4
Healthcare support	3.1	3.3	13.16	13.43	2
Protective service	2.5	1.7	20.54	15.17 *	-26
Food preparation and serving related	8.7	8.2 *	10.30	9.89 *	-4
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	2.7 *	12.29	12.31	[3]
Personal care and service	2.8	2.3 *	11.84	10.74 *	-9
Sales and related	10.6	9.9 *	18.04	16.66 *	-8
Office and administrative support	16.7	14.4 *	16.40	15.02 *	-8
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	[2]	11.68	[2]	[2]
Construction and extraction	3.9	2.8 *	21.46	27.18 *	27
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.8	20.86	21.16	1
Production	6.5	14.7 *	16.45	17.26 *	5
Transportation and material moving	6.7	9.4 *	15.96	15.93	[3]

* 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] A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Rockford is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

[2] Estimate not released.

[3] Indicates a value of less than 1.0 percent.

One occupational group—production—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Rockford had 20,420 jobs in production, accounting for 14.7 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 6.5-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$17.26, measurably above the national wage of \$16.45.

With employment of 4,650, team assemblers was the largest occupation within the production group, followed by machinists (2,650) and production worker helpers (1,250). Among the higher paying jobs were stationary engineers and boiler operators; and first-line supervisors of production and operating workers, with mean hourly wages of \$31.86 and \$27.99, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were pressers of textiles, garments, and related materials (\$9.49) and laundry and dry-cleaning workers (\$10.07). (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 an 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, tool and die makers were employed at 8.7 times the national rate in Rockford, and milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders of metal and plastic, at 7.7 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers had a location quotient of 1.0 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 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 the national estimates. 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 2011 survey was 77.3 percent based on establishments and 73.3 percent based on employment. May 2011 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2011, November 2010, May 2010, November 2009, May 2009, and November 2008. The sample in the Rockford Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,713 establishments with a response rate of 78 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The May 2011 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 2011

Occupation ^[1]	Employment		Mean Wages	
	Level ^[2]	Location quotient ^[3]	Hourly	Annual ^[4]
Production occupations	20,420	2.3	\$17.26	\$35,900
First-line supervisors of production and operating workers	1,130	1.9	27.99	58,210
Electrical and electronic equipment assemblers	70	0.4	17.19	35,760
Electromechanical equipment assemblers	[5]	[5]	22.34	46,460
Structural metal fabricators and fitters	80	0.9	18.97	39,460
Team assemblers	4,650	4.5	17.42	36,240
Assemblers and fabricators, all other	370	1.3	13.76	28,620
Bakers	90	0.6	10.42	21,670
Butchers and meat cutters	110	0.8	14.32	29,780
Computer-controlled machine tool operators, metal and plastic	600	4.3	19.20	39,930
Computer numerically controlled machine tool programmers, metal and plastic	100	4.4	19.90	41,390
Extruding and drawing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	80	1.0	16.70	34,730
Forging machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	130	5.4	20.41	42,450
Rolling machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	70	1.9	18.03	37,500
Cutting, punching, press machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	730	3.7	14.73	30,630
Drilling and boring machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	60	2.4	15.26	31,740
Grinding lapping polishing buffing machine tool setters operators tenders, metal and plastic	410	5.4	15.43	32,090
Lathe and turning machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	320	7.4	17.97	37,380
Milling and planing machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	180	7.7	19.31	40,150
Machinists	2,650	6.7	16.74	34,820
Metal-refining furnace operators and tenders	[5]	[5]	17.70	36,820
Foundry mold and coremakers	50	4.0	13.75	28,600
Molding, coremaking, casting machine setters, operators, tenders, metal and plastic	[5]	[5]	20.62	42,900
Multiple machine tool setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	210	2.6	13.24	27,540
Tool and die makers	660	8.7	21.34	44,400
Welders, cutters, solderers, and brazers	360	1.0	18.07	37,590
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, and tenders	[5]	[5]	16.32	33,940
Heat treating equipment setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	120	5.2	15.99	33,270
Plating and coating machine setters, operators, and tenders, metal and plastic	120	3.5	12.24	25,450
Tool grinders, filers, and sharpeners	40	3.0	15.83	32,930
Metal workers and plastic workers, all other	100	4.1	18.02	37,470
Prepress technicians and workers	100	2.2	15.61	32,460
Printing press operators	110	0.6	19.02	39,560
Print binding and finishing workers	100	1.6	13.33	27,720
Laundry and dry-cleaning workers	250	1.2	10.07	20,950
Pressers, textile, garment, and related materials	[5]	[5]	9.49	19,730
Sewing machine operators	[5]	[5]	11.10	23,090
Cabinetmakers and bench carpenters	50	0.6	16.65	34,640
Woodworking machine setters, operators, and tenders, except sawing	100	1.6	11.46	23,840
Stationary engineers and boiler operators	[5]	[5]	31.86	66,270
Water and wastewater treatment plant and system operators	50	0.4	24.24	50,410
Crushing, grinding, and polishing machine setters, operators, and tenders	[5]	[5]	16.50	34,330
Grinding and polishing workers, hand	70	2.3	15.14	31,490
Mixing and blending machine setters, operators, and tenders	[5]	[5]	20.30	42,220
Cutting and slicing machine setters, operators, and tenders	100	1.6	14.93	31,050
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers	1,120	2.4	18.07	37,580
Dental laboratory technicians	40	1.0	18.50	38,480
Packaging and filling machine operators and tenders	440	1.1	15.74	32,730
Coating, painting, and spraying machine setters, operators, and tenders	370	4.5	14.28	29,700
Painters, transportation equipment	110	2.2	[5]	[5]
Photographic process workers and processing machine operators	60	1.0	11.43	23,780
Paper goods machine setters, operators, and tenders	80	0.8	15.45	32,130
Helpers--production workers	1,250	2.7	11.66	24,250
Production workers, all other	460	1.8	15.30	31,830

[1] For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Rockford, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_40420.htm.

[2] 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.

[3] 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.

[4] 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.

[5] Estimate not released.