

News

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OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN COLORADO SPRINGS: MAY 2008

Workers in the Colorado Springs, Colo. Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.29 during May 2008, similar to the nationwide average of \$20.32, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, only two occupational groups had wages in the local area that were measurably above their respective national averages—architecture and engineering and healthcare support. Wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 7 of the 22 major occupational groups, including management; legal; and education, training, and library. (For a comprehensive definition of the Colorado Springs, Colo. Metropolitan Statistical Area, please see Technical Note.)

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 7 of the 22 occupational groups, including computer and mathematical science, business and financial operations, and architecture and engineering. Conversely, six groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including management and production occupations. (See table A and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Colorado Springs Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2008

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Average hourly wage	
	United States	Colorado Springs	United States	Colorado Springs
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$20.32	\$20.29
Management	4.6	4.0 *	48.23	45.08 *
Business and financial operations	4.5	5.7 *	31.12	32.09
Computer and mathematical science	2.4	4.6 *	35.82	36.63
Architecture and engineering	1.9	2.9 *	34.34	35.62 *
Life, physical, and social science	1.0	0.8	30.90	30.64
Community and social services	1.4	1.3	20.09	19.11 *
Legal	0.7	0.5 *	44.36	33.28 *
Education, training, and library	6.3	6.8 *	23.30	20.29 *
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.6 *	24.36	21.87 *
Healthcare practitioner and technical	5.2	5.1	32.64	31.28
Healthcare support	2.8	2.2 *	12.66	13.56 *
Protective service	2.3	2.1	19.33	18.58
Food preparation and serving related	8.5	9.6 *	9.72	9.65
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.3	3.2	11.72	11.54
Personal care and service	2.5	2.6	11.59	11.89
Sales and related	10.6	11.1	17.35	16.53 *
Office and administrative support	17.2	18.2 *	15.49	15.51
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.1 *	11.32	12.23
Construction and extraction	4.8	5.1	20.36	19.62
Installation, maintenance, and repair	4.0	3.9	19.82	19.27
Production	7.3	4.2 *	15.54	15.50
Transportation and material moving	7.0	4.4 *	15.12	14.12 *

* The employment share 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, computer and mathematical science, was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Colorado Springs had 11,620 jobs in the computer and mathematical science group accounting for 4.6 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the occupational group's 2.4-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for the computer and mathematical science group locally was \$36.63, not significantly different from the national wage of \$35.82.

With employment of 2,430, computer systems software engineers were the largest occupation within the computer and mathematical science group, followed by computer applications software engineers (1,650), and computer support specialists (1,560). Four occupations had hourly wages exceeding \$40.00, led by computer and information research scientists averaging \$50.45 and computer systems software engineers at \$44.05. At the lower end of the wage scale were computer support specialists (\$23.15). (Detailed occupational data for the computer and mathematical science group are presented in table B; for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to http://www.bls.gov/oes/2008/may/oes_17820.htm.)

Table B. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, for computer and mathematical science occupations, Colorado Springs Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2008

Occupation	Employment[1]	Mean wages		Median hourly wages
		Hourly	Annual[2]	
Computer and mathematical science occupations	11,620	\$36.63	\$76,180	\$36.44
Computer and information scientists, research	80	50.45	104,930	52.37
Computer programmers	850	37.58	78,170	39.37
Computer software engineers, applications	1,650	43.19	89,830	42.05
Computer software engineers, systems software	2,430	44.05	91,630	43.79
Computer support specialists	1,560	23.15	48,160	22.06
Computer systems analysts	1,490	35.92	74,700	36.75
Database administrators	260	35.52	73,890	34.08
Network and computer systems administrators	1,250	34.05	70,830	34.29
Network systems and data communications analysts	910	30.80	64,070	28.45
Computer specialists, all other	910	35.19	73,190	34.97
Operations research analysts	200	43.61	90,710	44.88

[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] 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.

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 Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and up to 801 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 Colorado Springs 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 2008 survey was 78.2 percent based on establishments and 74.3 percent based on employment. The survey included establishments sampled in the May 2008, November 2007, May 2007, November 2006, May 2006, and November 2005 semiannual panels. The sample in the Colorado Springs Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,289 establishments with a response rate of 78 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm>.

Effective with this news release, the Occupational Employment Statistics program has switched the basis for their industry classification from the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to the 2007 NAICS. Historical data were not revised.

Metropolitan area definition

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated December 2005.

Colorado Springs Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of El Paso and Teller Counties in Colorado.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/ro7/home.htm. If you have additional questions, contact the Mountain-Plains Economic Analysis and Information Office at 816-285-7000. 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.