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COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN NORTH DAKOTA – THIRD QUARTER 2011

North Dakota's only large county, Cass, reported an average weekly wage of \$823 in the third quarter of 2011, 8.4 percent higher than one year ago, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2010 annual average employment.) Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 5.3 percent over the year to \$916 in the third quarter of 2011. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that though Cass County's wages were below the U.S. average, the state had eight smaller counties, those with employment below 75,000, where wages exceeded that for the nation. (See table 1.)

Employment in Cass County increased 3.9 percent from September 2010 to September 2011. Cass County's employment level of 104,200 accounted for 26.7 percent of total employment within the state. Nationally, employment rose 1.6 percent during this 12-month period, as 271 of the 322 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.5 percent of total U.S. employment, which stood at 130.5 million in September 2011.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 52 smaller counties in North Dakota. Average weekly wages varied widely across the state, with seven having wages above \$1,000 and three reporting wages under \$500. (See table 2.)

Large county wage changes

Cass County's 8.4-percent wage growth from the third quarter of 2010 to the third quarter of 2011 ranked 15th nationally. (See table 1.) Among the 322 largest counties, 315 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Lake County, Ohio, ranked first in average weekly wage growth, with an increase of 17.1 percent. Santa Clara, Calif., had the second largest increase (11.7 percent), followed by Oklahoma, Okla. (11.5 percent). Three counties experienced a decline in average weekly wages. Clay, Mo., had the largest wage decline with a loss of 2.3 percent over the year. Alachua, Fla. (-0.8 percent), and Leon, Fla. (-0.1 percent), had the second and third largest declines in average weekly wages.

Large county average weekly wages

Cass County's \$823 average wage placed in the bottom half among the 322 large counties, ranking 196th. Nationally, average weekly wages were higher than average in 109 of the 322 largest U.S. counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position among the highest-paid large counties with an average weekly wage of \$1,857. New York, N.Y., was second at \$1,647, followed by Arlington, Va. (\$1,550), Washington, D.C. (\$1,527), and San Francisco, Calif. (\$1,457).

Among the 212 large counties with an average weekly wage below the U.S. average in the third quarter of 2011, 2 had wages below \$600. Horry, S.C. (\$561) reported the lowest wage, followed by Cameron County, Texas (\$591).

Average weekly wages in North Dakota's smaller counties

Forty-four of the 52 counties in North Dakota with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$916. Eight small counties had above-average wages, all located in the western portion of the state. The highest wage was reported in Williams County at \$1,365, followed by Slope (\$1,303) and McKenzie (\$1,234). Logan County reported the lowest wage in the state, averaging \$438 in the third quarter of 2011. (See table 2.)

When all 53 counties in North Dakota were considered, 16 reported average weekly wages under \$600, 15 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 12 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 2 reported wages from \$800 to \$899, and 8 had wages of \$900 or more. (See chart 1.)

Additional statistics and other information

Quarterly data for states have been included in this release in table 3. For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the Technical Note or visit the QCEW Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2010 edition of this publication, which was published in November 2011, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2011 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2010* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm. The 2011 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available later in 2012.

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 Midwest Information Office in Chicago at (312) 353-1880 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CT.

Technical Note

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 covered 130.5 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total 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 (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the

BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the BLS Web site.

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 in the United States and the largest county in North Dakota, third quarter 2011(2)

Area	Employment			Average Weekly Wage (3)			
	September 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level (5)	Percent change, third quarter 2010-11 (4)	National ranking by percent change (5)
United States (6)	130,524.7	1.6	--	\$916	--	5.3	--
North Dakota	390.8	6.7	--	820	28	12.9	1
Cass, N.D.	104.2	3.9	12	823	196	8.4	15

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

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

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

Table 2. Covered (1) employment and wages in the United States and all counties in North Dakota, third quarter 2011 (2)

Area	Employment September 2011	Average weekly wage (3)	Area	Employment September 2011	Average weekly wage (3)
United States (4)	130,524,677	\$916			
North Dakota	390,832	820	McKenzie	5,567	\$1,234
Adams	953	643	McLean	3,437	798
Barnes	4,983	608	Mercer	4,844	1,089
Benson	2,722	707	Morton	10,435	704
Billings	598	653	Mountrail	5,556	1,072
Bottineau	2,742	707	Nelson	1,091	499
Bowman	1,740	746	Oliver	714	1,109
Burke	878	878	Pembina	3,976	734
Burleigh	52,900	780	Pierce	1,750	597
Cass	104,229	823	Ramsey	5,978	649
Cavalier	1,553	709	Ransom	2,200	574
Dickey	2,106	605	Renville	903	757
Divide	861	795	Richland	7,626	682
Dunn	2,106	1,122	Rolette	4,682	615
Eddy	668	544	Sargent	2,469	684
Emmons	1,043	540	Sheridan	273	465
Foster	1,680	669	Sioux	1,667	687
Golden Valley	655	558	Slope	199	1,303
Grand Forks	39,771	721	Stark	17,089	976
Grant	629	507	Steele	627	642
Griggs	963	567	Stutsman	10,792	695
Hettinger	699	599	Towner	776	581
Kidder	646	549	Traill	3,298	662
LaMoure	1,374	612	Walsh	5,445	594
Logan	636	438	Ward	31,693	785
McHenry	1,316	654	Wells	1,607	537
McIntosh	1,080	549	Williams	25,733	1,365

(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.

Table 3. Covered (1) employment and wages by state, third quarter 2011 (2)

State	Employment		Average weekly wage (3)			
	September 2011 (thousands)	Percent change, September 2010-11	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, third quarter 2010-11	National ranking by percent change
United States (4)	130,524.7	1.6	\$916	--	5.3	--
Alabama	1,823.2	0.5	803	33	3.7	48
Alaska	341.5	2.1	963	10	4.0	42
Arizona	2,391.6	2.1	860	21	4.9	27
Arkansas	1,151.0	0.4	715	47	4.5	36
California	14,686.3	1.5	1,051	6	6.8	3
Colorado	2,234.4	2.3	948	13	5.6	13
Connecticut	1,626.5	0.9	1,118	2	4.7	31
Delaware	406.1	0.2	949	12	5.4	19
District of Columbia	708.1	2.1	1,527	1	3.9	45
Florida	7,167.5	1.7	812	30	4.2	40
Georgia	3,799.6	1.3	867	20	5.3	20
Hawaii	593.6	1.2	836	23	4.0	42
Idaho	623.8	1.1	697	48	4.7	31
Illinois	5,629.1	1.6	958	11	4.6	35
Indiana	2,797.5	2.1	785	35	5.8	9
Iowa	1,466.9	1.6	760	42	5.6	13
Kansas	1,311.7	1.1	772	40	5.6	13
Kentucky	1,757.4	1.7	764	41	4.8	28
Louisiana	1,852.3	0.9	821	27	3.9	45
Maine	595.6	0.9	734	46	2.9	51
Maryland	2,497.6	1.1	1,023	7	5.9	8
Massachusetts	3,227.8	1.8	1,114	3	4.1	41
Michigan	3,920.5	2.4	876	18	4.4	37
Minnesota	2,642.8	2.5	916	15	4.8	28
Mississippi	1,081.3	0.1	681	51	4.4	37
Missouri	2,610.3	0.6	804	32	5.2	24
Montana	433.9	1.3	687	49	6.2	4
Nebraska	905.0	0.5	747	43	5.7	11
Nevada	1,122.0	1.3	845	22	3.8	47
New Hampshire	613.2	0.7	903	17	5.6	13
New Jersey	3,774.1	0.6	1,069	5	4.3	39
New Mexico	788.7	0.4	779	37	4.7	31
New York	8,511.6	1.7	1,099	4	4.0	42
North Carolina	3,863.6	1.3	809	31	5.3	20
North Dakota	390.8	6.7	820	28	12.9	1
Ohio	5,015.3	1.4	834	25	5.6	13
Oklahoma	1,518.5	1.8	785	35	8.3	2
Oregon	1,645.0	1.4	835	24	5.7	11
Pennsylvania	5,550.9	0.9	912	16	6.2	4
Rhode Island	456.8	0.3	871	19	5.3	20
South Carolina	1,789.9	1.4	746	44	4.8	28
South Dakota	398.9	1.3	684	50	3.6	49
Tennessee	2,631.4	2.1	819	29	5.3	20
Texas	10,480.4	2.7	931	14	6.2	4
Utah	1,192.9	2.9	779	37	5.1	25
Vermont	297.0	0.8	778	39	3.3	50
Virginia	3,602.5	1.6	974	9	4.7	31
Washington	2,905.4	1.7	1,011	8	6.1	7
West Virginia	710.8	1.6	742	45	5.8	9
Wisconsin	2,697.9	1.4	792	34	5.6	13
Wyoming	284.0	1.6	832	26	5.1	25
Puerto Rico	910.3	-0.2	506	(5)	1.2	(5)
Virgin Islands	42.7	-1.5	718	(5)	-5.2	(5)

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

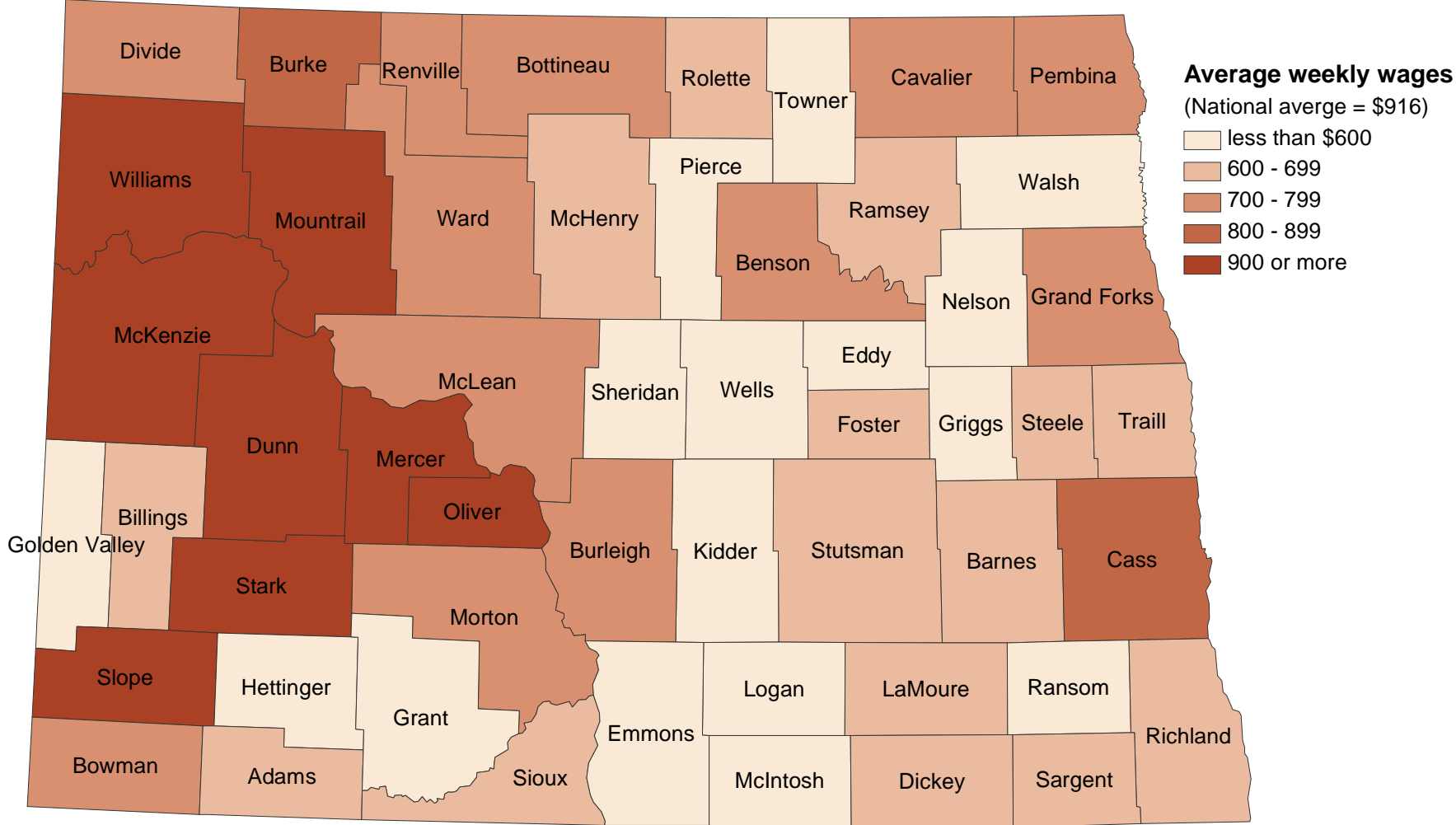
(2) Data are preliminary.

(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.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in North Dakota, third quarter 2011



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics