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## **COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES IN WEST VIRGINIA – THIRD QUARTER 2011**

### **Both Employment and Average Weekly Wages Rise in Kanawha County**

Employment rose 1.0 percent in West Virginia's only large county, Kanawha, from September 2010 to September 2011, 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, employment increased 1.6 percent, as 271 of the 322 largest U.S. counties gained jobs. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that Kanawha County was near the middle in terms of employment growth, ranking 177<sup>th</sup> of 322 counties.

Across the nation, Williamson, Tenn., posted the largest percentage increase in employment with a gain of 5.4 percent over the year. Frederick, Md., experienced the largest over-the-year decrease in employment among the largest counties in the U.S. with a loss of 2.6 percent.

Employment in Kanawha County stood at 105,670 in September 2011 and accounted for 14.9 percent of West Virginia's total employment. Nationwide, the 322 largest counties made up 70.5 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Kanawha County rose 3.7 percent from the third quarter of 2010 to the third quarter of 2011. Despite the increase, Kanawha County placed in the bottom half of the national ranking for wage growth (242<sup>nd</sup>). Over the year, the national average weekly wage increased 5.3 percent.

Among the 322 largest counties nationwide, 315 recorded growth in average weekly wages. Lake, Ohio, led the nation with a wage increase of 17.1 percent from the third quarter of 2010. Santa Clara, Calif., had the second-largest increase, 11.7 percent, followed by Oklahoma, Okla., at 11.5 percent.

Of the 322 largest counties, 3 experienced declines in average weekly wages. Clay, Mo., had the largest over-the-year wage decline with a loss of 2.3 percent. Alachua, Fla., and Leon, Fla., also recorded decreases, down 0.8 and 0.1 percent, respectively.

Kanawha County had an average weekly wage of \$804—\$112 below the national average of \$916 in the third quarter of 2011. Among the 212 counties with average weekly wages below the national average, Horry, S.C. (\$561), reported the lowest wage, followed by the counties of Cameron, Texas (\$591); Hidalgo, Texas (\$602); Yakima, Wash. (\$619); and Webb, Texas (\$629).

Average weekly wages were higher than the national 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 with an average weekly wage of \$1,647 followed by Arlington, Va. (\$1,550); and Washington, D.C. (\$1,527). (See table 1.)

### **Average weekly wages in West Virginia's smaller counties**

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 54 counties in West Virginia with employment below 75,000. Boone County posted the highest average weekly wage in the state (\$1,098) and was one of two counties in West Virginia to record a wage level exceeding the national average; Mingo County, at \$937, was the other. The lowest weekly wage was in Wirt County, at \$419. (See table 2.)

When all 55 counties were considered, 4 had wages of \$500 or less, 13 had wages from \$501 to \$600 and 15 had wages from \$601 to \$700. The remaining 23 counties had wages of \$701 or more. Five of the higher-paid counties—Boone, Clay, Kanawha, Lincoln, and Putnam—make up the Charleston, W.Va. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

### **Additional statistics and other information**

QCEW 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/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/).

An annual bulletin, *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 bulletin, 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 news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2010* are now available online at [www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn10.htm). The 2011 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages* 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 Mid-Atlantic Information Office at 215-597-3282 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET.

### **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 cover 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/](http://www.bls.gov/cew/); however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's 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<sup>1</sup> employment and wages in the top 10 large counties ranked by average weekly wage and Kanawha, W.Va., third quarter 2011<sup>2</sup>**

| Area                       | Employment                 |  |   | Average weekly wage <sup>3</sup> |                  |  |   |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|------------------|--|---|
|                            | September 2011 (thousands) | Percent change, September 2010-11 <sup>4</sup> | National ranking by percent change <sup>5</sup> | Average weekly wage              | Ranking by level | Percent change, third quarter 2010-11 <sup>4</sup> | National ranking by percent change <sup>5</sup> |
| United States <sup>6</sup> | 130,524.7                  | 1.6  | --  | \$916                            | --               | 5.3  | --  |
| Santa Clara, Calif.        | 873.1                      | 3.1  | 34  | 1,857                            | 1                | 11.7   | 2   |
| New York, N.Y.             | 2,332.5                    | 2.7  | 54  | 1,647                            | 2                | 4.6  | 184   |
| Arlington, Va.             | 167.7                      | 1.8  | 109   | 1,550                            | 3                | 2.4  | 297   |
| Washington, D.C.           | 708.1                      | 2.1  | 83  | 1,527                            | 4                | 3.9  | 230   |
| San Francisco, Calif.      | 566.9                      | 4.1  | 10  | 1,457                            | 5                | 6.1  | 75  |
| Fairfax, Va.               | 584.9                      | 2.0  | 92  | 1,440                            | 6                | 5.0  | 147   |
| Fairfield, Conn.           | 406.2                      | 1.4  | 143   | 1,432                            | 7                | 6.9  | 44  |
| San Mateo, Calif.          | 327.8                      | 2.4  | 69  | 1,426                            | 8                | 6.2  | 69  |
| Suffolk, Mass.             | 590.2                      | 3.1  | 34  | 1,419                            | 9                | 5.7  | 98  |
| Sommerset, N.J.            | 168.8                      | 1.7  | 121   | 1,338                            | 10               | 3.6  | 249   |
| Kanawha, W.Va.             | 105.7                      | 1.0  | 177   | 804                              | 219              | 3.7  | 242   |

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

<sup>2</sup> Data are preliminary.

<sup>3</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>4</sup> Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

<sup>5</sup> Ranking does not include the county of San Juan, Puerto Rico.

<sup>6</sup> Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

**Table 2. Covered<sup>1</sup> employment and wages in the United States and all counties in West Virginia, third quarter 2011<sup>2</sup>**

| Area                       | Employment<br>September<br>2011<br>(thousands) | Average weekly<br>wage <sup>3</sup> | Area       | Employment<br>September<br>2011<br>(thousands) | Average weekly<br>wage <sup>3</sup> |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| United States <sup>4</sup> | 130,524,677                                    | \$916                               | Mercer     | 21,285   | \$633                               |
| West Virginia              | 710,844  | 742                                 | Mineral    | 7,846  | 660                                 |
| Barbour                    | 3,415  | 575                                 | Mingo      | 8,739  | 937                                 |
| Berkeley                   | 29,288   | 721                                 | Monongalia | 52,617   | 852                                 |
| Boone                      | 8,629  | 1,098                               | Monroe     | 2,075  | 582                                 |
| Braxton                    | 3,917  | 558                                 | Morgan     | 2,838  | 496                                 |
| Brooke                     | 7,859  | 723                                 | Nicholas   | 8,685  | 704                                 |
| Cabell                     | 51,916   | 736                                 | Ohio       | 29,751   | 636                                 |
| Calhoun                    | 1,457  | 652                                 | Pendleton  | 1,660  | 538                                 |
| Clay                       | 1,859  | 769                                 | Pleasants  | 2,933  | 768                                 |
| Doddridge                  | 1,096  | 499                                 | Pocahontas | 2,949  | 522                                 |
| Fayette                    | 12,939   | 646                                 | Preston    | 7,093  | 648                                 |
| Gilmer                     | 2,315  | 644                                 | Putnam     | 19,006   | 851                                 |
| Grant                      | 3,830  | 692                                 | Raleigh    | 33,498   | 760                                 |
| Greenbrier                 | 13,691   | 600                                 | Randolph   | 11,464   | 587                                 |
| Hampshire                  | 4,023  | 511                                 | Ritchie    | 3,147  | 667                                 |
| Hancock                    | 10,974   | 628                                 | Roane      | 3,046  | 570                                 |
| Hardy                      | 5,896  | 544                                 | Summers    | 2,302  | 506                                 |
| Harrison                   | 34,817   | 763                                 | Taylor     | 2,807  | 517                                 |
| Jackson                    | 7,568  | 605                                 | Tucker     | 2,366  | 490                                 |
| Jefferson                  | 14,979   | 629                                 | Tyler      | 2,348  | 749                                 |
| Kanawha                    | 105,670  | 804                                 | Upshur     | 8,318  | 687                                 |
| Lewis                      | 7,239  | 817                                 | Wayne      | 9,216  | 792                                 |
| Lincoln                    | 3,345  | 717                                 | Webster    | 2,105  | 683                                 |
| Logan                      | 12,032   | 817                                 | Wetzel     | 4,439  | 506                                 |
| McDowell                   | 6,518  | 869                                 | Wirt       | 728  | 419                                 |
| Marion                     | 20,886   | 759                                 | Wood       | 38,527   | 667                                 |
| Marshall                   | 11,055   | 854                                 | Wyoming    | 5,241  | 716                                 |
| Mason                      | 6,456  | 716                                 |            |  |                                     |

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

<sup>2</sup> Data are preliminary.

<sup>3</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>4</sup> Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

**Table 3. Covered<sup>1</sup> employment and wages by state, third quarter 2011<sup>2</sup>**

| 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)                                |

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

<sup>2</sup> Data are preliminary.

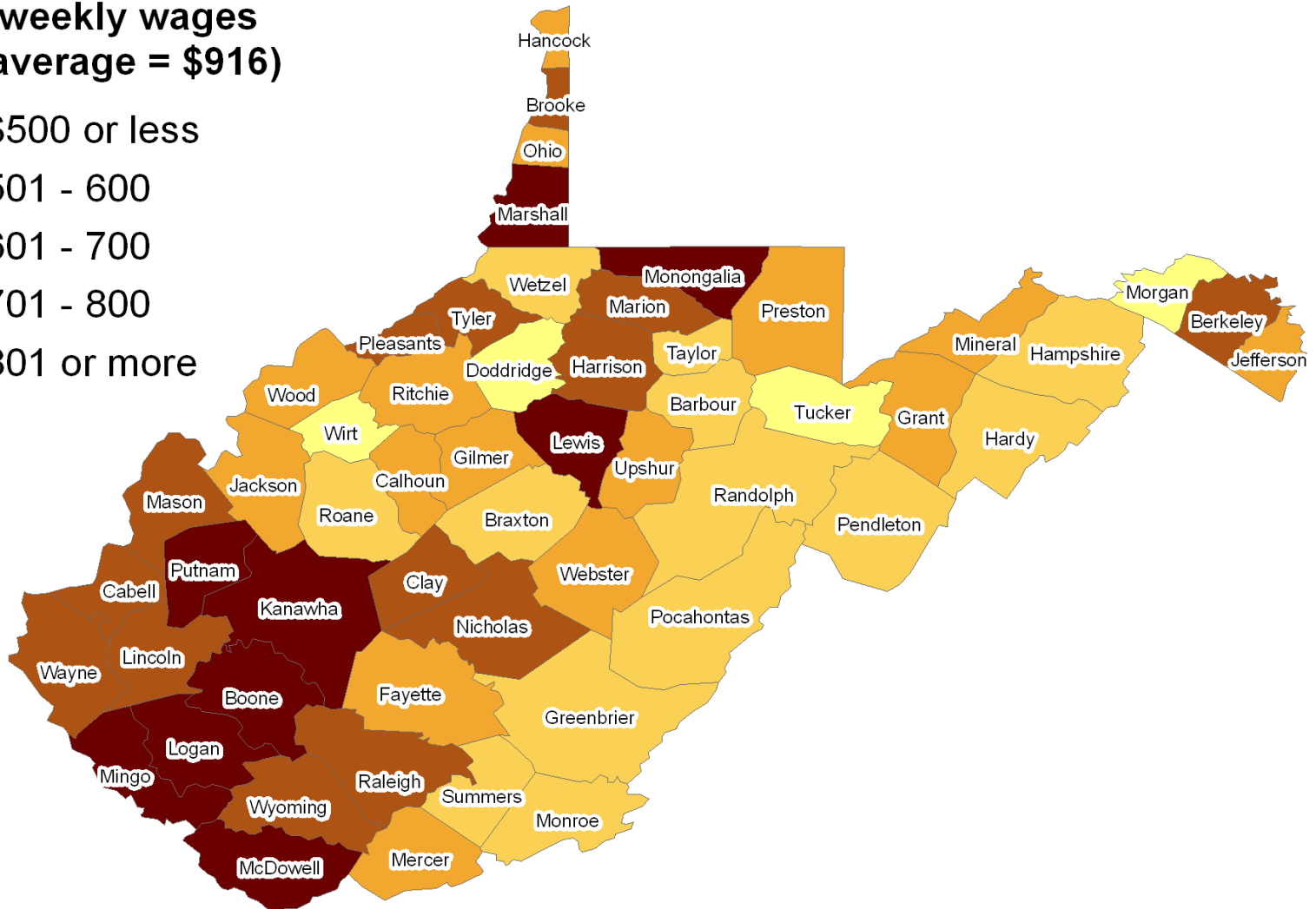
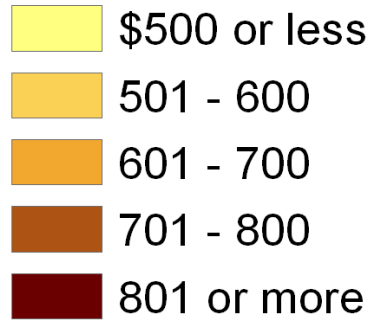
<sup>3</sup> Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

<sup>4</sup> Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

<sup>5</sup> Data not included in the national ranking.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in West Virginia, third quarter 2011<sup>1</sup>

### Average weekly wages (National average = \$916)



<sup>1</sup> Data are preliminary.