

# News

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## MAJOR WORK STOPPAGES IN 2004

The number of workers idled because of lockouts and strikes in 2004 rose from the prior year while the number of days of idleness fell. As a result, the percent of estimated working time lost remained roughly the same as in 2003, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics reported. These figures were still low by historical standards.

Seventeen major work stoppages began during 2004 and one major work stoppage continued from 2003, idling 170,700 workers and resulting in 3.3 million workdays of idleness. Comparable figures for 2003 were 14 stoppages, 129,200 workers idled, and 4.1 million workdays of idleness. (See Tables 1 & 3 and Charts A-C.) The major work stoppages series, which dates back to 1947, covers strikes and lockouts involving 1,000 or more employees and lasting at least one shift. For work stoppages that span two different calendar years, only those days of idleness in calendar year 2004 are counted. Detailed work stoppage statistics are available at (<http://www.bls.gov/cba/>).

Of the 17 major work stoppages beginning in 2004, 14 were in private industry and three were in State and local governments. In private industry, the largest number of stoppages occurred among the service providing industries (seven) and among the manufacturing sector of the goods producing industries (three). Of the stoppages occurring in the service providing industries, four were in the health care and social assistance sector and three were in the accommodation and food service sector. In State and local governments, two stoppages were in the transportation and warehousing sector and one was in the health care and social assistance sector.

Four work stoppages, three beginning in 2004 and one that began in 2003, accounted for 83 percent of all workers idled in 2004. The largest was between SBC Communications, Inc. and the Communications Workers of America (CWA), with 102,000 workers idled. The second largest, the stoppage that began in 2003 and continued into 2004, was between Albertsons, Ralphs Grocery Company, Vons and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), with 61,300 workers idled. The third largest was a stoppage between the Home Health Care Agencies in New York City and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which idled 19,000 workers. The fourth largest was a stoppage between the Hotel and Casino Employers in Atlantic City and UNITE HERE, which idled 10,000 workers. These four work stoppages cited above were responsible for 85 percent of the days of idleness in 2004. (See Table 2.)

The industries with the most days of idleness during the year due to work stoppages were retail trade (2,447,900 days) and other services (747,700 days).

The average length of a work stoppage beginning in 2004 was 14.6 days; 83 percent of all work stoppages lasted 30 days or less. (See Table A.) The longest work stoppage was a dispute between the Automobile Dealers Association in St. Louis, MO, with the International Association of Machinists (IAM) and the International Brother of Teamsters (IBT) lasting 52 days. The dispute between Albertsons, Ralphs Grocery Company, Vons and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) lasted 39 days in 2004 and 56 days in 2003, for a combined 95-day work stoppage (this work stoppage is represented in Table A for 2003 because it was initiated in 2003). There were two major work stoppages still in effect on December 31, 2004: a work stoppage between Ormet and United Steel Workers of America (USWA) and a work stoppage between Jersey Central Power and Light and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW).

Table A. Duration of work stoppages beginning in 2004, 2003, and 2002

Duration	2004		2003		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1-2 days	3	18	1	7	2	11
3-10 days	6	35	6	43	4	21
11-20 days	3	18	1	7	4	21
21-30 days	2	12	2	14	3	16
31-40 days	2	12	1	7	2	11
41-50 days	0	0	1	7	3	16
> 50 days	1	6	2	14	1	5

Note: Percent totals may not add to 100 because of rounding. The 2003 and 2002 numbers represent the total duration of all work stoppages initiated during these respective years. The 2004 numbers represent work stoppages initiated in 2004; at the time of this news release, there are two work stoppages still ongoing in 2005.

The term “major work stoppage” includes both worker-initiated strikes and employer-initiated lockouts that involve 1,000 workers or more. BLS does not distinguish between strikes and lockouts in its statistics.

Information on work stoppages is obtained from reports from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, State labor market information offices, and from media sources such as *The Daily Labor Report* and the *Wall Street Journal*. One or both parties involved in the work stoppage (employer or union) is contacted to verify the duration of and the number of workers idled by the stoppage.

**Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, 1947-2004**

Period	Number of work stoppages beginning in period	Numbers of workers involved (thousands) <sup>1</sup>	Days idle <sup>2</sup>	
			Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time <sup>3</sup>
2004 .....	17	171	3,344	.01
2003 .....	14	129	4,091	.01
2002 .....	19	46	660	( <sup>4</sup> )
2001 .....	29	99	1,151	( <sup>4</sup> )
2000 .....	39	394	20,419	.06
1999 .....	17	73	1,996	.01
1998 .....	34	387	5,116	.02
1997 .....	29	339	4,497	.01
1996 .....	37	273	4,889	.02
1995 .....	31	192	5,771	.02
1994 .....	45	322	5,021	.02
1993 .....	35	182	3,981	.01
1992 .....	35	364	3,989	.01
1991 .....	40	392	4,584	.02
1990 .....	44	185	5,926	.02
1989 .....	51	452	16,996	.07
1988 .....	40	118	4,381	.02
1987 .....	46	174	4,481	.02
1986 .....	69	533	11,861	.05
1985 .....	54	324	7,079	.03
1984 .....	62	376	8,499	.04
1983 .....	81	909	17,461	.08
1982 .....	96	656	9,061	.04
1981 .....	145	729	16,908	.07
1980 .....	187	795	20,844	.09
1979 .....	235	1,021	20,409	.09
1978 .....	219	1,006	23,774	.11
1977 .....	298	1,212	21,258	.10
1976 .....	231	1,519	23,962	.12
1975 .....	235	965	17,563	.09
1974 .....	424	1,796	31,809	.16
1973 .....	317	1,400	16,260	.08
1972 .....	250	975	16,764	.09
1971 .....	298	2,516	35,538	.19
1970 .....	381	2,468	52,761	.29
1969 .....	412	1,576	29,397	.16
1968 .....	392	1,855	35,367	.20
1967 .....	381	2,192	31,320	.18
1966 .....	321	1,300	16,000	.10
1965 .....	268	999	15,140	.10
1964 .....	246	1,183	16,220	.11
1963 .....	181	512	10,020	.07
1962 .....	211	793	11,760	.08
1961 .....	195	1,031	10,140	.07
1960 .....	222	896	13,260	.09
1959 .....	245	1,381	60,850	.43
1958 .....	332	1,587	17,900	.13
1957 .....	279	887	10,340	.07
1956 .....	287	1,370	26,840	.20
1955 .....	363	2,055	21,180	.16

See footnotes at end of table.

**Table 1. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, 1947-2004 — Continued**

Period	Number of work stoppages beginning in period	Numbers of workers involved (thousands) <sup>1</sup>	Days idle <sup>2</sup>	
			Number (thousands)	Percent of estimated working time <sup>3</sup>
1954 .....	265	1,075	16,630	.13
1953 .....	437	1,623	18,130	.14
1952 .....	470	2,746	48,820	.38
1951 .....	415	1,462	15,070	.12
1950 .....	424	1,698	30,390	.26
1949 .....	262	2,537	43,420	.38
1948 .....	245	1,435	26,127	.22
1947 .....	270	1,629	25,720	( <sup>5</sup> )

<sup>1</sup> Number of workers involved includes only those workers who participated in work stoppages that began in the calendar year. Workers are counted more than once if they are involved in more than one stoppage during the reference period. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Days idle includes all stoppages in effect during the reference period. For work stoppages that are still ongoing at the end of the calendar year, only those days of idleness in the calendar year are counted.

<sup>3</sup> Agricultural and government employees are included

in the calculation of estimated working time; private households, forestry, and fishery employees are excluded.

<sup>4</sup> Less than .005.

<sup>5</sup> Data not available.

Note: "Number of workers involved" in Table 1 reflects a tabulation of workers involved in a work stoppage that began in a specific year. "Number of workers involved" in Table 3 reflects a tabulation of all workers involved in a work stoppage in that year without making the distinction of when the work stoppage was initiated.

**Table 2. Work stoppages involving 5,000 or more workers beginning in 2004**

Organizations involved and location <sup>1</sup>	Industry code <sup>2</sup>	Beginning date	Ending date	Number of workers <sup>3</sup>	Days idle
American Axle and Manufacturing, Inc MI and NY United Auto Workers (UAW) .....	334350	2/26/04	2/26/04	6,700	6,700
SBC Communications, Inc. Nationwide Communications Workers of America (CWA) .....	517110	5/21/04	5/24/04	102,000	204,000
Home Health Care Agencies New York, NY Service Employees International Union (SEIU) .....	621610	6/7/04	6/9/04	19,000	57,000
City of New York New York, NY American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSME) .....	664410	6/9/04	6/11/04	7,000	21,000
Hotel and Casino Employees Atlantic City, NJ UNITE HERE .....	721120	10/1/04	11/3/04	10,000	230,000
Sutter Health San Francisco, CA Service Employees International Union (SEIU) .....	622110	12/6/04	12/10/04	7,000	35,000

<sup>1</sup> Labor organizations are affiliated with the AFL-CIO except where noted as Independent (Ind.).

<sup>2</sup> Industry code is from the 2002 NAICS (North American Industry Classification System).

<sup>3</sup> The number of workers involved is rounded to the nearest 100.

**Table 3. Work stoppages involving 1,000 or more workers, detailed monthly data, 2004, 2003, and 2002**

Period	Number of work stoppages beginning in period	Number of work stoppages in effect during period <sup>1</sup>	Numbers of workers involved (thousands) <sup>2</sup>	Days idle (thousands) <sup>3</sup>
<b>2004:</b>				
January .....	0	1	61	1204
February .....	1	2	67	1147
March .....	1	1	2	44
April .....	0	1	2	26
May .....	2	2	103	204
June .....	3	4	29	94
July .....	0	1	2	3
August .....	2	2	4	53
September .....	2	3	7	57
October .....	1	3	16	300
November .....	2	4	17	115
December .....	3	4	11	98
Annual .....	17	( <sup>4</sup> )	320	3344
<b>2003:</b>				
January .....	1	2	19	49
February .....	0	0	0	0
March .....	2	2	4	19
April .....	1	1	4	40
May .....	1	1	1	8
June .....	1	1	4	16
July .....	0	1	4	12
August .....	3	3	8	36
September .....	0	2	3	51
October .....	5	5	82	1169
November .....	0	3	77	1219
December .....	0	2	71	1473
Annual .....	14	( <sup>4</sup> )	277	4091
<b>2002:</b>				
January .....	0	1	1	21
February .....	1	2	3	9
March .....	1	1	3	44
April .....	2	3	7	81
May .....	3	5	9	138
June .....	1	3	5	36
July .....	3	4	8	54
August .....	1	3	6	51
September .....	3	3	14	40
October .....	1	3	14	133
November .....	2	2	4	24
December .....	1	1	1	29
Annual .....	19	( <sup>4</sup> )	75	660

<sup>1</sup> Includes stoppages that began in prior months and are still active.

<sup>2</sup> Includes ongoing work stoppages. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand.

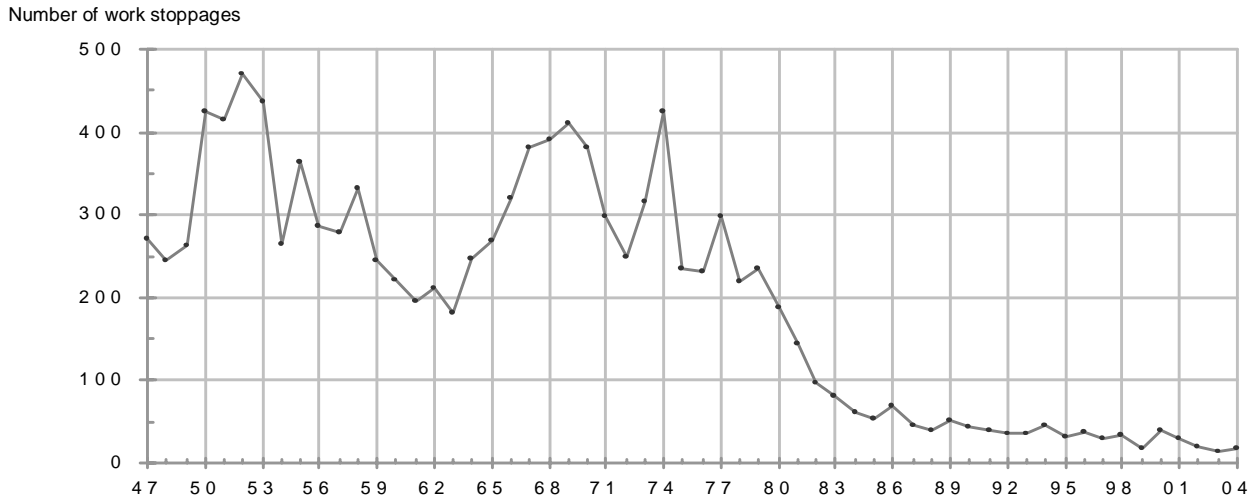
<sup>3</sup> Days idle includes all stoppages ongoing during the reference period.

<sup>4</sup> This column includes all work stoppages ongoing during the month. If a work stoppage continues longer than

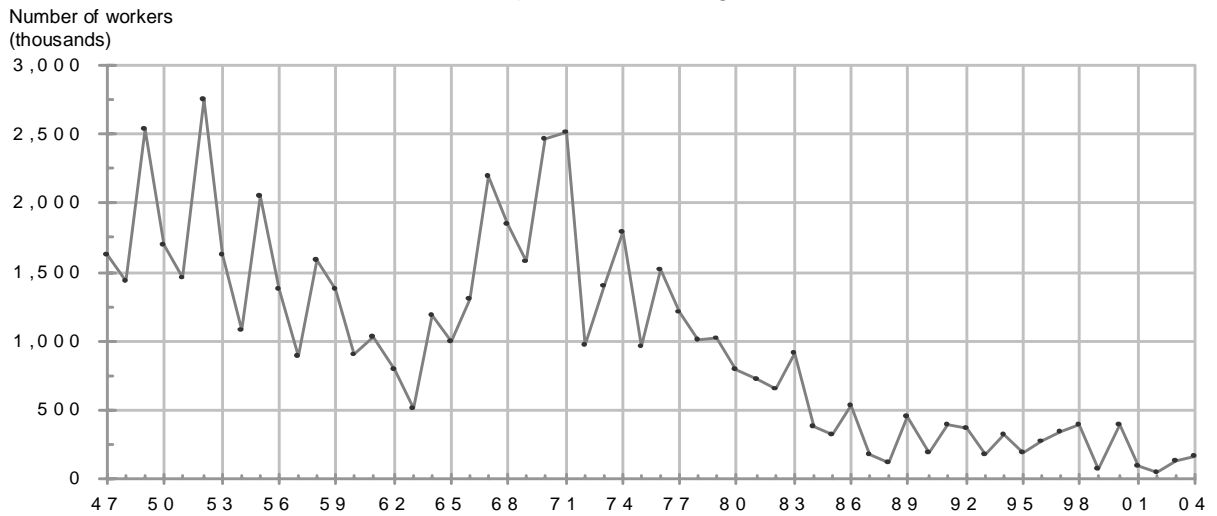
one month, it will be counted in each of the months.

Note: "Number of workers involved" in Table 1 reflects a tabulation of workers involved in a work stoppage that began in a specific year. "Number of workers involved" in Table 3 reflects a tabulation of all workers involved in a work stoppage in that year without making the distinction of when the work stoppage was initiated.

**Chart A. Number of major work stoppages, 1947-2004**



**Chart B. Number of workers involved in major work stoppages, 1947-2004**



**Chart C. Number of days of idleness from major work stoppages, 1947-2004**

