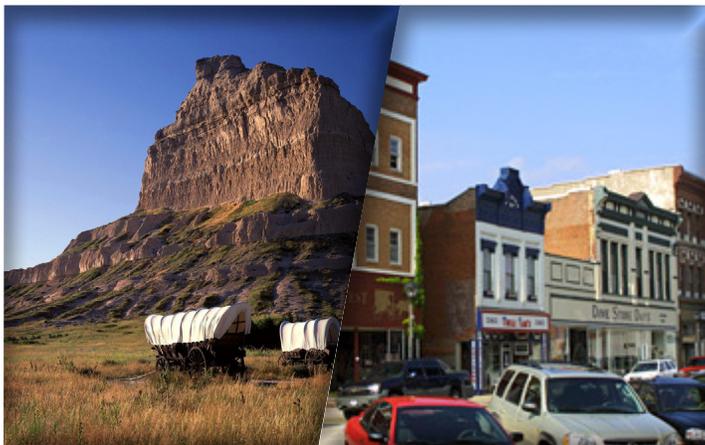


NEBRASKA WORKFORCE **SEPTEMBER 2011**

Trends



**Across the State: From
Scottsbluff to Fremont**



**Multiple Worksite Reports:
Why is the data helpful?**

Also Featuring...

Map Facts...

Largest Industries by County

Census...

Micro-Analysis of Nebraska's Counties:
Family and Home

Fast Facts...

Prepare for September

Occupational Profile...

Paralegals and Legal Assistants

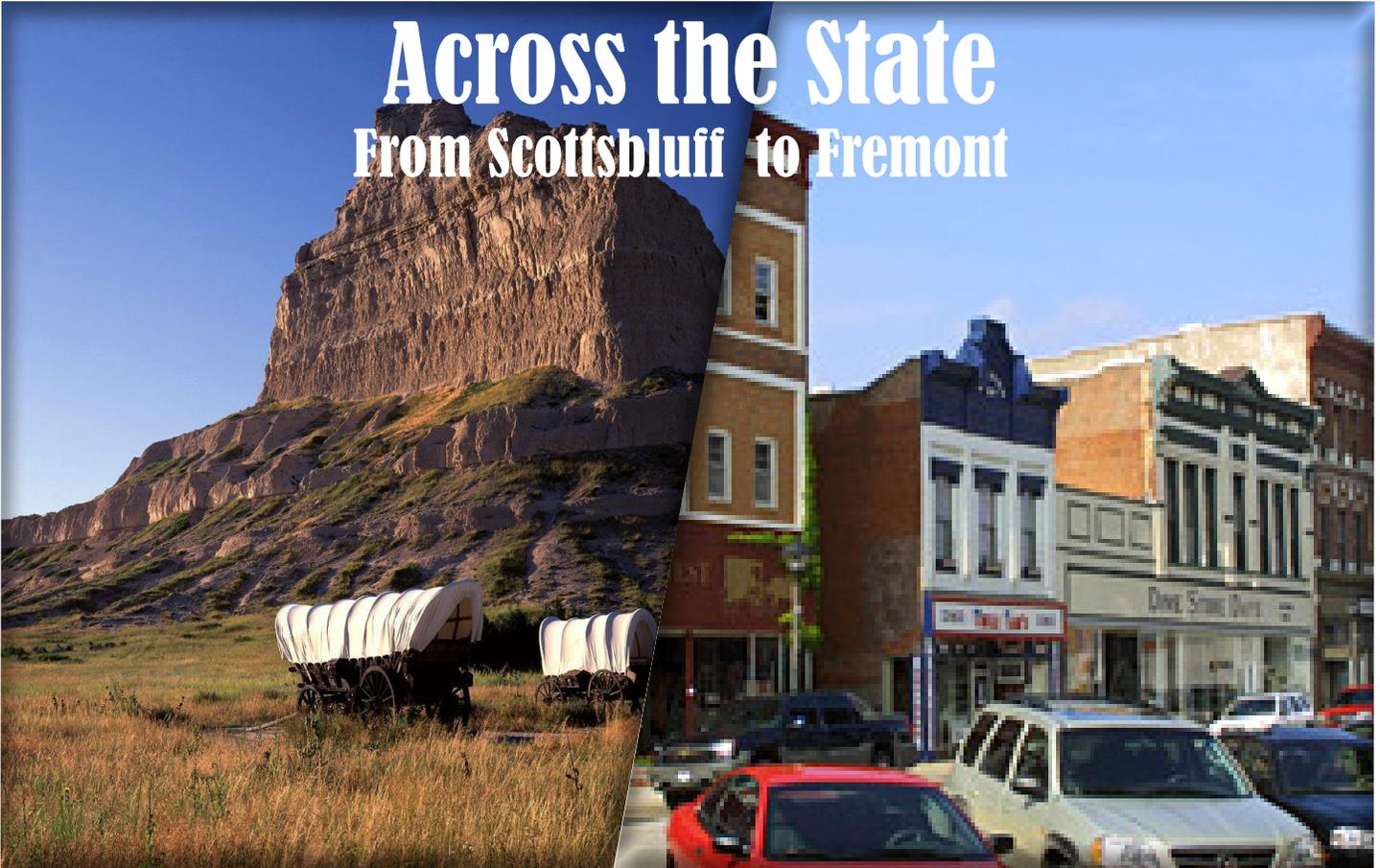


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Across the State From Scottsbluff to Fremont



JODIE MEYER, RESEARCH ANALYST

There are several ways to compare and contrast labor market information data for Nebraska including: urban versus rural, small versus large and economic region versus economic region. Geographically, Nebraska is a fairly large state ranking 15th in the nation by land area at 76,872.4 square miles. Driving across the state on Interstate 80 takes about seven hours. With this distance comes diversity in geography and the social and economic makeup of towns. Take Fremont in Northeast Nebraska and Scottsbluff in the Panhandle for example. These communities are across the state from each other and when comparing the size of each Micropolitan Statistical Area (MC) they are very close in population. However, the social and economic makeup of the towns differs.

The Fremont MC is made up of Dodge County and contains the towns of Ames, Dodge, Fremont, Hooper, Inglewood, Nickerson, North Bend, Scribner, Snyder, Uehling, and Winslow. The Scottsbluff MC is composed of Scotts Bluff and Banner Counties and contains the towns of, Gering, Harrisburg, Henry, Lyman, McGrew, Melbeta, Minature, Mitchell, Morrill, Scottsbluff, and Terrytown.

According to the 2010 Census data the total population of the Fremont MC was 36,691, making it the ninth largest MC/MSA in the state. The Scottsbluff MC ranks seventh in the state with a population of 37,660. Driving from Scottsbluff to Fremont, mostly via Interstate 80, takes about 7 hours and is about a 467 mile

drive. Both MCs are in different time zones with Fremont in the Central Time Zone and Scottsbluff in the Mountain Time Zone. Both cities have notable attractions from the Fremont Lakes State Recreation Area to the Scotts Bluff National Monument and both are located in the Platte River Valley.

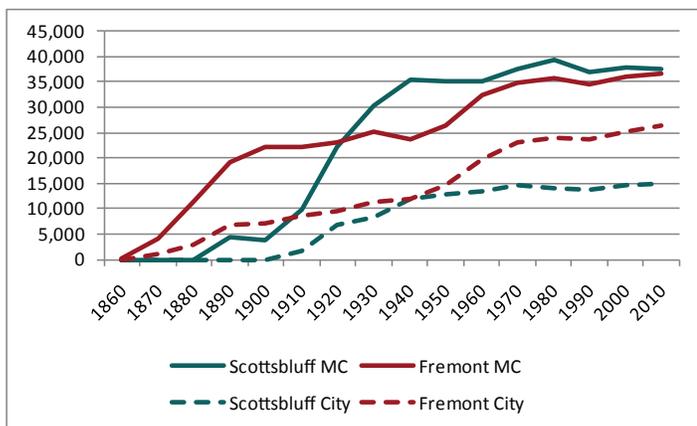
Fremont is the older of the two towns and was founded in 1856 where the Elkhorn and Platte Rivers meet. The town was named after John C. Fremont, military officer, politician, and explorer. Scottsbluff was founded in 1900 on the north side of the North Platte River and near the Scotts Bluff National Monument, the city's namesake. This location was also an important landmark for the Oregon and Mormon Trails. Proximity to the river and the railroad were main factors in choosing the location of both cities.

The earliest that Fremont was included in the decennial Census was in 1870 with a population of 1,195. Dodge County was first included in 1860 with a population of 309. The city of Scottsbluff did not show up on a Census until 1910 with a population of 1,746. Scotts Bluff and Banner Counties first appeared in 1890 with a combined population of 4,323. The graph shows the growth of both the city of Fremont and its MC and Scottsbluff and its MC. Keep in mind that over the years slight changes have occurred to the county and city borders which may have caused some fluctuation in the numbers. Even though the Scottsbluff MC got a later start on being an officially counted Census

geography, it overcame the Fremont MC in population in 1930. However, the gap between the two has narrowed in recent years and now the population of the Scottsbluff MC is only 969 people higher. The city of Fremont has almost always had a higher population than the city of Scottsbluff; however, in 1940, Scottsbluff nudged ahead for one Census with a population 195 people higher than Fremont.

According to 2010 Census data on race, both MCs are primarily white with Fremont at 90.9% and Scottsbluff at 87.5%. In Fremont, the largest minority group is black or African Americans representing 0.6% of the total population. Scottsbluff's largest minority group is American Indian and Alaska Natives at 2.1% of the MC's population. When ethnicity is examined, 10.1% of Fremont's population is Hispanic or Latino compared to 20.7% of Scottsbluff's. The Fremont MC has a slightly higher population of males, 49%, where the Scottsbluff MC is 48.2% male. Fremont residents are also older than Scottsbluff residents. The median age for the Fremont MC area is 40.3 years compared to 39.2 years for the Scottsbluff MC.

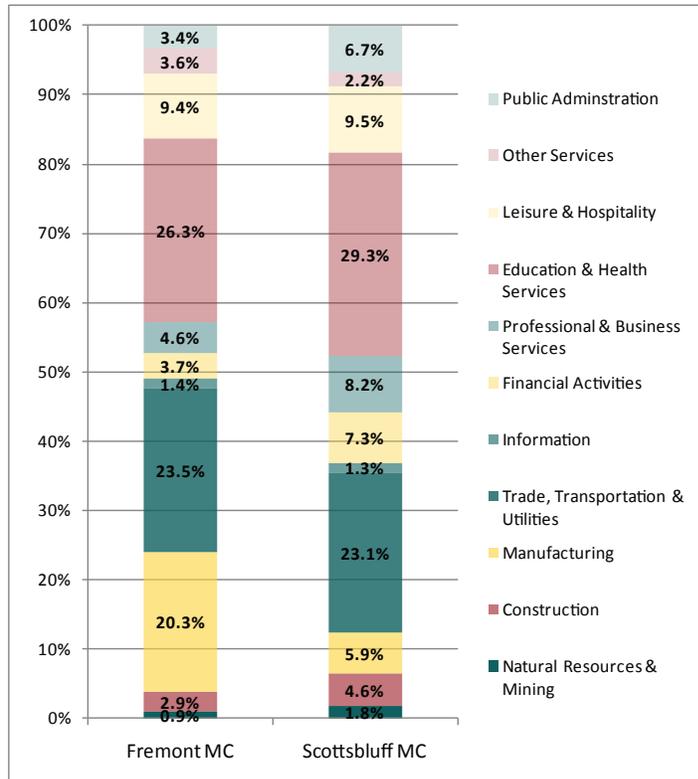
Population from Earliest Census to 2010



Source: U.S. Census

In both MCs the largest industry super-sector is Education and Health Services making up 26.3% of Fremont's employment and 29.3% of the Scottsbluff MC's according to 4th quarter 2010 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wage data. The second largest super-sector for both areas is Trade, Transportation, and Utilities making up about 23% of each area's employment. When looking at the third largest industry super-sector the cities differ quite a bit. In Fremont, Manufacturing makes up 20.3% of the area's employment. In Scottsbluff, the third largest industry super-sector is Leisure and Hospitality making up 9.5% of the area's employment and the Manufacturing super-sector only makes up 5.9% of employment. Average hourly wages from the Occupational Employment Statistics are unavailable by MC, but for Scotts Bluff County the average hourly wage was \$16.45 according to June 2011 estimates. In Dodge County, which is the Fremont MC, the average hourly wage was \$15.98. As of June 2011 preliminary data, Scottsbluff MC had a slightly higher unemployment rate at 4.9% where the Fremont MC had a rate of 4.7%.

Employment by Industry, 4th Quarter 2010



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

A comprehensive look at both of these MC's as well as the other eight MCs in the state, the Omaha Consortium, Lincoln MSA, and Nebraska statewide are available online in the Labor Market Region Review publications. These publications contain a variety of labor market information and can be found online at networks.nebraska.gov/analyzer.



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Multiple Worksite Reports Why is the data helpful?

NANCY RITCHIE, RESEARCH ANALYST

As many employers will tell you, there are a lot of forms that need to be filled out in order to keep a business running. On a quarterly basis a Quarterly Contributions Report (QCR) is sent to each state where an employer has people working who are covered under the state's Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs. The QCR reflects the total employment and wages in a state. Some of these forms help governmental agencies in evaluating the state or nation's economy by analyzing employment and wage data.

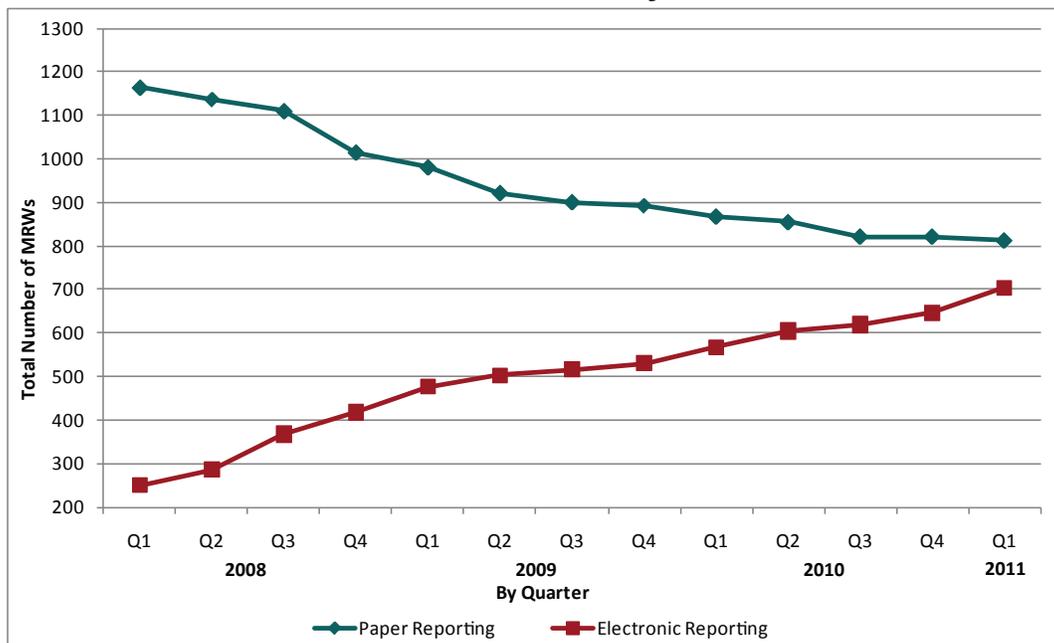
More detailed data is needed for some state and federal programs when a company operates in more than one location. In this case, a Multiple Worksite Report (MWR) is needed. This report gives detailed data on employment and wages based on individual locations operating under a given UI account number. Who qualifies to report MWR data? It

is any employer with more than one physical location of business and when you take the largest unit of employment out, still has ten or more employees.

There are several ways that a MWR can be submitted to the state. There is the paper form that gets sent out at the end of each quarter to the employer. This is a pre-printed form with each location listed as it has been provided from the employer. When all employment and wages are added together, they need to equal the employment and wages that were reported to UI.

Another way to report this data is through the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) MWRweb. This is a secure website that gives employers the option of submitting employment and wage data, updating administrative fields and physical

Total MRWs Sent Out By Quarter





locations, and adding new locations. For more information, go to <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewmwr05.htm>.

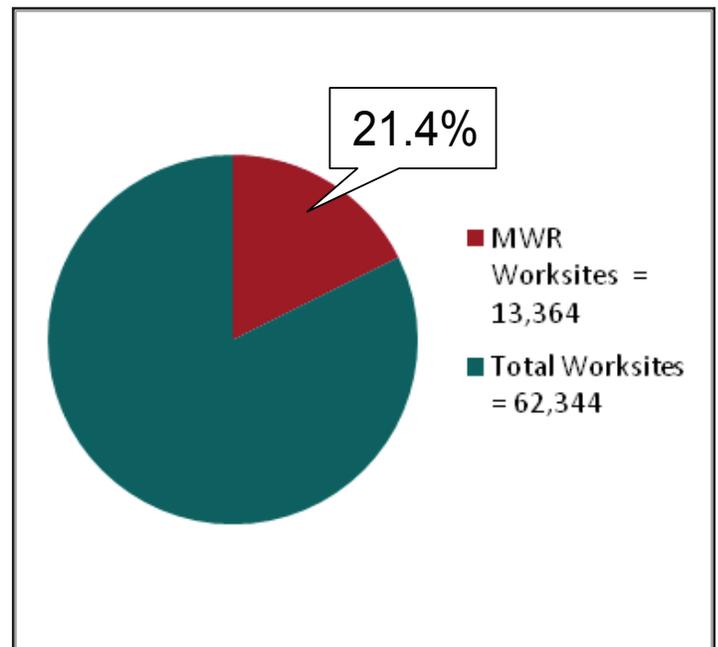
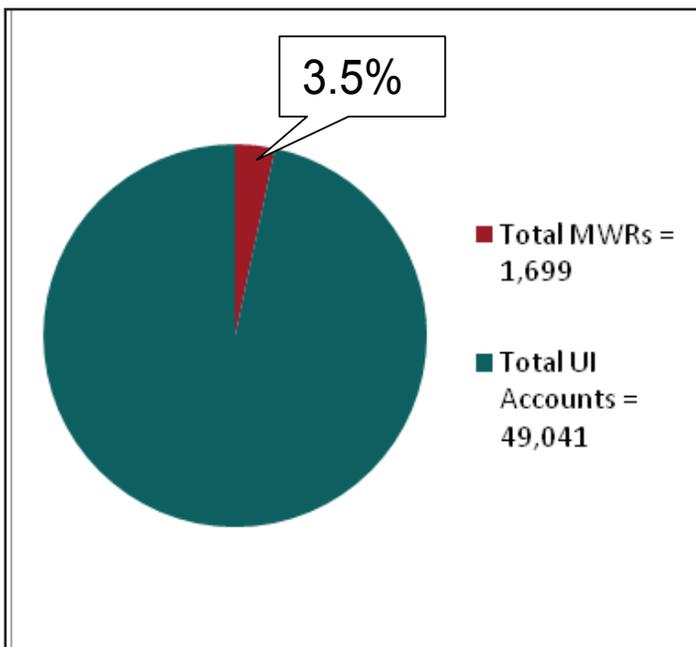
The third option is geared more towards the larger employers who meet the requirements for the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Center in Chicago. These large employers will transmit the employment and wage data electronically to the EDI Center. The EDI Center then exports this data to the states involved. If more information is needed on the EDI Center please go to <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewmwr02.htm>.

Who looks at this data? There are many entities that use this data for a number of reasons. Legislative bodies, school districts, universities, economic development agencies, and other businesses all look at the industry data that is collected. The MWRs give the level of detail to see if an area

is thriving, needs a boost or a certain industry is saturated in a specific location.

Over the years Nebraska has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of paper MWRs that are processed. This has to do with companies going toward electronic reporting. During this same timeframe, the total number of MWRs has steadily increased overall.

The charts below show that even though the total number of MWRs is only 3.5% they represent 21.4% of the total worksites in the state of Nebraska. The level of data also ensures that each county is credited with the correct level of employment, rather than have it only show up in the largest place of employment. This data is from the fourth quarter 2010 QCEW files.





Micro-Analysis of Nebraska's Counties: Family and Home

LINDSAY BURFORD, RESEARCH ANALYST

Last month, an analysis examined the state's gender and age demographics as they were on Census Day, April 1, 2010. It also compared those demographics to the previous decade to determine how the demographics of the state have evolved. This month in the Census column, an analysis will examine family size, home vacancy, and home ownership for Nebraska and compare these factors to the previous decade.

Family Households

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a family household as one where the householder and one or more individuals living in the same household are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All people living in a household and related to the householder are considered to be family members. Not all households are family households. A household can contain several unrelated individuals or a single resident; these are non-family households.

Blaine County has the largest percentage of family households in Nebraska. Seventy-six percent of its county households meet the requirements to be labeled family households. There are sixteen additional counties that have family household percentages in the 70 percentile range: McPherson (75.4%); Thurston (75.3%); Sarpy (73.2%); Hamilton (73.1%); Banner (73.0%); Cass (73.0%); Washington (72.7%); Arthur (72.2%); Saunders (71.9%); Dakota (71.8%); Stanton (71.8%); Pierce (71.0%); Colfax (71.0%); Hayes (70.5%); Dawson (70.3%); and Cedar

(70.1%). Dawes County had the lowest family household percent with only 57.2% of its households meeting the definition. The second most populous county in Nebraska, Lancaster County, had the second lowest family household percentage with only 60.2% of households considered to be family households.

Households with Children (Under 18)

The counties with the highest percentages of family households were also the counties with the highest percentages of households with children under the age of 18 residing in the household. Blaine County again led Nebraska counties with the highest rate of 38.4% of households with children under the age of 18. Fifteen additional counties had more than 30% of their households have children less than 18 years of age residing within the household. Furthermore, the same counties that had the lowest percentage of family households also had the lowest percentages of children under the age of 18 residing in the household. Dawes County had the fewest households with the child demographic at 19.9% of its households having children under the age of 18. Lancaster County had 20.2%, Wayne County had 20.8% with children (61.4% family households) and Pawnee County had 20.9% with children under the age of 18 (61.5% family households).

Average Household Sizes

The average household size is measured by dividing the number of individuals (related and unrelated) living within a

housing unit by the total number of occupied housing units. Sarpy County has the largest household size within Nebraska after the 2010 Census with 3.19 people per household. There were fourteen additional counties with at least 2.5 people per household, including: McPherson, Thurston, Blaine, Hamilton, Washington, Banner, Dakota, Pierce, Cedar, Arthur, Saunders, Dawson, Stanton, and Clay. Clay County was the only county from this list that did not have one of the largest percentages of family households and households with children under the age of 18. The lowest household size in Nebraska was in Pawnee County with 2.10 people per household.

The average family size was measured by dividing the number of people in families by the total number of families (or family householders). There are 18 Nebraska counties with an average family size greater than 3.0; with Sarpy County having the largest family size at 3.69. McPherson and Thurston counties have the next largest family size with 3.39 and 3.38, respectively. Interestingly, Blaine County had the highest percentages of family households and households with children under the age of 18, yet it ranked fifth in average family size. Sarpy County ranked fourth on both family households and households with children under the age of 18, but jumped to the highest ranking county for household size and family size.

Occupied Housing

An occupied household is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms or a single room that was occupied on April 1, 2010. Twenty-three counties had at least 90% of their housing units occupied during the 2010 Census. Three counties had 95%, the highest percentage in the state: Thurston, Stanton, and Loup counties.

There were eight counties with an occupied housing percentage less than 70%. Platte County had the lowest occupied housing percentage with only 60.1% of its housing units occupied. One might expect this could be a result of a



New and Upcoming Census Releases

- Nebraska's 2010 Census Summary File 1 has been released! It includes detailed tables showing age, sex, households, families, relationship to householder, housing units, detailed race and Hispanic origin groups and group quarters, down to the block or census tract level. June – August release dates
- Education and Synthetic Work-Life Earnings: 2006 – 2009 ACS data examining the relationship between lifetime earnings and education. Early August release.
- Marital Events of Americans (2009): First of its kind report detailing characteristics of the marital events using data from the ACS. August release.
- Nonemployer Statistics (2009): Annual report examining businesses without employees (self-employed/small businesses). July 28 release date.

population loss over the past decade, but that was not the case. Platte County was one of twenty-four counties to gain population over the past decade. Interestingly, Platte County did lose 7.3% of its 17 or younger population. The other seven counties with occupied housing percentages below 70% included: Nemaha (69.2%), Dawes (69.4%), Wayne (67.8%), Scottsbluff (67.0%), Garfield (64.6%), Douglas (64.0%), and Boone (61.8%).

Owner-occupied housing units are housing units occupied by the owner of said housing unit. A strong percentage in this category suggests a high rate of home ownership versus renting. Sheridan County had the highest percentage of occupied housing units where the resident was its owner at 81.0%. Hall and Hamilton counties followed closely behind with 80.8% and 80.3% owner-occupied housing units, respectively. In all other measures, Hall County ranked on the lower half of the measures [family household, 66.6% (43rd); households with children under 18, 26.8%, (43rd); average household size, 2.35 (43rd); average family size, 2.86 (51st); and occupied housing, 82.3% (60th)].

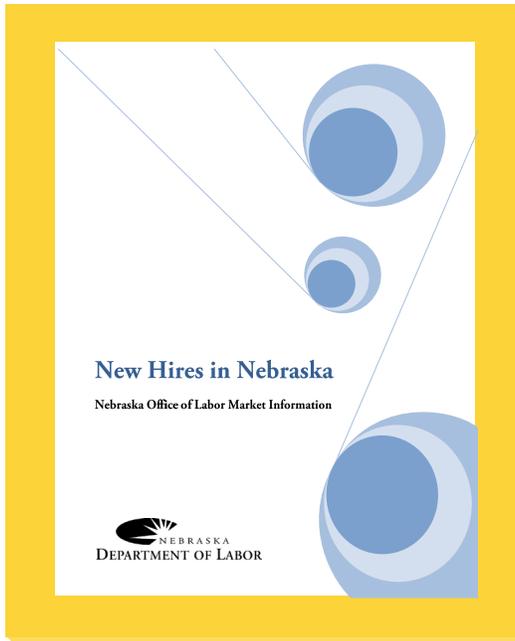
On the other end of the spectrum, nine counties had owner-occupied housing units at a rate less than 65.0% with Butler County having the lowest owner-occupied housing units at 60.1%. Butler County had a relatively higher occupied housing percentage at 83.7% (ranking it 58th on that list). Other counties with low owner-occupied percentages were Garfield (64.6%), Lancaster (64.3%), Douglas (63.9%), Cheyenne (63.7%), Platte (63.3%), Harlan (62.9%), and Scottsbluff (61.1%).

New Hires

BEN KUSPA, RESEARCH ANALYST

Nebraska Labor Market Information conducted a survey of employers that hired new employees during the fourth quarter of 2009. The survey collected information from the employer on both the newly hired employee and the job the employee holds. Survey topics included skills required for the job, desired skills of applicants, pre-identified green skills, education requirements, demographics, compensation, benefits, and satisfaction with employee performance.

Results from the survey can be accessed in the report published online with the rest of the Green Jobs Research in the Publications section of Nebraska's Labor Market Information website at networks.nebraska.gov/analyzer.



MID-PLAINS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Employment Outcomes

There were 353 Mid-Plains Community College graduates between July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009. Of these graduates, 253 (72%) were working in Nebraska in the first quarter of 2010. Mid-Plains was the only community college to have a higher percent of graduates working in the state in 2010 than in 2008. Slightly more than half (59%) of the graduates were female with 74% of the female graduates working in the state while 68% of male graduates were employed in the state.

There was at least one graduate employed in 26 of the state's 93 counties. Lincoln County had the most graduates working in the county and the largest share with 43% of all Mid-Plains Community College graduates who were working in Nebraska. Red Willow County followed with 11% of the graduates employed in that county.

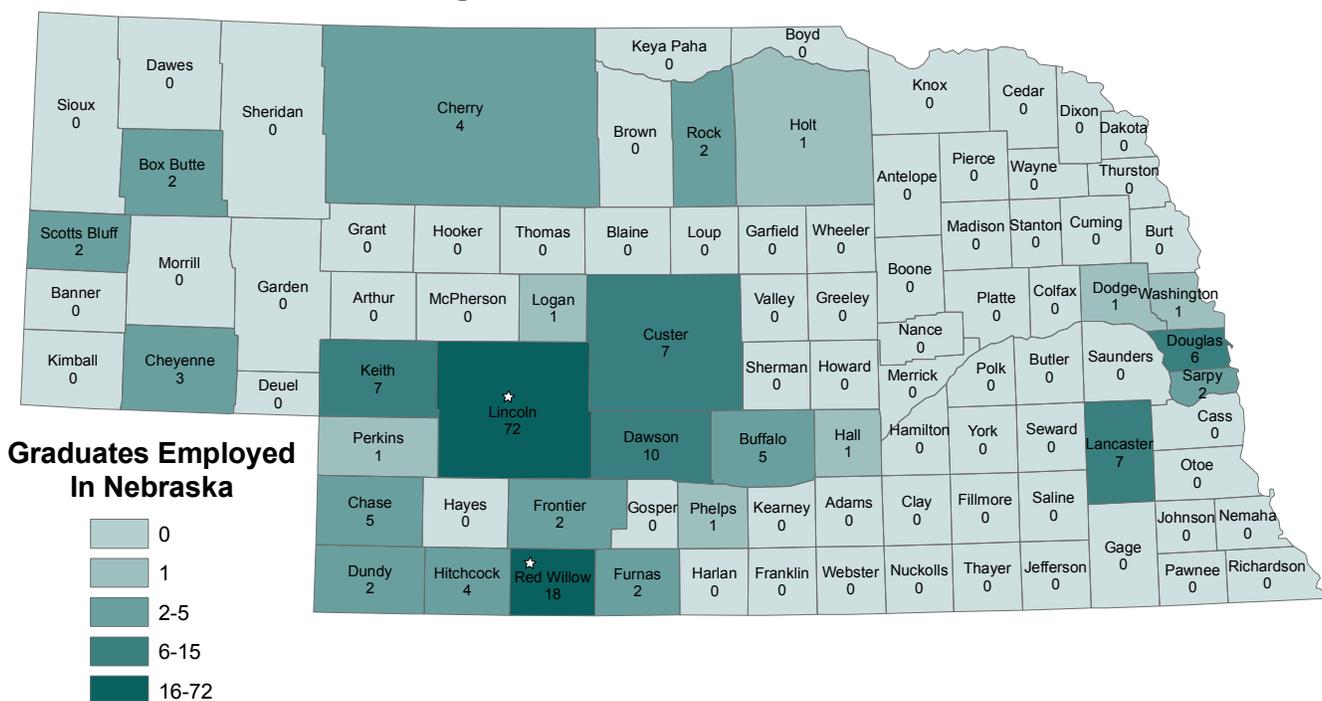
There were 128 graduates in 16 degree/fields of study that had more than 80% of the graduates working in the state. Within this group, the 4 Emergency Medical Technology Associate Degree had the highest estimated average annual wages of all fields of study with \$46,891 followed by Registered Nursing Associate Degree graduates with \$38,867. The Registered Nursing field of study also had the highest number of graduates within this group at 28 with 27 working in the state.

Majors in technical and medical fields of study produced graduates with the highest wages. Associate Degree graduates in Emergency Medical Technology had the highest estimated average annual wages of all fields of study with \$46,891. There were 6 fields of study/degrees with a combined 70 graduates working in the state that had estimated wages above \$25,000 per year. Overall, the highest number of graduates and the highest number working in the state were in the Associate Degree Liberal Arts and Sciences field of study. The estimated average annual wages of \$13,812 reflect that this field of study generally leads to transfer to a four-year college or university.

The Health Care industry had the highest number (78) of graduates working in the state and also the highest discloseable estimated average annual earnings of \$31,093. The 10 graduates employed in the Public Administration industry had the second highest earnings of \$29,938.

For more outcomes information on Mid-Plains Community, Central Community College, Metropolitan Community College, Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College, Western Nebraska Community College, Chadron State College, Peru State College, Wayne State College and the University of Nebraska – Kearney, contact the Nebraska Department of Labor's Office of Labor Market Information.

2009-2010 Mid-Plains Community College Graduates Working in Nebraska in First Quarter 2010



Map Facts



Largest Industries by County

JACOB LIUDAHL, RESEARCH ANALYST

It's been often said that Nebraska's workers are its greatest asset. This Labor Day, many employees across the state get a much-needed holiday. In honor of their commitment, this month's map examines what industries those employees work in. The largest industry in each county helps define the county and community make-up.

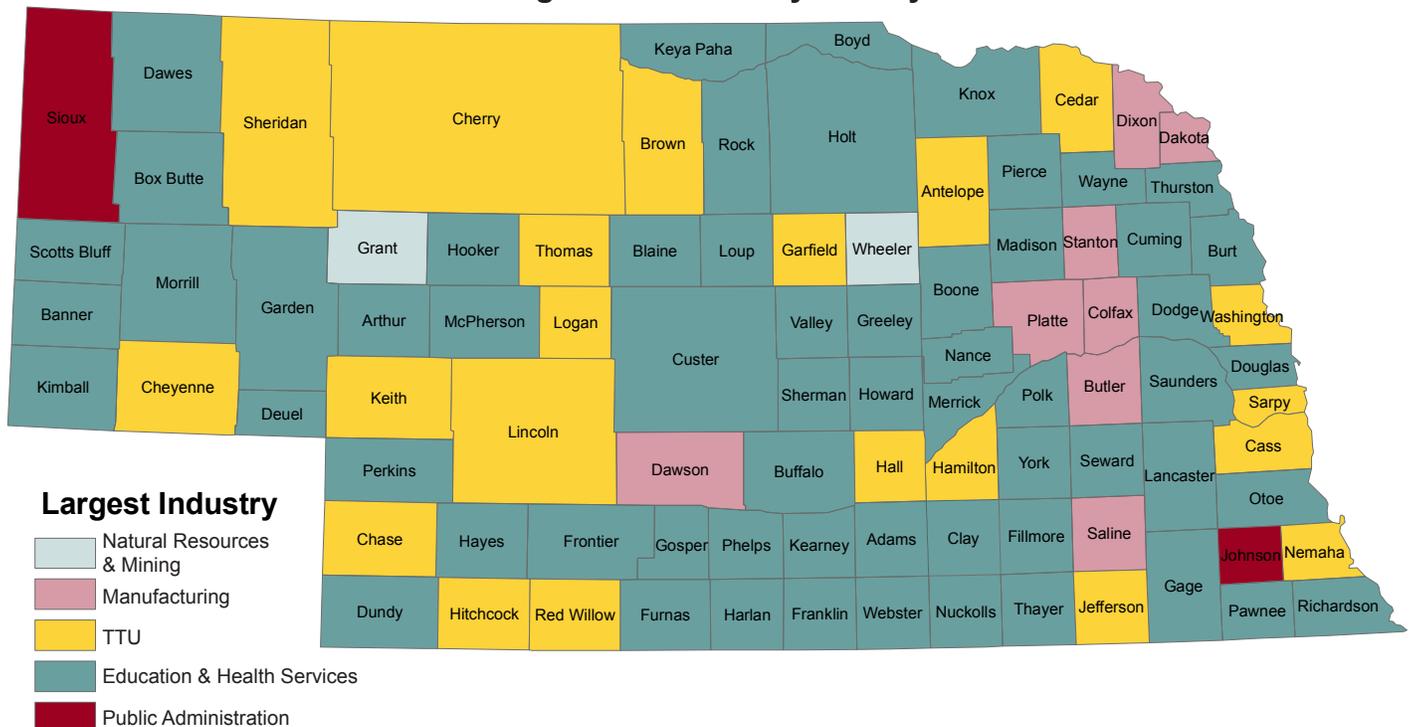
The largest industry in a majority of counties was Education and Health Services. This industry employed the most people in 60 of the state's 93 counties. The industry with the second most number of counties was Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (TTU). There were 21 counties that listed TTU as their highest employing industry. These two industries were, not surprisingly, the largest two employing industries in the state.

Despite the biggest two industries in the state making up 87% of the counties' largest industries, there were some

interesting findings in the details. Johnson County listed Public Administration as their highest employing industry, likely because of the presence of a large correctional institute. There was a large Manufacturing presence in northeastern Nebraska, highlighted by large percentages in counties like Platte, Dakota, and Colfax. In a couple of the smaller population counties, Natural Resources and Mining won out due to the agricultural industry.

In Douglas County and Lancaster Counties, Professional and Business Services was the third largest industry behind Education and Health Services and TTU. Though it wasn't the biggest industry in any county in the state, it was overall the third largest employing industry statewide. Ironically, Natural Resources and Mining, which was the largest industry in two counties, was the smallest of the given industries statewide.

Largest Industries by County





Prepare for September

RYAN CALDWELL, RESEARCH ANALYST

September is **National Preparedness Month** and has been officially observed in the United States since 2004. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency within the Department of Homeland Security, sponsors the month which raises awareness and encourages Americans to take simple steps to prepare for emergencies in all aspects of their lives.

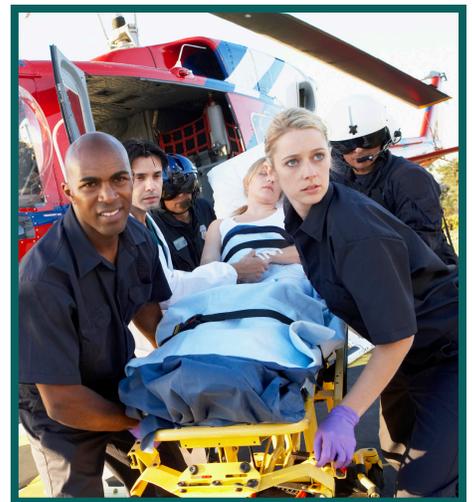
Since we can't be completely prepared for every situation we luckily have a broad span of first responders in Nebraska. These first responders include everyone from **police officers** and **firefighters**, to **emergency medical technicians** and **volunteers** as well.

When you call **911** the first people you will talk to are Nebraska's Police, Fire, and Ambulance **Dispatchers**. Over a thousand were employed in the state as of May 2010 and on average they made just over \$30,000 annually. Their median salary was **\$30,774** with entry wages around \$10.79 an hour and experienced wages reaching \$16.54 an hour.

Dispatchers are then likely to call police officers, fire fighters, or emergency medical technicians depending on your situation. In 2009 Nebraska employed **3,518** police officers in the state serving **162** different agencies. These officers earned an average annual wage of just over **\$45,000**.

Also in **2009** Nebraska was served by 1,260 firefighters statewide. These workers earned an average of \$22.16 an hour while responding to over **63,000** incidents, of which over **4,500** involved fires. Over half of the responding incidents in 2009 were for EMS calls, or **Emergency Medical Services**.

It's a good idea to have pre-made plans **prepared** at home or in your place of business in case of **emergencies**. Taking these actions ahead of time can often help Nebraska's first responders with their job duties once they arrive on the scene.



Occupational Profile



**SOC and O*Net
Code, 23-2011**

Paralegals and Legal Assistants LINDSAY BURFORD, RESEARCH ANALYST

Introduction

To Kill a Mockingbird, 12 Angry Men, My Cousin Vinny, Philadelphia, A Time To Kill, The Verdict, A Few Good Men, Kramer vs Kramer, And Justice for All, A Civil Action, Adam's Rib, Witness for the Prosecution, and Judgment at Nuremberg. All are movies revolving around lawyers and the legal system. What few people see in the movies are the forces of nature that enable lawyers to function: paralegals. The list of movies about paralegals is few and far. Julia Roberts won critical acclaim, and an Oscar, for her dignified role as legal assistant Erin Brockovich. While the spitball fire personality is not a requirement for paralegals, the attention to details and constant workload is.

Occupational Characteristics

Paralegals, also called Legal Assistants, primarily assist lawyers through various mechanisms, such as research, investigation, and preparation. Paralegals prepare almost all legal documents, including affidavits, legal correspondents with clients and other lawyers, briefs, pleadings, wills, contracts, and appeals. They are responsible for meeting with, helping, reassuring, and prepping clients for their case. They often file court pleadings and other court documents with the court clerk. When the lawyer's case goes to trial, it is the Paralegal that organizes trial exhibits and makes arrangements according to the lawyer's calendar. Paralegals spend numerous hours investigating and researching the

facts and laws of cases, which may include trips to the law library. It can also be the paralegal's responsibility to maintain the lawyer's activity, billing, and calendar.

Common knowledge the paralegal is expected to know include the English language, law and government, clerical components, computers and electronics, and customer and personal service. Specific skills sought in paralegals are reading comprehension, active listening, speaking, writing, critical thinking, time management, active learning, coordination, judgment and decision making, and monitoring. Specific abilities that are expected from paralegals include: oral comprehension and expression, written comprehension and expression, near vision, speech clarity, information ordering, speech recognition, category flexibility, and deductive reasoning. Common work activities include: interacting with computers, getting information, organizing/planning/prioritizing work, communication with individuals, processing information, documenting information, analyzing data, and updating relevant knowledge.

Education and Training

Paralegals and Legal Assistants require medium-level preparation before entering this occupation. Typically, that suggests at least an associate's degree and previous work-related experience. According to O*Net Online, 44%

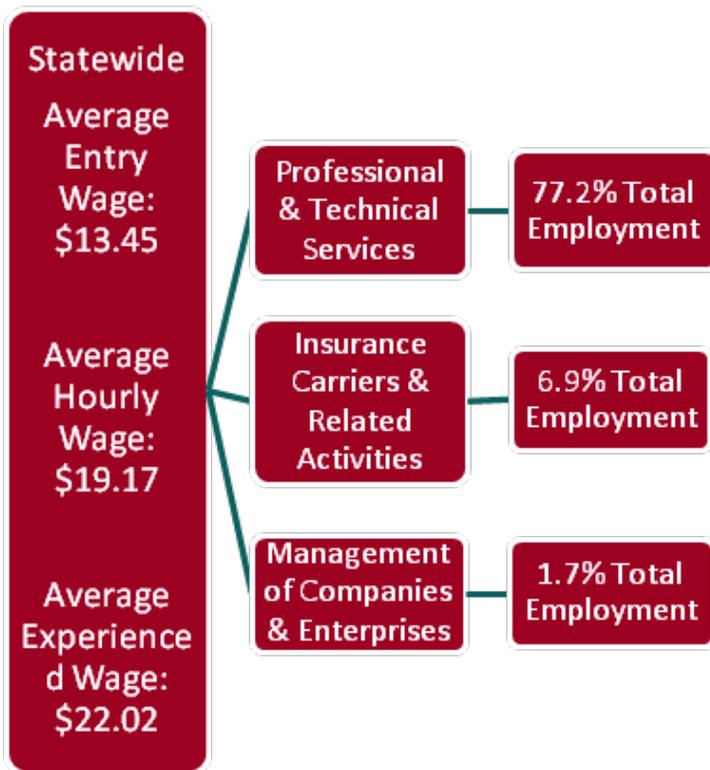
of employers stated that Paralegals and Legal Assistants required a Bachelor's Degree, 30% stated they needed an Associate's Degree, and 19% stated they could have some college, but no degree. Currently, Nebraska does not require individuals within this occupation to a specific license.

There are several training programs throughout Nebraska that offer individuals' higher educational experience for this occupation. According to Labor Market Information's website, there are 49 programs in Nebraska that offer an Associate's Degree in Legal Assistant/Paralegal, 15 that offer a certificate and 11 that offer a Bachelor's Degree. For more information about where these programs are found throughout the state, visit <http://traininglink.dol.state.ne.us/index.cfm>.

Employment and Wages

Paralegals and Legal Assistants have a HOT! job prospect rating statewide, as well as in three sub-regions within Nebraska. Two sub-regions, Central and Mid Plains, have a Fair! job prospect rating, while the Panhandle and Northeast Regions have a Cold! job prospect rank. Statewide, this occupation is projected to grow at a rate of 24.4% with 40 annual job openings. As of July 28, 2011, there are 30 job openings for this position according to Career Services at the networks.nebraska.gov website.

The average entry wage in Nebraska for Paralegals and Legal Assistants is \$13.45 per hour, or almost \$28,000 per year. The



average hourly wage (mean) is \$19.17, or almost \$40,000 annually. The average experienced wage is \$22.02 per hour, or approximately \$45,800 yearly. These wages are below the national average; more so around the experienced wage.



The top three industries account for almost 86% employment of this occupation. Paralegals and Legal Assistants are concentrated in the Professional & Technical Services industry, with 77.2% of total employment located within that sector. The figure shows that almost 7% of Paralegals and Legal Assistants are in the specific sub-set of Insurance Carriers and Related Activities within the Finance and Insurance industry. The third highest concentration of Paralegals and Legal Assistants is found in Management of Companies and Enterprises with almost 2% of total employment. Credit Intermediation and Related Activity and Administration and Support Services round out the top five industries where Paralegals and Legal Assistants are concentrated; these latter two industries; however, have such a small amount of employment that the numbers are confidential.

Conclusion

Yahoo! Education cited Paralegals as one of their Smart Career Options in a recent article. Nebraska's long-term projections suggest a HOT! job prospect rating in employment for Paralegals and Legal Assistants with 27 of the 40 annual openings to be a result of actual growth; the other 13 openings are replacement openings. If you or someone you know has an overall interest in learning more about this occupation, please visit Career Resources on the Nebraska Department of Labor's website at networks.nebraska.gov/analyzer.

What is an Economic Indicator?

TREVOR NELSON, RESEARCH ANALYST

Note: Unemployment Rates are smoothed seasonally adjusted. DXY is the U.S. Dollar compared to a basket of international currencies. Retail Sales figures are in billions of dollars. Median Employment Wages are OES 50th percentile Annual Wage for All Occupations. Crude Oil Price is as of the close of business on the last Thursday of the month. ECI is Employment Cost Index. PPI is Producer Price Index. CPI is Consumer Price Index.

For over a year this column has been written about economic indicators, without an explanation of what an economic indicator actually is. Simply, any piece of data which describes some aspect of economic behavior in the real world is an economic indicator. This definition is so broad that it can include everything from the stock market to beer sales at a specific bar. The question becomes “What is useful?” When picking economic indicators a person should try to focus on specifically what is important for the part of the economy which they want to discuss. For example, if you wanted to learn about farmers in Nebraska, it would not be very useful to look at Chinese manufacturing, but corn prices in Omaha could tell you a lot. Good economic indicators are chosen or created based on the idea that past actions and reactions of the markets will explain the present state and help predict future movements.

An important thing to keep in mind is that there is no such thing as a “current” economic indicator. Data takes time to create and produce which causes a lag period. This lag period is why we talk about July’s unemployment rate in the September issue and second quarter Gross Domestic Product in the third quarter. When looking at a number of economic indicators to estimate macroeconomic trends, another timing issue appears. Some economic indicators seem to move ahead of the market and some seem to move behind. An indicator which moves ahead of the economy is called a leading indicator. These will usually improve before an upturn and worsen before a downturn. The opposite is called a lagging indicator, which will usually improve after a rally has begun and worsen after a recession has started.

A single economic indicator alone is normally not useful, because any measure will be incomplete. If you want to know

how bad inflation is, looking at the change in gas prices alone will not tell the whole story. Instead, multiple indicators used in conjunction give a more complete view of the market in question. This problem is somewhat mitigated by composite indexes such as the Consumer Price Index, where a number of other economic indicators are all combined into one figure.

The Nebraska Department of Labor produces several economic indicators for the state. Every month, state and metropolitan unemployment rates, as well as other labor-force statistics, are produced in the LAUS program. Every quarter, the QCEW program produces information on employment and wages within the state and counties, split up by industries. Every quarter, the OES program produces employment and wage information within the state, split up by occupation groups. Every quarter, the MLS program produces information on layoffs for the state and metropolitan areas. This data is then used by people ranging from public officials to academic researchers to company managers to unemployed citizens in helping them make more informed decisions.

National Indicators	Date	Value
GDP Growth	11Q2	1.0%
Unemployment Rate	Jul-11	9.1%
Fed Interest Rate	Aug-11	0.25%
Current Account Balance	11Q1	-\$119.3 Billion
Exchange Rate DXY	Jul-11	0.78%

Nebraska Indicators	Date	Value
Unemployment Rate	Jul-11	4.1%
House Value Appreciation	11Q2	-1.05%
Average Weekly Manufacturing Hours	Jul-11	40.8
Net Taxable Retail Sales	May-11	\$1.991 Billion
Median Employment Wages	11Q2	\$30,575

Pricing Indicators	Date	Value
Barrel of Crude Oil	Aug-11	\$87.15
ECI Change	11Q2	0.70%
PPI Change	Jul-11	0.20%

July 2011	Indexes			% Change From	
	Jul-11	Jun-11	Jul-10	Jun-11	Jul-10
U.S. All Items	225.922	225.722	218.011	0.1%	3.6%
Midwest Urban All Items	216.099	215.954	208.211	0.1%	3.8%
Northeast Urban All Items	242.282	241.690	233.885	0.2%	3.6%
South Urban All Items	219.682	219.318	210.988	0.2%	4.1%
West Urban All Items	227.805	228.075	221.331	-0.1%	2.9%

Sources: tradingeconomics.com, bls.gov, fhfa.gov, revenue.state.ne.us, oil-price.net

Openings and Expansions

TREVOR NELSON, RESEARCH ANALYST



Note: The following information is obtained through a monthly survey of Nebraska's Career Centers. Openings and expansions that were not publicly reported or reported to career center managers are not listed. If you own or know of a business which is opening or expanding, please email Jacob.Liudahl@nebraska.gov with you information.

Lincoln

- Kawasaki has announced addition of 100 workers over the next few months for the railcar division.
- White House Black Market is opening in South Pointe in late September or early October.
- Dickey's Barbeque Pit opened at the end of July.
- Lester Electrical plans to add more than 40 new employees over the next few years as part of their Nebraska Tax Advantage Act application.

Omaha

- Bellissimo Salon and Spa, a new business, is adding three employees.
- Andrea's Designs, a new business in Elkhorn, is adding two employees.
- Fountain Creek Dezinworks has a new site in Elkhorn.
- New York Life is adding five to six employees.
- Paperdoll Vintage Boutique opened in Benson.
- The following openings and expansions have been reported by the Omaha Chamber of Commerce: Chick-fil-A, 15 employees; Hayneedle, online retailer, 50 employees; Alegent Health Clinic, 15 employees; CSG systems, 60 employees; AAA Bank Nebraska, 11 employees.

Northeast

Norfolk

- Veyance expects to add more employees as part of their Nebraska Tax Advantage Act application.

Central

Grand Island

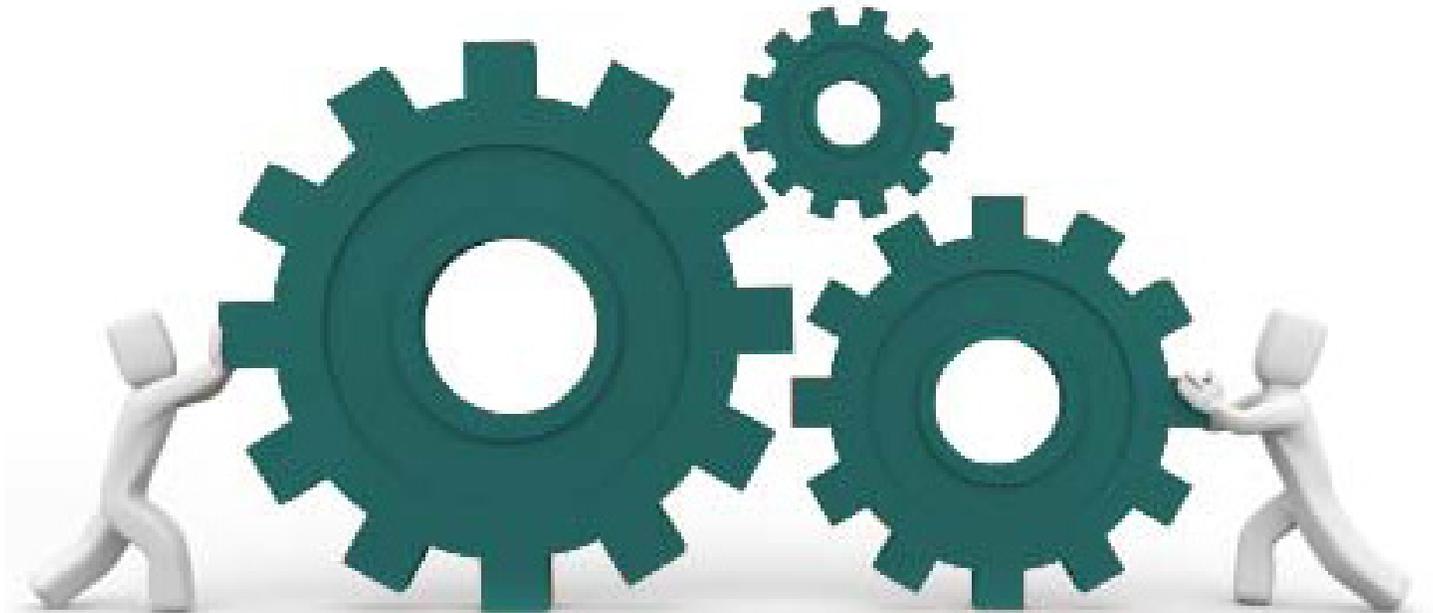
- Dreisbach's Carry-out opened in Grand Island on July 8th.

Panhandle Region

Scottsbluff

- A job fair was held by Health and Human Services to fill approximately 30 social service worker trainee positions at the customer service center in Scottsbluff.
- A new Maverick's convenience store and gas station is being built in Scottsbluff.
- Steel Art Gallery opened in Morrill featuring "original art work and hand crafted items."
- El Tapito and Noah's Burritos opened.
- Regional West Medical Center is in the second stage of a \$2.8 million expansion.

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS



Responsibilities for the Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates of monthly industry employment for the state and metropolitan areas (Lincoln & Omaha) changed from the Nebraska Department of Labor to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in April 2011. This transition happened in all states. Concurrent with this transition, BLS implemented several methodological changes to the estimation approach across states. The new estimation process reduces local economic knowledge in the process and may result in more month to month variability of the estimates, particularly in the smaller states. More detailed information on the changes to procedures for producing CES estimates is available on the BLS Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/sae/cesprocs.htm>

TOTAL NONFARM

JANET DENBRING

Nationally, over-the-month non-seasonally adjusted employment declined by 1,231,000 jobs (-0.9%), a normal occurrence in July. The vast majority of the monthly loss came from Government (1,227,000 jobs) due to the summer drop in Local Education. Over-the-year non-seasonally adjusted employment gained 1,351,000 jobs (1.0%). In 2011, it has consistently improved from 0.7% to 1.1% each month. During the past seven months, the highest over-the-year percentage growth industries have been in Professional and Business Services (2.4% to 3.2%) followed by Educational and Health Services (2.0% to 2.2%).

From January 2011 to June 2011, Nebraska Total Nonfarm increased by 36,604 jobs. Since June, employment decreased 12,298 to 955,231 jobs (-1.3%), which is common in July. Over the year, Total Nonfarm employment expanded by 15,470 jobs (1.6%). In 2011, it has increased 1.3% to 1.8%

each month. Since January, over-the-year employment has consistently improved the most in Professional and Business Services (4.8% to 7.6%) or Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (1.6% to 3.8%).

The Lincoln MSA employment started out 2011 at 168,494 and grew by 6,616 jobs to peak in May at 175,110, but has lost 1,394 jobs in the past two months. Over half of the losses have come from Local Government seasonal decline. Since July 2010, employment has increased by 5,102 jobs with majority of gains in Professional and Business Services (2,023 jobs) and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (1,595 jobs). Over the month, the Omaha MSA employment edged up the past four months by 20,267 jobs, but dropped by 4,429 jobs in the last month to 464,114 jobs, with decreases occurring in 9 of the 10 industries. Over the year, the gain of 5,901 jobs came from Professional and Business Services (2,959 jobs) and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (2,960 jobs).

MINING AND CONSTRUCTION

Over-the-month seasonal growth in national Mining and Construction for the past six months has been positive, from 0.1% to 3.6%. Since February, over-the-year employment has increased (0.8% to 2.0%).

Over the month, statewide employment in Mining and Construction remained stable at 45,433. Over the year, employment has been relatively even at -0.4%.

Over the past year, Lincoln MSA employment has ranged from 6,005 to 7,184 workers, following its usual seasonal pattern, but just dropping lower each year. Currently in July, there are 6,777 workers. Since reaching its lowest point in February 2011 at 18,368, employment in the Omaha MSA

has grown by 3,026 jobs. Since July 2010, employment dropped by 775 jobs (-3.5%) which is less than its past average of -3.9%.



MANUFACTURING

From June to July this year, statewide Manufacturing remained flat at 95,089 (-0.4% or -367 jobs). July's over-the-year growth of 3.3% (3,062 jobs) adds to its consecutive growth since December 2010. Over-the-year employment in Durable Goods increased 1,819 jobs (4.3%) and Non-durable Goods gained 1,243 jobs (2.5%).

Lincoln MSA hit its recent peak in June 2011 at 13,104 and dropped in July by 270 jobs. Employment in the Omaha MSA in the past three months has varied from 31,700 to 32,000.



TRADE, TRANSPORTATION, AND UTILITIES

During the past four months, statewide employment gained 9,040 jobs. Since June, employment contracted by 1,871 jobs to 201,994 (-0.9%). All three subsectors declined from June to July. Since July 2010, employment improved by 6,195 jobs (3.2%). Over the year, Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities increased 6.7% (3,388 jobs) with over-the-year gains of 3.9% to 8.3% since January 2011. Retail Trade added 2,541 jobs (2.4%) with yearly gains of 0.3% to 2.6%. Over-the-year employment in Wholesale Trade grew 266 jobs (0.6%) in July

with the previous six months improving 0.2% to 1.5%.

Over the year, Lincoln MSA employment increased by 1,595 jobs (5.0%). The last recent comparable month occurred in March 2008 (1,538 jobs or 5.0%). Retail Trade (962 jobs, 5.5%) contributed the most to the gains in the past year. Over the past year, Omaha employment advanced by 2,960 jobs (3.2%). Retail Trade progressed by 1,943 jobs and Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities delivered an increase of 1,127 jobs since last July.

INFORMATION

Over the month, statewide employment grew 174 jobs (1.0%). Over the year, employment increased by 337 workers (2.0%).

Since July 2010, employment in the Lincoln MSA has decreased to 2,151 (-0.5%). In the Omaha MSA, employment has varied from 10,601 to 10,702 since January 2011.

FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Over-the-month employment in Nebraska decreased by 407 jobs (-0.6%). Since January 2011, over-the-year employment has held steady between -0.3% and 0.3%.

Employment in the Lincoln MSA was just above 13,400 in June and July. Over-the-year employment in the Omaha MSA remained stable during the past four months (-0.1% to 0.4%); however, it declined 400 jobs (-1.0%) in July.

PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Since March 2011, Nebraska monthly employment has consistently added jobs to reach 109,655 workers, with the majority of the increases coming from Administrative and Waste Services. Over-the-year employment increased 6,772 jobs (6.6%). Since March 2011, the growth rates range from 5.3% to 7.6%. The majority of the yearly employment growth has come from Administrative and Waste Services posting gains between 10.3% and 13.6% since January 2011.

Lincoln MSA increased in July to surpass the previous peak employment of 19,918. In the Omaha MSA, employment dipped down to 60,706 in February 2010 but in July reached a new high at 66,885.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES

Over-the-month employment in Nebraska decreased by 1,621 jobs (-1.2%). The decrease counteracts the large gain of 2,226 jobs (1.7%) in June 2011. Statewide, over-the-year employment added only 713 jobs (0.53%) in July, which is the smallest gain it has had since November 2009 (0.54%).

After posting continual over-the-year losses for the past year, ranging from -0.8% to -2.7%, over-the-year employment in the Lincoln MSA grew by 541 jobs (2.2%) to 25,085. After an unusual over-the-month increase of 575 in June, employment in the Omaha MSA dropped this month in July by 346 to 71,049 jobs.

	Number of Workers			Over the Month		Over the year	
	July-11	June-11	July-10	Numeric Change	Percent Change	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Total Nonfarm	955,231	967,529	939,761	-12,298	-1.3%	15,470	1.7%
Mining, Logging & Construction	45,433	45,453	45,597	-20	0.0%	-164	-0.4%
Construction of Buildings	9,063	8,991	9,306	72	0.8%	-243	-2.6%
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	6,885	6,756	6,566	129	1.9%	319	4.9%
Specialty Trade Contractors	29,097	29,357	28,756	-260	-0.9%	341	1.2%
Manufacturing	95,089	95,456	92,027	-367	-0.4%	3,062	3.3%
Durable Goods	43,725	43,741	41,906	-16	0.0%	1,819	4.3%
Non-Durable Goods	51,364	51,715	50,121	-351	-0.7%	1,243	2.5%
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	201,994	203,865	195,799	-1,871	-0.9%	6,195	3.2%
Wholesale Trade	41,450	41,851	41,184	-401	-1.0%	266	0.7%
Retail Trade	106,511	107,169	103,970	-658	-0.6%	2,541	2.4%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	54,033	54,845	50,645	-812	-1.5%	3,388	6.7%
Information	17,238	17,064	16,901	174	1.0%	337	2.0%
Financial Activities	68,748	69,155	68,984	-407	-0.6%	-236	-0.3%
Finance and Insurance	59,726	60,087	59,922	-361	-0.6%	-196	-0.3%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	9,022	9,068	9,062	-46	-0.5%	-40	-0.4%
Professional & Business Services	109,655	108,908	102,883	747	0.7%	6,772	6.6%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	43,691	43,951	42,674	-260	-0.6%	1,017	2.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	17,995	17,917	16,992	78	0.4%	1,003	5.9%
Admin & Support & Waste Mngmt & Remdtn Srvc	47,969	47,040	43,217	929	2.0%	4,752	11.0%
Education & Health Services	134,997	136,618	134,284	-1,621	-1.2%	713	0.5%
Educational Services	16,402	16,972	15,841	-570	-3.4%	561	3.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	118,595	119,646	118,443	-1,051	-0.9%	152	0.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	85,814	85,312	83,815	502	0.6%	1,999	2.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	14,147	14,114	14,327	33	0.2%	-180	-1.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	71,667	71,198	69,488	469	0.7%	2,179	3.1%
Other Services	36,812	37,725	37,257	-913	-2.4%	-445	-1.2%
Repair and Maintenance	9,683	9,903	9,918	-220	-2.2%	-235	-2.4%
Personal and Laundry Services	7,563	7,791	7,803	-228	-2.9%	-240	-3.1%
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Profssnl, & Sim Orgs	19,566	20,031	19,536	-465	-2.3%	30	0.2%
Government	159,451	167,973	162,214	-8,522	-5.1%	-2,763	-1.7%
Federal Government	16,573	16,557	18,028	16	0.1%	-1,455	-8.1%
State Government	38,918	39,286	38,600	-368	-0.9%	318	0.8%
Local Government	103,960	112,130	105,586	-8,170	-7.3%	-1,626	-1.5%

LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY

From June to July, statewide employment rose by 502 jobs (0.6%) to 85,814. Over-the-year employment expanded 1,999 jobs (2.4%). Since November 2010, over-the-year employment has grown consistently from 0.7% to 2.4%. The yearly growth is due to Accommodation and Food Service gaining 2,179 jobs (3.1%). Since November 2010, this subsector has improved repeatedly from 1.3% to 3.1%.

In 2011, employment in the Lincoln MSA started at 15,539 and reached its peak in June at 16,690 but fell to 16,547 in July. Over-the-month employment growth in the Omaha MSA was higher than normal for the past four months (2.5% to 5.1%), which may account for why July's drop (-1.8%) was twice as large as previous years.

OTHER SERVICES

Since last month, statewide employment fell by 913 jobs (-2.4%)

with losses spread across all three subsectors. Over-the-year employment had been expanding since January 2007 to June 2011 with percentages ranging from 0.3% to 4.3%. That trend changed this month as over-the-year employment was down 445 workers (-1.2%). Since September 2008, Personal and Laundry Services has been declining every month except for April and May of 2011. Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations has increased 0.6% to 6.1% since January 2008; however, it remained steady this month (0.2%).

From July 2010 to July 2011, the Lincoln MSA employment has ranged from 6,900 to 7,100 jobs. Over-the-year employment in the Omaha MSA has been steadily growing by 1.0% or more since June 2009. It lost some momentum last month by only increasing 0.7%, but it was enough to push employment to its five-year high of 17,973. July 2011 employment was stable at -0.2%.

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