



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Wednesday, October 2, 2019**

**CONTACT: Brian Turmail**  
**(703) 459-0238; [brian.turmail@agc.org](mailto:brian.turmail@agc.org)**

**CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT INCREASES IN 252 OUT OF 358 METRO AREAS FROM AUGUST 2018 TO AUGUST 2019 AS FIRMS HIRE AMID TIGHT LABOR CONDITIONS**

*Dallas-Plano-Irving, Texas and Auburn-Opelika, Ala. Have Largest Gains; Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, N.C., Fairbanks, Alaska, and Longview, Texas Lag the Most as Industry Calls for New Workforce Funding*

Construction employment grew in 252 out of 358 metro areas between August 2018 and August 2019, declined in 60 and was unchanged in 46, according to a new analysis of federal employment data released today by the Associated General Contractors of America. Association officials said that while firms are finding ways to add staff, a recent [survey](#) found 80 percent of contractors are having a hard time finding enough workers to hire.

“Construction firms would likely be adding even more jobs if they could find more qualified workers to hire,” said Ken Simonson, the association’s chief economist. “But tight labor market conditions are prompting many firms to become more efficient and more adaptable to keep pace with demand for their services.”

The Dallas-Plano-Irving, Texas metro area added the most construction jobs during the past year (12,400 jobs, 8 percent). Other metro areas adding a large amount of construction jobs during the past 12 months include Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz. (11,000 jobs, 9 percent); Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, Calif. (9,600 jobs, 6 percent) and St. Louis, Mo. (7,100 jobs, 10 percent). The largest percentage gain occurred in Auburn-Opelika, Ala. (15 percent, 400 jobs) and Spokane-Spokane Valley, Wash. (15 percent, 2,400 jobs) followed by Omaha-Council Bluffs, Neb.-Iowa (14 percent, 4,300 jobs).

The largest job losses between August 2018 and August 2019 occurred in Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, N.C. (-2,900 jobs, -4 percent), followed by Baton Rouge, La. (-2,600 jobs, -5 percent); Hartford-West Hartford-East Hartford, Conn. (-1,500 jobs, -7 percent) and Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, Md. (-1,400 jobs, -4 percent). The largest percentage decrease took place in Fairbanks, Alaska (-9 percent, -300 jobs) and Longview, Texas (-9 percent, -1,300 jobs), followed by Houma-Thibodaux, La. (-8 percent, -400 jobs).

Association officials said that many firms are boosting pay and benefits, investing in more training programs and adopting new technologies and new techniques to become more efficient. Even with those changes, many firms report they are proposing longer construction schedules and charging more for projects because of labor shortages. That is why association officials are continuing to push Congress and the Trump administration to boost funding for career and technical education, pass comprehensive immigration reform and make it easier for construction students to qualify for federal Pell Grants.

“Despite the many steps this industry is taking, there are still too many high-paying construction career positions that remain vacant,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “Congress and the administration can help put more people into good jobs by investing in school and workforce training programs that expose them to careers in construction.”

View the metro employment [data](#), [rankings](#), [top 10](#), [history](#) and [map](#).

###