AGC THE CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION

Data DIGest

Vol. 26, No. 44 Nov. 17-20, 2026

Construction employment climbs in 29 states from September to October; starts surge, Dodge reports

Seasonally adjusted **construction employment** rose from September to October **in** 29 **states**, fell in 15 states and was unchanged in six states and the District of Columbia, according to AGC's analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data posted on Tuesday. Texas added the most construction jobs (6,900 jobs, 0.7%), followed by Indiana (2,600, 1.4%), Iowa (1,800, 2.0%), Arizona (1,600, 0.7%) and Michigan (1,500, 0.7%). The largest percentage gain occurred in Delaware (2.4%, 600 jobs), followed by Alaska (2.2%, 400), Iowa, Indiana, and 1.3% gains in Idaho (1,000 jobs) and Rhode Island (300 jobs). New York lost the largest number of construction jobs from September to October (-6,100 jobs or -1.6%), followed by California (-4,800, -0.5%), North Carolina (-2,600, -0.9%), Colorado (-2,300, -1.2%) and Oregon (-1,800, -1.6%). Montana experienced the largest percentage loss (-2.4%, -900 jobs), followed by 1.6% job losses in Mississippi (-900 jobs), Oregon and New York. Between October 2025 and October 2026, 37 states and the District of Columbia added construction jobs, while 13 states shed jobs. Texas had the largest year-over-year (y/y) gain (26,900 jobs or 3.0%), followed by Ohio (18,000, 7.0%), Louisiana (17,600, 13.0%), Illinois (16,100, 6.7%) and North Carolina (12,200, 4.3%). Louisiana posted the largest percentage gain y/y, followed by Iowa (8.4%, 7,000 jobs), New Mexico (7.4%, 4,000), Ohio and Illinois. Georgia lost the most construction jobs from October 2025 to last month (-6,300 or -2.7%), followed by New Jersey (-5,300, -3.2%), New York (-4,500, -1.2%), West Virginia (-1,600, -4.5%) and Montana (-1,200, -3.2%). The largest percentage loss was in West Virginia, followed by Alaska (-3.2%, -600 jobs), Montana, New Jersey and Georgia. (BLS combines mining, logging, and construction data for Hawaii, Maryland, and D.C.; AGC treats all jobs as construction.)

Total **construction starts** surged 23% at a seasonally adjusted annual rate from September to October, Dodge Construction Network reported today. "Nonresidential building starts jumped 47.7% over the month, residential starts fell 6.9%, and nonbuilding improved by 12.9%." On a year-to-date (YTD) basis, total construction starts were up 14.6% through October compared to the first 10 months of 2025. "Nonresidential starts were up 30.0%, nonbuilding starts improved by 10.7%, and residential starts were down 1.3%....'Construction starts bounced back in October, but gains were highly concentrated in manufacturing with non-energy infrastructure providing secondary support,' said [Chief Economist Eric Gaus]. 'Excluding manufacturing, total construction starts fell 1.1 percent.'"

Construction industry workplace injuries and illnesses declined from 167,100 (2.2% of full-time workers) in 2024 to 155,100 (2.0%) in 2025, BLS posted on Wednesday in its annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses.

The **Architecture Billings** Index (ABI) ticked up to 44.9 in October, seasonally adjusted, from 44.7 in September but has been below 50 (indicating decreasing business conditions at architecture firms) since March 2023, the American Institute of Architects reported on Wednesday. The ABI is derived from the share of responding architecture firms that report a gain in billings from the previous month less the share reporting a decline, on a 0-to-100 scale. Subindexes (based on three-month moving averages) varied for practice specializations: commercial/industrial, 51.0 (down from 51.4 in September but at or above 50 for the third-straight month); mixed practice. 44.3, up from 43.6); multifamily residential, 42.7 (up from 42.5); and institutional, 42.5 (down from 45.2 and the lowest score since December 2020).

Housing starts (units) in October climbed 9.9% from September and 2.8% y/y at a seasonally adjusted annual rate, the Census Bureau reported on Wednesday. Single-family starts rose 4.0% for the month but declined 4.2% y/y. Multifamily (five or more units) starts soared 26% for the month and 22% y/y. Multifamily units under construction at the end of October were unchanged from September but down 3.2% y/y. **Residential permits** decreased by 7.4% from September and 8.7% y/y. Single-family permits declined 8.7% and 13%, respectively. Multifamily permits fell 5.2% and 0.4%, respectively.

From January to September, 29 **states** and D.C. **recorded increases in multifamily building permits** YTD, while 21 states experienced declines, the National Association of Home Builders posted on Monday. The top three states by number of multifamily permits had mixed results: Texas, down 18%; California, up 23%; and Florida, down 24%. The top five **metro area**s with the most **multifamily permits** were similarly varied: New York-Newark-Jersey City, up 51%; Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, down 13%; Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, up 74%; Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, down 7.0%; and Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W.Va., up 69%.

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