



AGC
THE CONSTRUCTION
ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, December 20, 2019

CONTACT: Brian Turmail
(703) 459-0238; turmailb@agc.org

CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT INCREASES IN 38 STATES AND D.C. FROM NOVEMBER 2018 TO NOVEMBER 2019, WHILE 18 STATES ADDED CONSTRUCTION JOBS LAST MONTH

Texas and Nevada Have Biggest Number and Percent of Annual Job Gains, Louisiana Has Largest Losses; Association Survey Finds Contractors in All Regions Expect to Add Workers in 2020 but Report Difficulty Filling Positions

Thirty-eight states and the District of Columbia added construction jobs between November 2018 and November 2019, while construction employment increased in 18 states from October to November, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of Labor Department data released today. Association officials noted that a [survey](#) it released on Wednesday found most contractors expect to keep adding workers in 2020 but they are finding it hard to fill positions and anticipate it will continue to be hard to hire employees.

“It is encouraging that so many contractors were able to add employees even with overall unemployment at a 50-year low and construction job openings at a record high,” said Ken Simonson, the association’s chief economist. “Our survey found that contractors in all parts of the country remain optimistic about demand for projects, and they intend to increase headcount in 2020, but finding workers is a major challenge.”

The association’s 2020 Construction Outlook survey found that 75 percent of the 956 respondents expect to add workers next year, while only 5 percent expect a decrease. Seventy-nine percent of respondents in the Northeast anticipate adding workers, as do 78 percent of respondents in the South, 73 percent in the West and 72 percent in Midwest. However, 81 percent of firms said they are having a hard time filling hourly craft or salaried positions.

Texas added the most construction jobs over the year (56,000 jobs, 7.5 percent), followed by California (29,400 jobs, 3.4 percent) and Florida (26,700 jobs, 4.9 percent). Nevada added the highest percentage of construction jobs (13.4 percent, 12,500 jobs) since last November, followed by New Mexico (11.3 percent, 5,300 jobs) and New Hampshire (9.3 percent, 2,500 jobs). Construction employment reached a record high in Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Washington.

Twelve states shed construction jobs over the latest 12 months. Louisiana lost the largest number and percentage of construction jobs (-9,200 jobs, -6.2 percent). Other states with large job losses include Ohio (-7,800 jobs, -3.5 percent), Tennessee (-4,000 jobs, -3.1 percent) and Illinois (-4,000 jobs, -1.8 percent). Other states with large percentage losses include Wyoming (-5.6 percent, -1,200 jobs) and Connecticut (-4.8 percent, -2,900 jobs).

Texas added the most construction jobs between October and November (5,800 jobs, 0.7 percent), followed by Georgia (2,300 jobs, 1.1 percent), Nevada (2,200 jobs, 2.1 percent) and Oregon (2,200 jobs, 2.0 percent). Nevada added the highest percentage of construction jobs, followed by Oregon and Montana (1.4 percent, 400 jobs).

Construction employment decreased from October to November in 30 states and was flat in Kansas, New Hampshire and D.C. Minnesota lost the largest number of construction jobs (-4,900 jobs, -3.8 percent), followed by Illinois (-2,800 jobs, -1.2 percent) and Pennsylvania (-2,800 jobs, -1.1 percent). Minnesota also had the largest percentage decline for the month, followed by Rhode Island (-2.0 percent, -400 jobs) and Wyoming (-1.9 percent, -400 jobs).

Association officials note that their survey found that two-thirds of respondents expect it will be as hard or harder to hire workers in the coming 12 months, although firms are adopting a variety of recruitment, retention and technology approaches to attract, train and retain workers. The association urged Washington officials to increase funding for career and technical education and to reform employment-based immigration programs.

“Many firms are eager to find workers to fill high-paying and rewarding craft career positions in most parts of the country,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “But Washington officials need to do more to encourage people to pursue rewarding career in construction to boost employment further in many states.”

View the state employment data by [1-](#) and [12-](#)month rank. [View](#) the 2020 Construction Outlook Survey.

###