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Contact: Heather Hawes
630.772.1022
heather@ConstructionMarketingAssociation.org

CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT SHOWS SIGNS OF STABILIZING; AS SIX STATES ADD JOBS BETWEEN JUNE 2009 & 2010; 22 STATES ADD JOBS DURING THE PAST MONTH

July 20, 2010

*Reprinted from CONSTRUCTION NEWS
The Associated General Contractors of America*

Kansas Tops Yearly and Kentucky Tops Monthly Gainers; Nevada and California Experience Most Jobs Losses During Past Year While Wyoming Experiences Largest Monthly Percent Decline

Construction employment edged closer to stabilizing in June, as half the states either added construction jobs or kept the same number as in May, the Associated General Contractors reported in an analysis of federal employment data released today. Compared to June 2009, construction employment rose in six states, the largest number of states to post year-over-year increases since October 2008.

"It is encouraging to see some states adding construction jobs and the declines in others getting less severe," said Ken Simonson, chief economist for the construction trade association. "But there's little room to celebrate with overall construction employment at a 14-year low and demand for most construction services still weak."

Simonson noted that the largest year-over-year increase was in Kansas, where construction employment rose 7.7 percent (4,400 jobs), followed by Alaska (3.1 percent, 500 jobs); Arkansas (2.4 percent, 1,200 jobs); West Virginia (2.4 percent, 800 jobs); and New Hampshire (2.3 percent, 500 jobs). The largest percentage job decrease compared to June 2009, was in Nevada, 24.4 percent (-19,500 jobs), followed by Vermont (18.5 percent, 2,500 jobs); Wyoming (16.6 percent, 4,000 jobs); and Washington (14.3 percent, 22,900 jobs). California lost the largest number of jobs (74,400 or 12 percent).

Kentucky experienced the highest one-month percent increase in construction employment (2.4 percent, 1,600 jobs), followed by New Mexico

(2.1 percent, 900 jobs); Massachusetts (1.9 percent, 2,000 jobs); Utah (1.5 percent, 1,000 jobs); and Nebraska (1.5 percent, 700 jobs). Wyoming lost the highest percentage of construction jobs during the past month (6.9 percent, 1,500 jobs); followed by Vermont (5.2 percent, 600 jobs); Nevada (4.7 percent, 3,000 jobs); Idaho (3.7 percent, 1,100 jobs); and Iowa (3 percent, 1,900 jobs).

Simonson noted that the abundance of workers and firms eager to work, combined with relatively low materials costs makes construction services more affordable than they have been in years. He noted that the producer price index for construction dropped 0.9 percent in June. "In a few months, however, many companies are likely to have closed their doors, and materials costs will be rising again," the economist cautioned.

Association officials noted that projects funded by federal stimulus money have added to the construction job tally in many states. They warned, however, that money will soon run out yet Congress has yet to pass most of its regular long-term infrastructure bills. "Any improvements in the construction employment picture will be difficult to sustain unless Congress quickly passes long-term funding for transportation, drinking water and wastewater infrastructure," said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association's chief executive officer.

View construction employment figures [by rank](#) or [by state](#).

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