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# Construction Employment Increases In 41 States And D.c. From October 2018 To October 2019, While 28 States Added Construction Jobs Last Month

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*Texas and Nevada Have Biggest Number and Percent of Annual Job Gains, Louisiana Has Largest Losses; Florida, Montana, Rhode Island & Vermont Experience Largest One-Month Gains as New York & Alaska Have Worst Declines*

Forty-one states and the District of Columbia added construction jobs between October 2018 and October 2019, while construction employment increased in 28 states from September to October, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of Labor Department data released today. Association officials said that firm's efforts to increase pay and benefits and do more in-house training appear to be helping them find people to hire despite tight labor conditions.

"Construction employment continues to experience robust growth in most parts of the country," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "Many firms appear to be overcoming the challenge of low unemployment rates and strong demand for labor by increasing compensation levels and investing more in training people with relatively little experience in construction."

Texas added the most construction jobs over the year (51,400 jobs, 6.9 percent), followed by California (34,400 jobs, 4.0 percent), Florida (25,300 jobs, 4.6 percent), Arizona (14,400 jobs, 8.9 percent), and Nevada (12,000 jobs, 13.1 percent). Nevada added the highest percentage of construction jobs since last October, followed by New Mexico (11.3 percent, 5,300 jobs), Arizona, New Hampshire (8.1 percent, 2,200 jobs), and Arkansas (7.6 percent, 3,800 jobs). Construction employment reached a record high in Nebraska, Texas, Utah, and Washington.

Eight states shed construction jobs over the latest 12 months, while construction employment was flat in Colorado. Louisiana lost the largest number and percentage of construction jobs (-9,700 jobs, -6.4 percent). Other states with large job losses include Ohio (-8,600 jobs, -3.9 percent), Tennessee (-3,800 jobs, -2.9 percent), North Carolina (-1,700 jobs, -0.8 percent) and Illinois (-1,600 jobs, -0.7 percent).

Florida added the most construction jobs between September and October (4,600 jobs, 0.8 percent), followed by California (2,100 jobs, 0.2 percent), Nevada (1,900 jobs, 1.9 percent), Pennsylvania (1,900 jobs, 0.7 percent), Utah (1,800 jobs, 1.6 percent) and Maryland (1,600 jobs, 1.0 percent). Montana (2.1 percent, 600 jobs), Rhode Island (2.1 percent, 400 jobs) and Vermont (2.1 percent, 300 jobs) all added the highest percentage of construction jobs for the month, followed by Nevada, North Dakota (1.8 percent, 500 jobs) and New Mexico (1.8 percent, 500 jobs).

Construction employment decreased from September to October in 19 states and was flat in three states and the District of Columbia. New York lost the largest number of construction jobs for the month (-3,000 jobs, -0.7 percent), followed by Georgia (-1,600 jobs, -0.8 percent), Illinois (-1,500 jobs, -0.7 percent) and Colorado (-1,400 jobs, -0.8 percent). Alaska had

the largest percentage decline for the month (-1.8 percent, -300 jobs), followed by West Virginia (-1.3 percent, -600 jobs), Kansas (-1.1 percent, -700 jobs) and Hawaii (-1.0 percent, -400 jobs).

Association officials note that a survey of construction firms the association released in August found that many firms report boosting pay and benefits to cope with workforce shortages. A significant number of firms also reported they have boosted investments in training and development programs as they work to prepare new hires with relatively little construction experience or training. They added that more people would likely pursue construction careers if Washington officials would increase funding for career and technical education programs.

“Construction firms are taking the lead to recruit people into the construction industry who may not have originally pursued this career choice,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “And if Washington can increase funding for high-school level construction programs, even more people would choose to pursue construction careers instead of amassing collegiate debt.”

View the state employment map and data by 1- and 12-month rank, state, and most recent peak.

**Contractor Type:**    Utility    Infrastructure    Federal/Heavy    Highway

**Industry Priorities:**    Economics