

STUDY SHOWS CONSTRUCTION JOBS HEADING DOWNWARD



The Associated General Contractors of America reported construction employment declined in 25 states between April and May and in 45 states between May 2009 and May 2010. The organization concluded in the report that construction employment is likely to remain weak because demand in the private, state and local sectors remains depressed. "Construction workers will continue losing jobs until demand for new housing, office, retail and local public construction improves," said Ken Simonson, the association's chief economist. "Although the stimulus is helping, it is very likely that construction employment has yet to hit bottom in most states." On a seasonally-adjusted basis, construction employment improved in 22 states and the District of Columbia and three states remain unchanged. New York's loss of 9,800 construction jobs in May was the most of any state. Wyoming, which lost 1,500 jobs, or 6.5 percent, suffered the biggest loss by percentage. Louisiana added the most jobs with 2,400 and Hawaii added the highest percentage, 4.1 percent, or 1,200 jobs. Other big gainers included Maine (3.7 percent, 800 jobs), D.C. (3.7 percent, 400 jobs), and West Virginia (2.7 percent, 900 jobs). California lost more construction jobs during the past 12 months than any other state (80,900 jobs, 12.8 percent) while Nevada lost the highest percentage (23.0 percent, 18,900 jobs). Other states experiencing high percentage drops include Washington (15.6 percent, 25,400 jobs); Missouri (15.0 percent, 18,000 jobs); and Vermont (14.7 percent, 2,000 jobs.) Association officials said that private, state and local construction employment demand was unlikely to improve until next year at the earliest, given current vacancy rates and public finances. With economists predicting stimulus work will decline later this year, association officials urged Congress and the Administration to act on a series of long-delayed infrastructure measures.

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