

## CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT HAS SKYROCKETED IN NEW JERSEY



No one liked to talk about the housing market and how it has plagued the United States. However, there is good news for the construction business going on in New Jersey. Some people are baffled as to how the construction market can be so strong, when the housing market is so very weak. There has been a 2.6 increase in the number of construction employment going on in New Jersey through the month November. This is an increase of almost 3,300 jobs. This is an amazing increase in regards to construction. Of course, it was the second best employment improvement seen in the state. There are a lot of different areas that New Jersey is seeing these various construction jobs. Some of the jobs are driven by the apartment sector, and others are driven by non-housing projects. There are also things like casinos being built, roads and other various parkways. "There is a lot of infrastructure spending," said James Hughes, a Rutgers University economist. The projects are funded by a variety of sources. Some of the sources are purely federal stimulus money. Other construction jobs are being paid for by actual companies. What really matters is that the jobs are being created and paid for. The New Jersey Turnpike is also increasing its employment. The goal of the turnpike is to widen the road between exit 3 and exit 9. There are also some smaller projects going on around the Turnpike. However, these projects are turning out to be fairly costly when it comes to funding. One of the projects is around \$2.5 billion dollars. The sad part is that 1 million dollars only produces around 10 jobs per year. Adding jobs is expensive and finding money to budget these jobs can prove to be costly as well. "The turnpike widening project is the largest construction project since the road was built," Thomas Feeney said. Other areas of New Jersey are also increasing in their construction spending. There is extensive routing being done on Route 3. One spokesman says that the road department is also increasing their road paving bill by 35 percent. The construction employment hike has the Revel project to think for the steady increase in employment. The casino has plans to open in the next few months. The casino has created almost 3,000 construction jobs. This is a full throttle project and New Jersey is happy to have the jobs and employment increase. "It's full throttle," said Rob Lewandowski, spokesman for the New Jersey Laborers Union, which has a local working on the Revel project. But overall, he said, "the state is facing an extremely slow recovery, and unemployment among the unions' members, which include workers in a variety of construction trades, is still very high."

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