


**Employment and Salary Comparison**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that U.S. construction unemployment in August 2010 was 17%. This is an all time high and an increase from the August 2009 unemployment rate of 16.5%. With the industry in such dire condition, both open shop and unionized labor companies are forced to reduce or freeze pay increases. Unionized labor, which had enjoyed nearly a decade of 4% pay increases, are now averaging 1.3%. Compounding the moderate pay increases are decreased contract terms. Negotiations that are typically for three years are being reduced to annual contracts. In the following table, we look at the pay scales for union construction trades in various cities around the country. The 'change' column is the percentage change in rate from last year<sup>1</sup>:

	Atlanta		Baltimore		Birmingham		Boston		Chicago		New York	
	Rate	Change	Rate	Change	Rate	Change	Rate	Change	Rate	Change	Rate	Change
Bricklayers	\$27.60	0.0	\$35.13	0.4	\$31.70	0.0	\$71.78	9.3	\$59.81	4.8	\$65.69	3.0
Carpenters	\$27.80	2.0	\$35.61	0.00	\$30.21	0.0	\$61.97	5.8	\$63.42	0.0	\$74.81	2.5
Cement Masons	\$26.59	0.0	\$32.60	3.7	\$25.11	0.0	\$68.45	4.3	\$60.61	0.0	\$66.58	0.0
Electricians	\$37.09	3.2	\$48.80	4.3	\$29.43	0.0	\$66.25	3.5	\$65.78	2.7	\$79.16	0.0
Elevator Constructors	\$54.33	6.5	\$62.94	5.3	\$47.98	0.0	\$68.47	4.6	\$66.40	0.8	\$66.43	0.0
Glaziers	\$28.05	3.6	\$42.26	-0.1	\$22.45	0.0	\$59.70	NA	\$62.72	9.6	\$61.76	0.0
Insulation Worker	NA	NA	\$45.03	3.5	\$32.75	0.0	\$59.49	4.2	\$63.25	5.7	\$68.76	0.0
Iron Workers	\$33.92	1.9	\$42.26	-0.1	\$34.59	0.0	\$60.93	3.1	\$71.45	NA	\$76.85	0.0
Laborers	\$21.62	0.0	\$23.14	4.5	\$21.08	0.0	\$49.60	8.3	\$53.37	0.2	\$59.81	4.7
Millwrights	\$34.37	0.7	\$38.93	4.3	\$33.05	0.0	\$58.57	0.0	\$61.10	0.0	\$74.08	0.0
Crane Operators	\$36.95	5.7	\$39.31	3.9	\$25.76	0.0	\$61.10	4.0	\$66.38	0.0	\$82.15	0.0
Painters	\$31.00	NA	\$38.48	NA	\$22.45	0.0	\$64.41	NA	\$60.32	5.8	\$53.51	0.0
Pipefitters	\$41.21	4.8	\$51.35	0.00	\$30.34	0.0	\$69.96	7.0	\$67.23	4.6	\$77.32	0.0
Plasterers	\$26.59	1.5	\$32.95	7.5	\$25.11	0.0	\$68.45	4.3	\$61.50	1.6	\$58.56	0.0
Plumbers	\$41.21	4.8	\$51.35	0.00	\$35.09	0.0	\$68.20	3.0	\$64.25	1.7	\$73.56	0.0
Roofers	\$25.57	0.0	\$33.60	0.00	\$32.18	0.0	\$54.43	0.0	\$52.45	NA	\$56.12	0.0
Sheet-Metal	\$39.11	0.0	\$44.64	4.2	\$32.18	0.0	\$67.02	8.7	\$64.55	1.1	\$73.18	0.0
Drivers	NA	NA	\$48.39	NA	\$20.82	0.0	\$42.33	2.9	\$46.58	0.3	\$59.21	0.0

\*Rates are adjusted to include

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<sup>1</sup> Source: ENR, September 27, 2010