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THIRTY-FOUR STATES AND D.C. ADD CONSTRUCTION JOBS BETWEEN AUGUST 2016 AND AUGUST 2017 WHILE 30 STATES ADD JOBS BETWEEN JULY AND AUGUST
California & Rhode Island Add Most Jobs for the Year; Iowa Has Largest Percent and Total Drop; Maryland & Rhode Island Top Monthly List; South Carolina & Arkansas Have Biggest Monthly Drops

Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia added construction jobs between August 2016 and August 2017, while 30 states added construction jobs between July and August amid strong demand for construction work in most parts of the country, according to an analysis by the Associated General Contractors of America of Labor Department data released today. Association officials said that more states likely would have added new construction jobs except for the fact 70 percent of firms report having a hard time finding craft workers to hire.

"Firms in most states are expanding their headcount to keep pace with growing demand for many types of construction projects," said Ken Simonson, chief economist for the association. "While it is too early to tell what impacts Hurricanes Harvey and Irma will have on the sector's workforce, there are not a lot of unemployed, experienced workers available to travel to Texas or Florida to help communities rebuild."

California added the most construction jobs (47,400 jobs, 6.1 percent) during the past year. Other states adding a high number of new construction jobs for the past 12 months include Florida (35,000 jobs, 7.3 percent); Louisiana (15,300 jobs, 11.1 percent); Texas (15,200 jobs, 2.2 percent) and Nevada (11,600 jobs, 15.3 percent). Rhode Island (17.6 percent, 3,200 jobs) added the highest percentage of new construction jobs during the past year, followed by Nevada; New Hampshire (12.2 percent, 3,100 jobs) and Oregon (11.7 percent, 10,600 jobs).

Sixteen states shed construction jobs between August 2016 and August 2017. Iowa lost both the highest number and highest percentage of construction jobs (-5,900 jobs, -7.3 percent), followed by Illinois (-3,000 jobs, -1.4 percent) and Missouri (-2,100 jobs, -1.7 percent). Other states losing a high percentage of construction jobs during the past year include South Dakota (-2.9 percent, -700 jobs); Nebraska (-2.9 percent, -1,500 jobs) and Wyoming (-2.4 percent, -500 jobs).

Among the 30 states that added construction jobs between July and August, Maryland added more than any other state (3,200 jobs, 1.9 percent), followed by Florida (3,100 jobs, 0.6 percent); Texas (2,600 jobs, 0.4 percent) and Kentucky (2,400 jobs, 3.0 percent). Rhode Island (5.4 percent, 1,100 jobs) added the highest percentage of construction jobs for the month, followed by Kentucky; New Mexico (2.9 percent, 1,300 jobs); and Nevada (2.0 percent, 1,700 jobs).

Seventeen states and D.C. lost construction jobs between July and August while construction employment was unchanged in three states. South Carolina (-2,700 jobs, -2.8 percent) lost the most construction jobs for the month. Other states losing a high number of construction jobs include New York (-2,600 jobs, -0.7 percent); Arkansas (-1,500 jobs, -2.9 percent) and Missouri (-1,200 jobs, -1.0 percent). Arkansas lost the highest percentage of construction jobs during the past month, followed by South Carolina; North Dakota (-2.1 percent, -700 jobs) and Nebraska (-1.8 percent, -900 jobs).

Association officials welcomed the mostly positive data, but continued to urge federal, state and local officials to act on the recommendations included in the association's Workforce Development Plan. They said the key to encouraging more young people to pursue high-paying construction careers is to offer more career and technical education programs, among other measures.

"Too few students and young adults are ever exposed to the fact that the construction industry offers a rewarding path to success," Stephen E. Sandherr, chief executive officer for the association, said. View the state employment data by rank and state. View the state employment map.

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