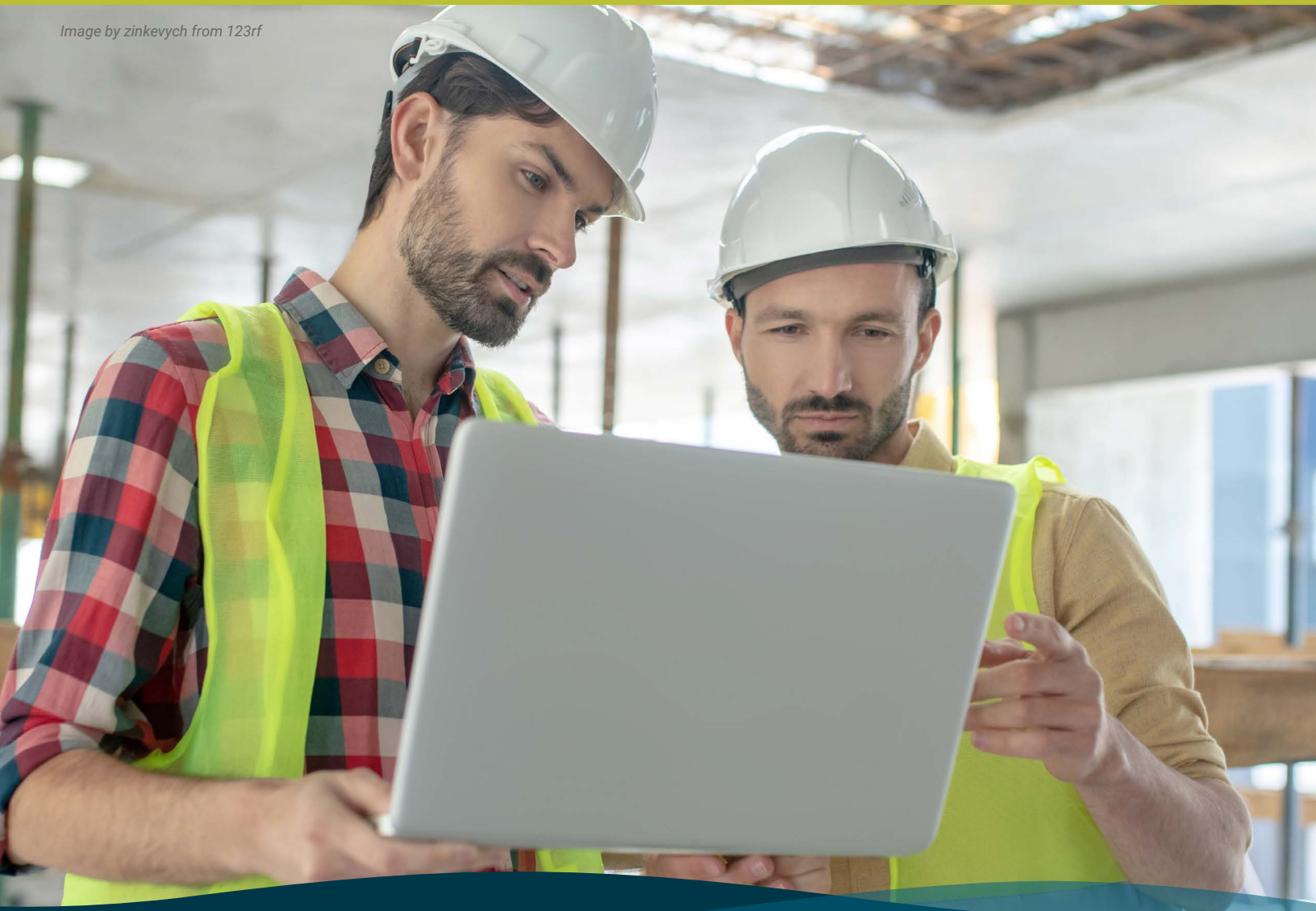


NEBRASKA WORKFORCE TRENDS

MARCH 2023 ISSUE | NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Image by zinkevych from 123rf



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Specialty Trade Contractors

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Labor Supply & Demand

Scott Hunzeker, Research Administrator

When the calendar flipped to 2022, a primary theme heard from many Nebraska employers was difficulty finding available candidates to fill open jobs. This could be seen in the labor supply and demand data shown on NEworks. As the economic recovery picked up steam in 2021, the number of job openings posted gradually grew. At the same time, the counts of potential candidates declined, likely due to unemployment insurance claimants removing their resumes after finding a job.

The ratio of candidates per job opening, which had been closer to 2.0 in early 2021, was just below 1.0 at the beginning of 2022. The labor supply and demand ratio continued to drop throughout 2022 and was below 0.5 candidates per open job since August 2022. As of the end of December 2022, there were 0.44 candidates per every job opening on NEworks.

A ratio at or above 1.0 candidates per job does not necessarily mean that potential applicants are a good fit for open positions; the ratio varies significantly by occupation. Geographic location, education, skills, experience, wages, working conditions, and many other factors also weigh into decisions to accept or change jobs.

48,387

Job count on NEworks as of
February 28, 2023

Data Source: NE- Nebraska Department of Labor. Online advertised jobs data. NEworks. networks.nebraska.gov.

At the end of December, 2022, a few occupations statewide had more than two potential applicants per opening: construction laborers (6.56), general office clerks (5.92), customer service representatives (2.56), and receptionists and information clerks (2.09). However, occupations such as radiologic technologists and technicians, speech-language pathologists, and occupational therapists all had over 100 openings and no potential candidates at all.

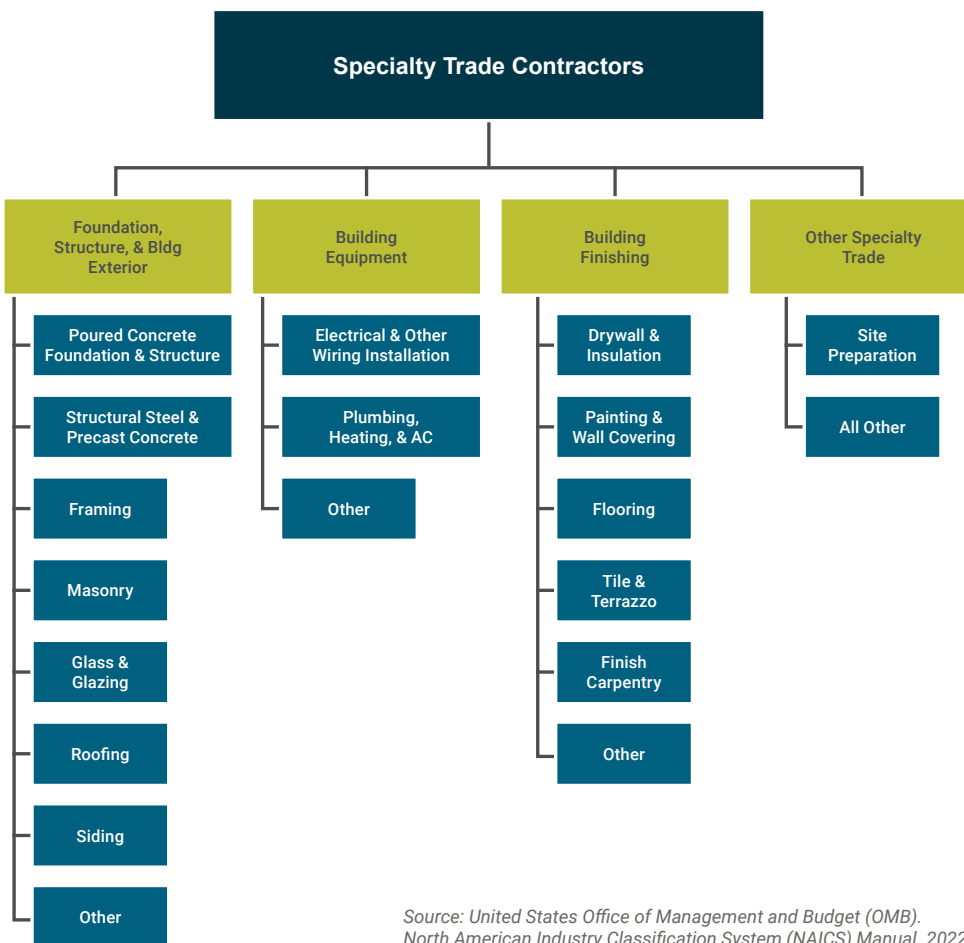
Counts of job postings vary from day to day – the most current jobs are always available on NEworks.

Industry Profile:

Specialty Trade Contractors

Rachel Eckloff, Research Analyst

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Hierarchy: Specialty Trade Contractors



Source: United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Manual. 2022.

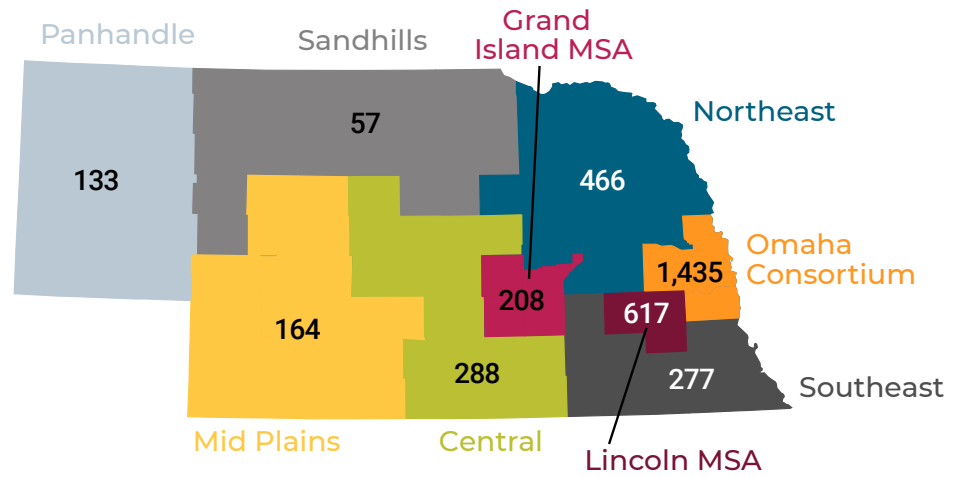
Within the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), the construction sector “comprises establishments primarily engaged in the construction of buildings or engineering projects (e.g., highways and utility systems)” as well as those “primarily engaged in the preparation of sites for new construction and... subdividing land for sale as building sites.” Construction is subdivided into three subsectors: construction of buildings, heavy and civil engineering construction, and specialty trade contractors. (1)

The specialty trade contractors subsector includes “establishments primarily engaged in activities to produce a specific component (e.g., masonry, painting, and electrical work) of a construction project.” The subsector can be subdivided into four industry groups (foundation, structure, and building exterior contractors; building equipment contractors; building finishing contractors; and other specialty trade contractors), which can themselves be further broken down into 19 specific industries, as illustrated above.

Employment

As of January of 2023, there were 3,595 specialty trade contractor establishments with employees in Nebraska. While the majority were located in the state's most populous areas, there were a significant number of specialty trade contractor establishments in each of Nebraska's economic regions. (2) Specialty trade contractors accounted for 4.0% of all employment statewide during the second quarter of 2022, for a total of 39,062 jobs. (3)

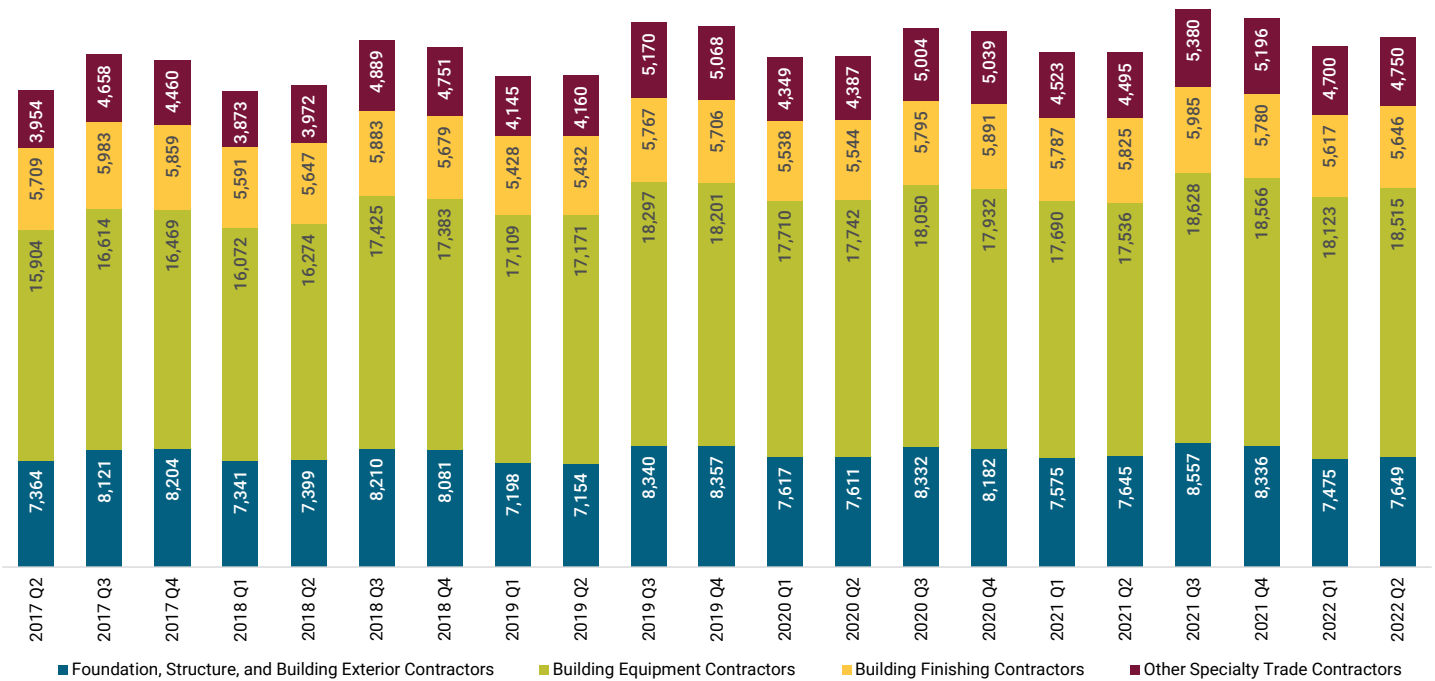
Specialty Trade Contractor Employers by Economic Region, January 2023



Source: Nebraska Department of Labor. NEworks.nebraska.gov. Industry Profile. Employer information is provided by Data Axle®, Omaha, NE. January 2023.

Over the past five years of available data, the building finishing contractors industry group has accounted for the largest share of specialty trade contractor employment in Nebraska. The peak quarter for building finishing contractor employment was the third quarter of 2021, with 18,628. This tracked seasonality patterns seen in the subsector as a whole, with employment typically reaching annual highs in the third quarter, and annual lows during the first. (4)

Nebraska Specialty Trade Contractor Employment by Industry Group, 2017 – 2022*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Quarterly Workforce Indicators. QWI Explorer App. 2023.

* Industry group totals may not sum to subsector totals provided elsewhere due to methodological differences between different data collection programs.

The most common occupations employed by specialty trade contractors in Nebraska were electricians (4,708); carpenters (2,847); and heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers (2,825).

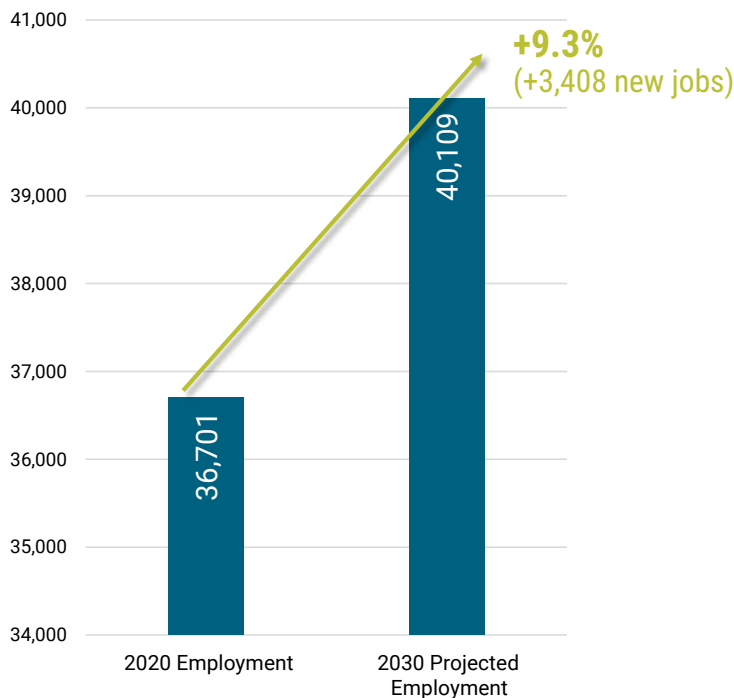
Each of the top 10 most common occupations in the specialty trade contractors subsector have been projected by the Nebraska Department of Labor to grow their total employment by between 5.1% and 20.7% between 2020 and 2030. (5)

Most Common Occupations in Nebraska Specialty Trade Contractors Subsector, 2020

Rank	Occupation	2020 Estimated Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Numeric Change	% Change
1	Electricians	4,708	5,441	733	15.6%
2	Carpenters	2,847	3,168	321	11.3%
3	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	2,825	3,124	299	10.6%
4	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	2,756	2,897	141	5.1%
5	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	2,120	2,345	225	10.6%
6	Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	1,962	2,174	212	10.8%
7	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	1,128	1,261	133	11.8%
8	Construction Laborers	1,063	1,219	156	14.7%
9	Roofers	924	1,020	96	10.4%
10	Construction Managers	910	1,098	188	20.7%

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor. NEworks.nebraska.gov. Long-Term Employment Projections. Staffing Patterns. 2022.

Most Common Occupations in Nebraska Specialty Trade Contractors Subsector, 2020



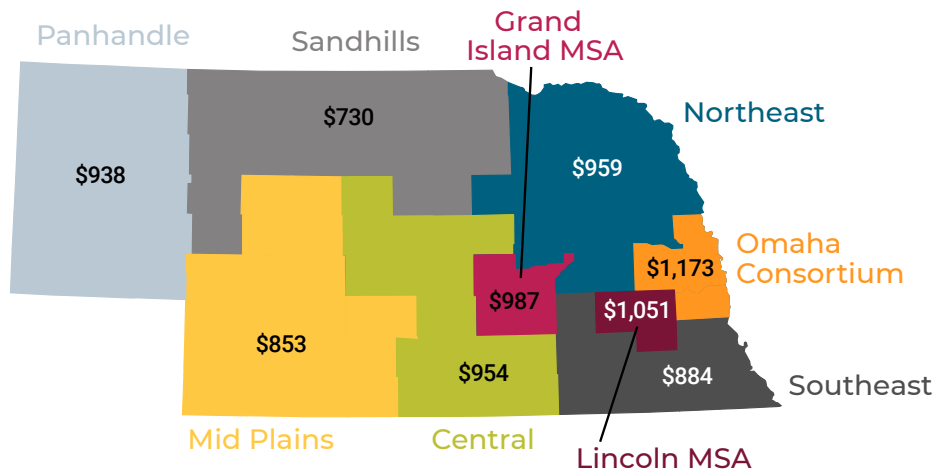
Total employment of all occupations in the specialty trade contractors subsector is projected to increase by 9.3%, or 3,408 new jobs, from 2020 to 2030. This is faster than the 8.1% employment growth rate projected for all industries overall. (6)

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor. NEworks.nebraska.gov. Long-Term Employment Projections. Staffing Patterns. 2022.

Wages

The statewide average wage for workers in Nebraska’s specialty trade contractor subsector was \$27.53 per hour, or \$1,101 per week, in the second quarter of 2022. This was comparable to the statewide average weekly wage for all industries overall during the same time period, which was \$1,057. Specialty trade contractor wages were higher in the state’s metropolitan areas, likely due to differences in cost of living as well as demand. (3)

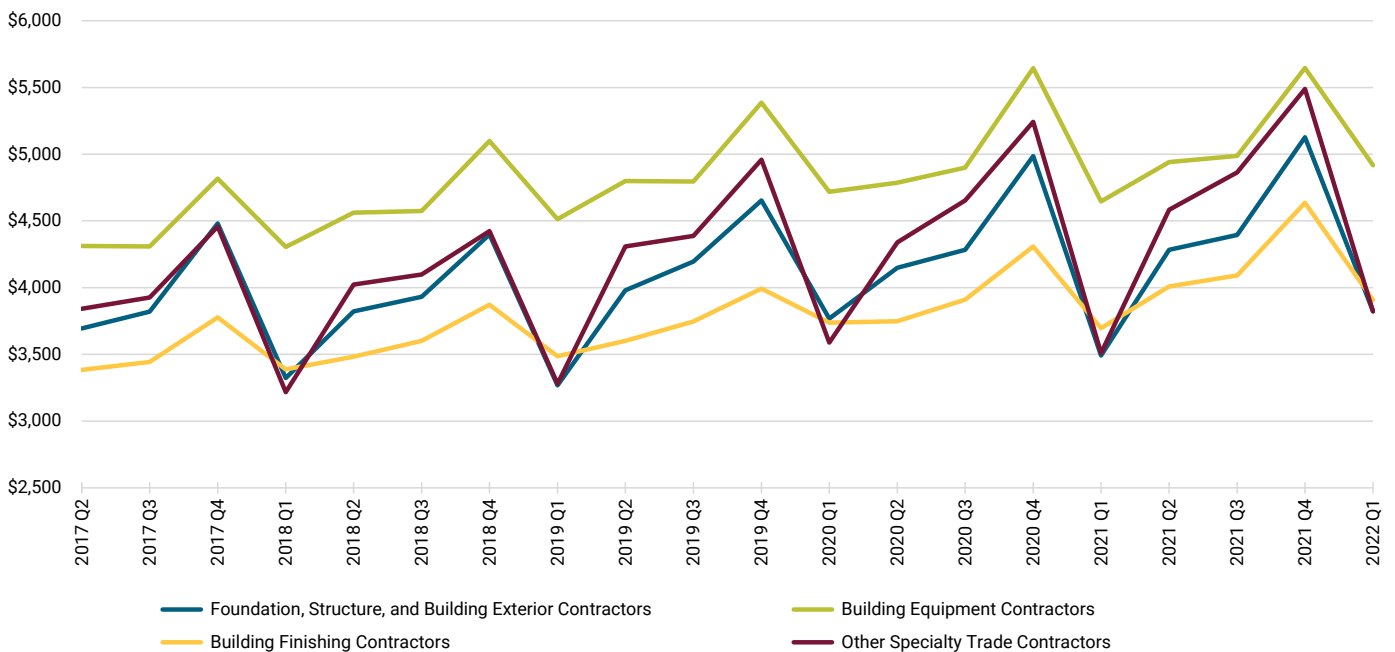
Average Weekly Wages in Nebraska’s Specialty Trade Contractors Subsector by Economic Region, Q2 2022



Source: Nebraska Department of Labor. NEworks.nebraska.gov. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Q2 2022.

Like employment, average monthly earnings for workers in the specialty trade contractors subsector followed patterns of seasonal fluctuation. While employment typically peaked during the third quarter of each year, earnings generally hit their annual high during the fourth quarter. Building equipment contractors consistently enjoyed the highest monthly earnings of any specialty trade contractor industry, while the industry group with the lowest earnings fluctuated seasonally. (4)

Average Monthly Earnings for Nebraska Specialty Trade Contractor Employees by Industry Group, 2017 – 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Quarterly Workforce Indicators. QWI Explorer App. 2023.

Most of the highest-paying occupations within Nebraska's specialty trade contractors subsector were management positions, such as chief executives (average annual wage of \$242,692), sales managers (\$110,377), and financial managers (\$104,296). Several technical occupations requiring a substantial amount of specialized training, such as mechanical and health and safety engineers and elevator and escalator installers and repairers, also made the top 10 list. When management occupations were excluded, the rankings included a wider variety of professions, such as training and development specialists and network and computer systems administrators. (7)

Highest-Paying Occupations in Nebraska Specialty Trade Contractors Subsector, Q3 2022

Rank	Occupation Title	Est Employment May 2021	Avg Hourly Wage	Avg Annual Wage
1	Chief Executives	30	\$116.67	\$242,692
2	Sales Managers	40	\$53.06	\$110,377
3	Financial Managers	40	\$50.14	\$104,296
4	Mechanical Engineers	40	\$48.39	\$100,645
5	General and Operations Managers	1,100	\$46.55	\$96,831
6	Elevator and Escalator Installers and Repairers	60	\$46.25	\$96,194
7	Industrial Production Managers	30	\$44.34	\$92,229
8	Health and Safety Engineers, Except Mining Safety Engineers and Inspectors	10	\$42.59	\$88,574
9	Administrative Services Managers	20	\$42.22	\$87,816
10	Managers, All Other	80	\$41.44	\$86,190

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor. Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics. Q3 2022.

Highest-Paying Non-Management Occupations in Nebraska Specialty Trade Contractors Subsector, Q3 2022

Rank	Occupation Title	Est Employment May 2021	Avg Hourly Wage	Avg Annual Wage
1	Mechanical Engineers	40	\$48.39	\$100,645
2	Elevator & Escalator Installers & Repairers	60	\$46.25	\$96,194
3	Health & Safety Engineers, Except Mining Safety Engineers & Inspectors	10	\$42.59	\$88,574
4	Training & Development Specialists	20	\$40.76	\$84,791
5	Electrical Engineers	40	\$38.17	\$79,408
6	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	30	\$38.07	\$79,180
7	Project Management Specialists	180	\$37.97	\$78,962
8	Sales Reps of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, & Travel	80	\$37.95	\$78,930
9	Network & Computer Systems Administrators	-	\$36.19	\$75,276
10	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades & Extraction Workers	2,500	\$35.24	\$73,285

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor. Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics. Q3 2022.

Sources:

1. United States Office of Management and Budget (OMB). North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Manual. [Online] 2022. https://www.census.gov/naics/reference_files_tools/2022_NAICS_Manual.pdf.
2. Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL). Industry Profile. NEworks. [Online] 2023. <https://neworks.nebraska.gov>.
3. NDOL. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). NEworks. [Online] Q2 2022. <https://neworks.nebraska.gov>.
4. U.S. Census Bureau. Quarterly Workforce Indicators. QWI Explorer App. [Online] 2023. qwexplorer.ces.census.gov/static/explore.html.
5. Nebraska Department of Labor. Long-Term Employment Projections, 2020-2030. Staffing Patterns. NEworks. [Online] July 2022. <https://neworks.nebraska.gov>.
6. NDOL. Long-Term Industry Employment Projections, 2020-2030. NEworks. [Online] July 2022. <https://neworks.nebraska.gov>.
7. NDOL. Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics. [Online] Q3 2022. neworks.nebraska.gov.

Nebraskans Urged to be Cautious When Hiring a Contractor

Grace Johnson, Public Information Officer

As the agency enforcing Nebraska's Contractor Registration Act, the Nebraska Department of Labor (NDOL) reminds Nebraskans to use caution when hiring contractors to repair or remodel their homes and businesses.

Make sure all contractors you speak with are registered with the NDOL and are in compliance with local licensing and building permit requirements. A searchable listing of registered contractors is available at dol.nebraska.gov/conreg/Search

Consumers can minimize the chances of being scammed by an unscrupulous contractor by following these recommendations:

- **Beware of a contractor who makes you an unsolicited offer by showing up at your doorstep with a great deal.**
- **Check references.**
- **Get written estimates, a written contract, proof of insurance, and a written warranty.**

Contractor registration is required of all contractors prior to doing work in Nebraska, but does not ensure quality of work or protect against fraud. However, consumers following the above recommendations can greatly increase their chances of having a positive experience when using the services of a construction contractor. For more information, go to the Nebraska Department of Labor website at dol.nebraska.gov or call 402-471-2239.

Image by andreypopov from 123rf

Roughly **19,000** Contractors were registered in Nebraska last year.

Unemployment Insurance Claims

2022 Year in Review

Scott Hunzeker, Research Administrator

Data dashboards are maintained on NEworks for initial (first filings to determine eligibility) and continued (ongoing filings for those determined eligible) unemployment insurance claims.

Initial claims in 2022 tended to follow seasonal patterns, with increases in winter months due to weather-related shutdowns. Bumps in initial claims outside of these seasonal timeframes, as well as continued elevated levels, can indicate a softening labor market. Decreases in initial claims, including lower than normal seasonal levels, are typically a positive sign that unemployed individuals can find employment before needing to claim unemployment insurance benefits.

Initial Claims 2022



For more claims data, check out our [Tableau dashboard on NEworks](#).

For Benefit Week Ending Date: **7/2/2022**, due to a webhost outage, most new claimants were unable to file this week.

Weeks of Unemployment Claimed in 2022



Understanding continued unemployment insurance claims involves looking at recent trends in initial claims. Unemployment insurance claimants can be eligible for up to 26 weeks of benefits that must be claimed within a year; changes to the number of initial claimants impact the future number of continued claims that may be filed. Shifts in continued weeks claimed that don't correspond to a prior change in initial claims can indicate individuals returning to work quicker (decreases in continued claims) or taking longer to find a job (increasing continued claims).

Throughout 2022, new initial unemployment insurance claims were relatively steady at levels seen prior to the pandemic. Initial claims started increasing in December— a normal seasonal trend due to temporary weather-related closures in industries such as construction. Continued unemployment insurance claims were higher at the beginning of 2022 due to seasonality. Increases between May and August are typical for educational support occupations that decline over the summer, as well as manufacturing establishments that sometimes temporarily close for cleaning or retooling around the Fourth of July. Continued claims began increasing in December, again due to normal seasonal trends.

Image by fizkes from 123rf



Labor Availability Study Results Overview

Greater Lincoln Area Highlights

Scott Ferguson & Marc Bettis, Research Analysts

Top 3 Industries with Greatest Difficulty Hiring

Industries	Percentage of Respondents with Difficulty
Construction	89.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	83.4%
Administrative and Waste Services	83.3%

Factors Most Important to Potential Job Seekers When Considering New Employment

- Salary
- Job security/stability
- Paid vacation
- Paid holidays

Top Job Satisfaction Factors for Employed Potential Job Seekers

- Job security/stability
- Use of existing skills
- Work schedule
- Company values

Top Obstacles to Employment for Potential Job Seekers

- Inadequate pay offered at local area employers
- Work schedule flexibility
- Lack of job opportunities in local area

Top 3 Occupation Groups with Greatest Difficulty Hiring

Occupations	Percentage of Respondents with Difficulty
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	96.7%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	91.1%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	89.9%

Top 3 Reasons Given by Employers for Hiring Difficulty

Occupations	Percentage of Respondents with Difficulty
Not enough applicants	89.5%
Wage demand too high	60.5%
Lack of work experience	55.9%

For all of the Labor Availability Study reports, visit: [NEworks.nebraska.gov](https://neworks.nebraska.gov)

Comparison to Previous Study

	2018	2022
Businesses reporting most or all job applicants had experience in a related occupation	40.8%	24.5%
Businesses reporting not enough applicants as a reason for hiring difficulty	72.0%	89.5%

Important Factors for Potential Job Seekers When Considering New Jobs	2018	2022
Paid sick leave	73.9%	80.9%
Paid holidays	76.4%	85.5%
Work from home/telecommuting opportunities	29.0%	36.7%

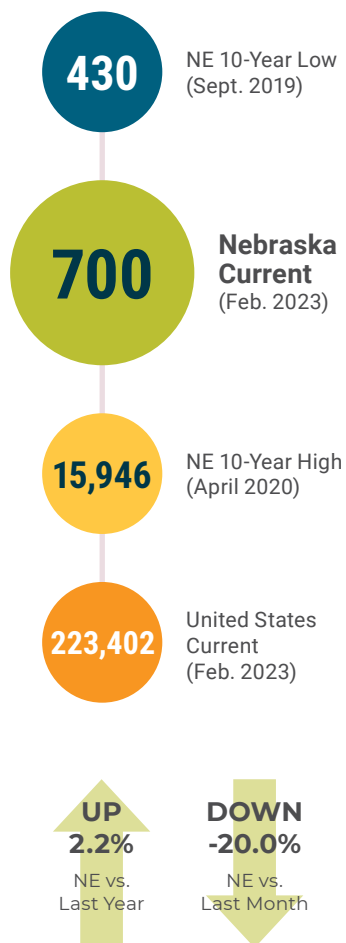
Obstacles to Employment for Potential Job Seekers	2018	2022
Inadequate pay	63.1%	69.6%
Lack of education	24.8%	17.9%
Lack of child care	10.4%	13.5%

Economic Indicators

Kermit Spade, Research Analyst

Initial Unemployment Claims

Monthly Avg. Number of Claims per Week



An initial claim is a request for determination of UI program eligibility filed by an unemployed individual following a separation from an employer. It can serve as an indicator of emerging labor market conditions in the area.¹

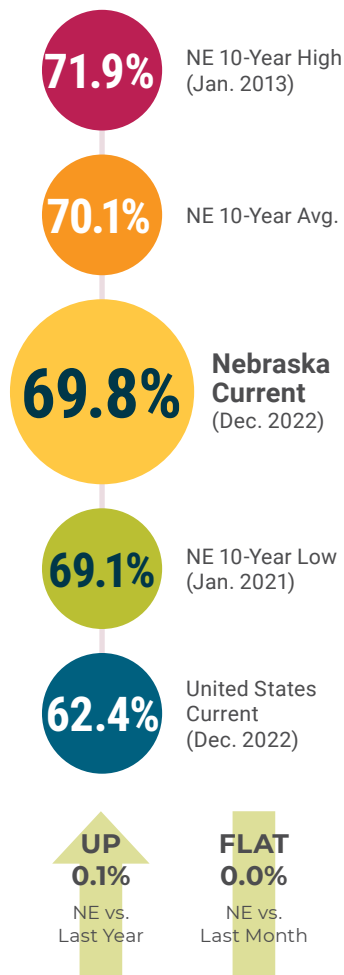
NE- U.S. Employment & Training Administration. *Initial Claims in Nebraska (NEICLAIMS)*. Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NEICLAIMS>.

U.S.- U.S. Employment & Training Administration. *Initial Claims (ICNSA)*. Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/ICNSA>.

Labor Force Participation Rate

Seasonally Adjusted



The labor force participation rate measures the labor force (people working or looking for work) as a percentage of the total civilian, noninstitutionalized population, age 16 and over.³

NE- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Labor Force Participation Rate for Nebraska (LBSSA31)*. Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LBSSA31>.

U.S.- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate (CIVPART)*. Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CIVPART>.

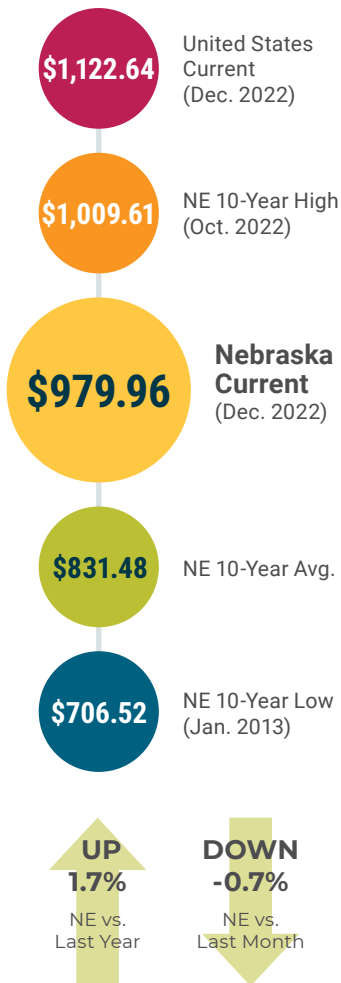
Data Sources: [Retrieved: February 2023.]

Economic Indicators

Kermit Spade, Research Analyst

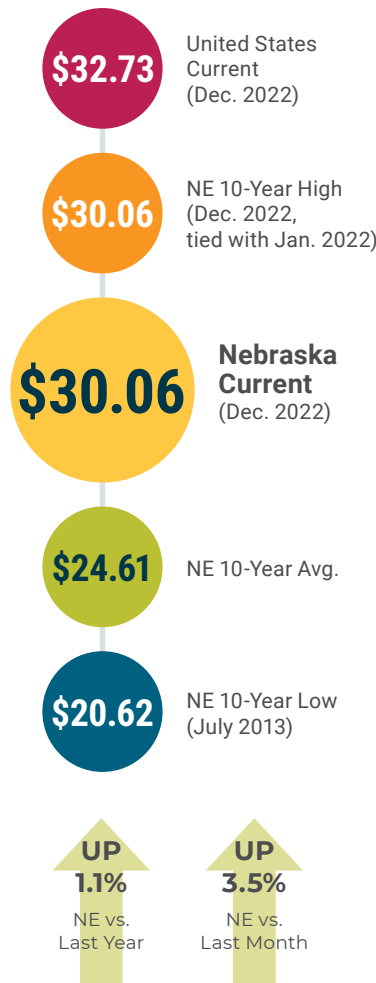
Avg. Weekly Earnings

All Private Employees
Not Seasonally Adjusted



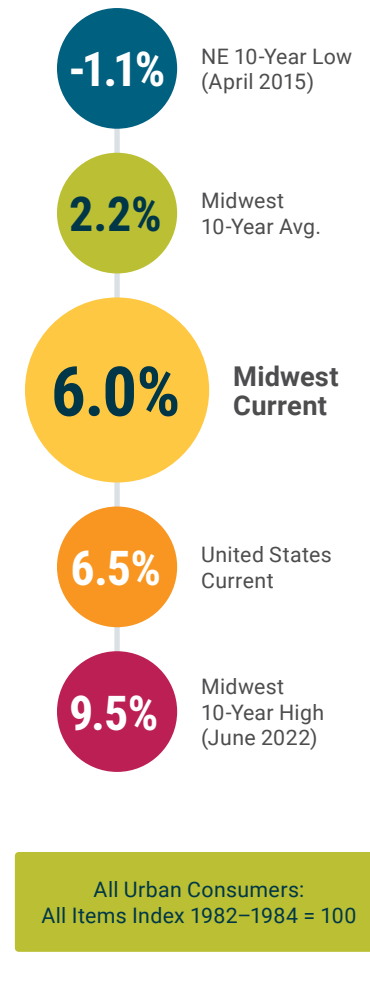
Avg. Hourly Earnings

All Private Employees
Not Seasonally Adjusted



Consumer Price Index

12-Month % Change
Not Seasonally Adjusted



Average weekly earnings represents the mean pay received by workers for services performed over the course of one week.⁴

NE- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. State and Area Employment, Hours, & Earnings. Average Weekly Earnings of All Employees, In Dollars. Nebraska (Statewide): Total Private, Not Seasonally Adjusted. Series ID SMU31000000500000011.

<https://data.bls.gov/PDQWeb/sm>.

U.S.- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment, Hours, & Earnings from the Current Employment Statistics Survey (National). Average Weekly Earnings of All Employees: Total Private, Not Seasonally Adjusted. Series ID CES0500000011.

<https://data.bls.gov/PDQWeb/ce>.

Average hourly earnings represents the mean pay received by workers for services performed during one hour of work.⁵

NE- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. State and Area Employment, Hours, & Earnings. Average Hourly Earnings of All Employees, In Dollars. Nebraska (Statewide): Total Private, Not Seasonally Adjusted. Series ID SMU31000000500000003.

<https://data.bls.gov/PDQWeb/sm>.

U.S.- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment, Hours, & Earnings from the Current Employment Statistics Survey (National). Average Hourly Earnings of All Employees: Total Private, Not Seasonally Adjusted. Series ID CEU0500000003.

<https://data.bls.gov/PDQWeb/ce>

The consumer price index (CPI) is a measure of the average change over time in the prices paid by consumers for goods and services. It is used to determine the real purchasing power of consumers' dollars, and as a measure of inflation.⁶

NE- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in Midwest (CUUR0200SA0). Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CUUR0200SA0#0>.

U.S.- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items (CPIAUCNS). Retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CPIAUCNS>.

Data Sources: [Retrieved: February 2023.]

2023 Workforce Development Excellence Award



Image by fizkes from 123rf

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2023 Workforce Development Excellence Award. Nominees must be individuals or organizations who are making or have made exceptional contributions or achievements in the area of workforce development in Nebraska.

Nominations are due **March 31** and can be submitted by emailing the Workforce Development Board at ndol.wioa_policy@nebraska.gov. Learn more, visit dol.nebraska.gov.

*Labor market information is updated continuously.
For the latest data, visit networks.nebraska.gov or contact us at 800-876-1377 or email Imi_ne@nebraska.gov.*

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