



SASKATCHEWAN

Construction Looking Forward 2009-2017 Key Highlights

What recession? Construction employment growth is accelerating in Saskatchewan as economic momentum carries industrial projects forward and government fiscal stimulus increases civil engineering and institutional building. The only hint of the recession is a brief drop in housing this year. Employment in the 33 trades and occupations tracked in the CSC system will increase by nearly 8% in each of 2009 and 2010 and reach a record peak in 2014 – 43% above 2001 when the cycle began.

The result is tight labour markets for the skilled trades needed on the following key industrial and engineering trades:

- boilermakers
- millwrights
- supervisors
- crane operators
- electricians
- heavy equipment operators and mechanics
- ironworkers
- plumbers
- truck drivers
- welders

Recruiting activity will continue to grow and have improved chances of filling jobs with workers leaving projects in nearby provinces.

As employment stabilizes from 2011 to 2014, the industry will have time to build the skilled workforce through in-migration, apprenticeship training and career promotion. As the recession ends in 2010 and 2011 and construction activity resumes in other jurisdictions (notably Manitoba and Atlantic Canada), competition for skilled workers will intensify once again.

Of the current list of known construction projects, many are complete after 2014 and then a moderate easing of employment begins. Activity in both residential and non-residential sectors declines slowly and this coincides with the emerging demographic impacts as more workers retire. Under these circumstances, an orderly replacement of the skilled workforce with the next generation of tradespersons, supervisors and managers is possible.

The 2009 CSC scenario for Saskatchewan offers prospects for growth and opportunities in construction while conditions deteriorate in other provinces and industries. Much depends on the current plans and intentions for big industrial and government infrastructure projects. Labour market conditions and the depth of the available workforce will likely limit recruiting challenges as the scenario unfolds.

The outlook for residential and non-residential construction investment in Saskatchewan, as well as the need to replace older workers who will be retiring, are the key drivers for construction trades demand. Construction employment is set to rise by more than 4,300 jobs over current employment levels in order to meet the peak in construction activity in 2014. Key projects include a number of mining and manufacturing projects underway or scheduled for construction. These projects represent record levels of investment for the province. Saskatchewan's construction industry will also have to replace another 4,400 retiring workers over the next nine years.

The table (over) shows the labour market rankings for trades and occupations in Saskatchewan.

Industry and government must sustain the traditional support systems for construction across the scenario. This support is essential to meet the challenges of volatile markets, increasing mobility, replacing skilled workers as they retire and improving skills.

MARKET RANKINGS FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS IN SASKATCHEWAN

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Boilermakers	4	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bricklayers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
Electricians (including industrial and power system)	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Insulators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators and fitters	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential home builders and renovators	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	4	4	5	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
Truck drivers	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
Welders and related machine operators	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	2	3

Source: Construction Sector Council.

MARKET RANKINGS

- 1 Workers are available, excess supply is apparent and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets.
- 2 Workers are available to meet an increase in demand.
- 3 The availability of workers may be limited by large projects, industrial maintenance or other short-term increases in demand.
- 4 Workers are generally not available. Employers will need to compete to attract additional workers.
- 5 Workers are not available to meet demand. Competition for workers is intense and projects or production may be delayed or deferred.

Timely construction forecast data is available online at www.constructionforecasts.ca. Create customized reports on a broad range of selected categories within sector, trade or province covering up to 10 years.

The full report, *Construction Looking Forward, An Assessment of Construction Labour Markets from 2009 to 2017 for Saskatchewan*, is part of the Construction Sector Council's Labour Market Information Program, and will be available electronically at www.csc-ca.org later this summer.

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