



**SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE
61 FORSYTH STREET, SW, ROOM 7T50
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303
TELEPHONE: (404) 331-3415**

**FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE
OCTOBER 31, 2003**

Media Contact: Michael Wald
(404) 331-3446

Internet address: <http://www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm>

Fax on demand: (404) 331-3403. Request document 9467

HIGHLIGHTS OF HICKORY-MORGANTON-LENOIR, NC NATIONAL COMPENSATION SURVEY JANUARY 2003

Workers in the Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir metropolitan area averaged \$14.22 per hour during January 2003, according to a new survey released by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin reported that white-collar workers averaged \$19.51 per hour and accounted for 26 percent of the workers in the area. Blue-collar employees averaged \$12.71 per hour and represented 62 percent of the workforce, while the remaining 12 percent worked in service occupations and earned \$11.02 per hour. (See table 1.)

The National Compensation Survey (NCS) presents straight-time earnings for occupations in establishments employing 50 or more workers in private industry and State and local governments. The survey excludes agricultural establishments, private households, the self-employed, and the Federal Government. This NCS covered 162 firms representing 90,500 workers in the Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir metropolitan area, which includes Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba Counties in North Carolina. Eighty-two percent of those represented worked in private industry.

In the Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir metropolitan area, average hourly wages were published for 40 detailed occupations. (See table 1.) Among white-collar workers, registered nurses averaged \$22.61 per hour; general office clerks, \$12.32; and traffic, shipping and receiving clerks, \$10.76. Blue-collar occupations included upholsterers earning \$20.00; industrial machinery repairers at \$14.69; and hand packers and packagers at \$9.40. In the service occupations, nursing aides, orderlies and attendants averaged \$10.10; and janitors and cleaners, \$9.18.

The NCS also provides broad coverage of selected occupational characteristics. (See tables 2 and 3.) For example, full-time employees in the Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir area averaged \$14.48 per hour and part-timers earned \$8.75. Private industry workers at establishments employing 50-99 workers averaged \$11.67 per hour, while those in establishments with 500 or more employees earned \$14.15.

The NCS is part of a statistical program that integrates three previously separate surveys of wages and benefits into one comprehensive compensation program increasing the amount of data available. Data provided by the NCS may be used by businesses for establishing pay plans, making decisions concerning plant relocation, and in collective bargaining negotiations. Individuals may use such data to help choose potential careers. Average rates of pay are also available for levels of work within an occupation based on knowledge, skill, independent judgement, supervision received, and other factors required on the job.

Survey Availability

Complete survey results are contained in the Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC National Compensation Survey January 2003 (Bulletin 3120-13). While supplies last, single copies of the bulletin are available from the Atlanta Information Office by calling 404-331-3415. In addition, data contained in the bulletin are available on the Internet in both text and PDF formats at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs/home.htm>. Select survey tables can also be obtained from the Bureau's fax-on-demand service in Atlanta by dialing 404-331-3403 and requesting document 9467.

For personal assistance or further information on the National Compensation Survey, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Atlanta Information Office at 404-331-3415 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings,¹ all workers:² Selected occupations, private industry and State and local government, National Compensation Survey, Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC, January 2003

Occupation ³	Total		Private industry		State and local government	
	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)
All	\$14.22	2.8	\$13.78	3.0	\$16.32	5.8
All excluding sales	14.13	3.4	13.65	3.8	16.32	5.8
White collar	19.51	6.1	19.46	7.3	19.58	11.9
White collar excluding sales	19.87	8.3	20.07	11.4	19.58	11.9
Professional specialty and technical	21.70	6.2	22.89	8.0	20.96	8.2
Professional specialty	22.68	9.1	25.92	8.8	21.23	10.9
Engineers, architects, and surveyors	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mathematical and computer scientists	-	-	-	-	-	-
Natural scientists	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health related	26.10	14.2	23.07	4.6	-	-
Registered nurses	22.61	4.7	23.44	5.5	-	-
Teachers, college and university	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers, except college and university	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social scientists and urban planners	-	-	-	-	-	-
Social, recreation, and religious workers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Writers, authors, entertainers, athletes, and professionals, n.e.c.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Technical	17.91	5.6	17.50	8.0	-	-
Health technologists and technicians, n.e.c.	13.66	13.7	-	-	-	-
Executive, administrative, and managerial	33.00	7.1	32.62	8.0	34.29	16.1
Executives, administrators, and managers	32.44	7.0	31.93	7.2	-	-
Managers and administrators, n.e.c.	31.73	5.8	31.99	5.9	-	-
Management related	35.93	19.3	35.82	22.8	-	-
Sales	17.03	29.3	17.03	29.3	-	-
Administrative support, including clerical	11.49	5.2	11.92	3.9	-	-
Order clerks	11.83	5.8	11.83	5.8	-	-
Bookkeepers, accounting and auditing clerks	11.59	8.3	11.35	10.1	-	-
Traffic, shipping and receiving clerks	10.76	2.8	10.76	2.8	-	-
Stock and inventory clerks	12.44	6.1	12.44	6.1	-	-
General office clerks	12.32	2.9	-	-	-	-
Blue collar	12.71	2.1	12.83	1.9	-	-
Precision production, craft, and repair	17.15	4.0	17.50	4.1	-	-
Industrial machinery repairers	14.69	2.9	14.69	2.9	-	-
Machinery maintenance	12.09	4.5	12.09	4.5	-	-
Mechanics and repairers, n.e.c.	20.22	4.3	20.22	4.3	-	-
Supervisors, production	16.16	2.3	16.16	2.3	-	-
Upholsterers	20.00	1.6	20.00	1.6	-	-
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	11.87	.6	11.87	.6	-	-
Grinding, abrading, buffing, and polishing machine operators	10.03	4.6	10.03	4.6	-	-
Numerical control machine operators	13.62	10.0	13.62	10.0	-	-
Sawing machine operators	12.71	1.2	12.71	1.2	-	-
Shaping and jointing machine operators	11.54	7.6	11.54	7.6	-	-
Knitting, looping, taping, and weaving machine operators	11.38	8.2	11.38	8.2	-	-
Textile cutting machine operators	11.86	14.2	11.86	14.2	-	-
Textile sewing machine operators	12.43	2.6	12.43	2.6	-	-
Packaging and filling machine operators	10.38	3.7	10.38	3.7	-	-
Mixing and blending machine operators	13.40	10.6	13.40	10.6	-	-
Painting and paint spraying machine operators	11.08	5.2	11.08	5.2	-	-
Slicing and cutting machine operators	12.67	1.2	12.67	1.2	-	-
Miscellaneous machine operators, n.e.c.	12.55	2.1	12.55	2.1	-	-
Assemblers	10.70	3.7	10.70	3.7	-	-
Hand cutting and trimming	13.69	8.7	13.69	8.7	-	-
Miscellaneous hand working, n.e.c.	12.28	13.1	12.28	13.1	-	-
Production inspectors, checkers and examiners ..	10.79	1.0	10.79	1.0	-	-
Transportation and material moving	14.17	10.1	15.56	6.9	-	-

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Mean hourly earnings,¹ all workers:² Selected occupations, private industry and State and local government, National Compensation Survey, Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC, January 2003 — Continued

Occupation ³	Total		Private industry		State and local government	
	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)	Mean	Relative error ⁴ (percent)
Blue collar —Continued						
Transportation and material moving —Continued						
Truck drivers	\$15.00	12.7	\$17.29	5.5	—	—
Industrial truck and tractor equipment operators ..	11.02	7.0	11.02	7.0	—	—
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	9.84	4.0	9.97	4.0	—	—
Production helpers	9.30	2.7	9.30	2.7	—	—
Stock handlers and baggers	8.94	8.8	8.94	8.8	—	—
Machine feeders and offbearers	10.07	1.5	10.07	1.5	—	—
Freight, stock, and material handlers, n.e.c.	10.10	4.4	10.10	4.4	—	—
Hand packers and packagers	9.40	4.1	9.40	4.1	—	—
Laborers, except construction, n.e.c.	9.23	7.4	9.51	8.8	—	—
Service	11.02	11.2	8.36	7.2	\$14.29	13.2
Protective service	—	—	—	—	—	—
Food service	7.59	10.4	7.10	12.1	—	—
Waiters, waitresses, and bartenders	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other food service	8.64	4.4	8.28	5.6	—	—
Food preparation, n.e.c.	9.06	5.1	8.73	5.7	—	—
Health service	10.12	1.9	9.81	4.1	—	—
Nursing aides, orderlies and attendants	10.10	2.0	9.81	4.1	—	—
Cleaning and building service	15.69	30.4	10.45	17.1	—	—
Janitors and cleaners	9.18	10.4	9.24	11.6	—	—
Personal service	—	—	—	—	—	—

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² All workers include full-time and part-time workers.

³ A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy.

⁴ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria, and n.e.c. means "not elsewhere classified." Overall occupational groups may include data for categories not shown separately.

Table 2. Selected worker characteristics: Mean hourly earnings¹ by occupational group,² National Compensation Survey, Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC, January 2003

Occupational group	Private industry and State and local government					
	Full-time workers ³	Part-time workers ³	Union ⁴	Nonunion ⁴	Time ⁵	Incentive ⁵
	Mean					
All occupations	\$14.48	\$8.75	–	\$14.18	\$13.69	\$18.03
All excluding sales	14.31	9.31	–	14.08	13.78	16.81
White collar	20.17	10.56	–	19.51	18.71	33.93
White-collar excluding sales	19.94	17.31	–	19.87	19.54	–
Professional specialty and technical	21.98	17.31	–	21.70	21.70	–
Professional specialty	22.83	20.15	–	22.68	22.68	–
Technical	18.63	–	–	17.91	17.91	–
Executive, administrative, and managerial	33.00	–	–	33.00	31.80	–
Sales	22.63	7.09	–	17.03	9.87	–
Administrative support, including clerical	11.49	–	–	11.49	11.49	–
Blue collar	12.80	7.98	–	12.61	12.01	16.12
Precision production, craft, and repair	17.15	–	–	17.15	15.71	22.25
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	11.88	–	–	11.85	11.44	13.68
Transportation and material moving	14.17	–	–	13.32	13.39	17.11
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	10.01	7.99	–	9.79	9.79	10.98
Service	11.65	7.37	–	11.02	11.02	–
	Relative error ⁶ (percent)					
All occupations	2.9	6.8	–	2.8	3.7	7.9
All excluding sales	3.5	7.0	–	3.4	3.7	7.4
White collar	6.3	12.3	–	6.1	7.7	25.3
White-collar excluding sales	8.4	19.2	–	8.3	8.1	–
Professional specialty and technical	6.2	19.2	–	6.2	6.2	–
Professional specialty	9.0	18.8	–	9.1	9.1	–
Technical	4.6	–	–	5.6	5.6	–
Executive, administrative, and managerial	7.1	–	–	7.1	7.2	–
Sales	29.5	6.5	–	29.3	13.6	–
Administrative support, including clerical	5.2	–	–	5.2	5.2	–
Blue collar	2.1	10.8	–	1.9	2.2	3.9
Precision production, craft, and repair	4.0	–	–	4.0	3.0	6.5
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors5	–	–	.6	.4	1.3
Transportation and material moving	10.1	–	–	7.9	14.2	7.3
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	3.8	11.8	–	3.8	4.4	4.7
Service	12.8	4.6	–	11.2	11.2	–

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy.

³ Employees are classified as working either a full-time or a part-time schedule based on the definition used by each establishment. Therefore, a worker with a 35-hour-per-week schedule might be considered a full-time employee in one establishment, but classified as part-time in another firm, where a 40-hour week is the minimum full-time schedule.

⁴ Union workers are those whose wages are determined through collective bargaining.

⁵ Time workers' wages are based solely on an hourly rate or salary; incentive workers are those whose wages are at least partially based on productivity payments such as piece rates, commissions, and production bonuses.

⁶ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria.

Table 3. Establishment employment size: Mean hourly earnings¹ by occupational group,² private industry, National Compensation Survey, Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC, January 2003

Occupational group	Full-time and part-time workers				
	All private industry workers	50 - 99 workers ³	100 workers or more		
			Total	100 - 499 workers	500 workers or more
	Mean				
All occupations	\$13.78	\$11.67	\$14.59	\$14.70	\$14.15
All excluding sales	13.65	11.49	14.42	14.48	14.15
White collar	19.46	16.40	20.56	20.99	19.27
White-collar excluding sales	20.07	19.72	20.14	20.46	19.27
Professional specialty and technical	22.89	—	23.58	25.06	21.65
Professional specialty	25.92	—	25.92	27.53	23.57
Technical	17.50	—	18.58	18.83	18.33
Executive, administrative, and managerial	32.62	39.80	31.03	31.01	—
Sales	17.03	13.42	—	—	—
Administrative support, including clerical	11.92	12.00	11.90	11.91	11.85
Blue collar	12.83	11.37	13.34	13.51	12.56
Precision production, craft, and repair	17.50	17.64	17.47	17.62	16.66
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	11.87	10.09	12.39	12.47	11.93
Transportation and material moving	15.56	15.26	15.73	16.59	13.16
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	9.97	8.89	10.63	10.67	10.51
Service	8.36	6.76	10.04	10.17	9.40
	Relative error ⁴ (percent)				
All occupations	3.0	8.9	2.6	2.9	2.0
All excluding sales	3.8	7.4	3.9	4.5	2.0
White collar	7.3	20.2	7.8	9.3	6.7
White-collar excluding sales	11.4	22.1	13.0	16.6	6.7
Professional specialty and technical	8.0	—	7.7	12.0	6.3
Professional specialty	8.8	—	8.8	13.5	7.4
Technical	8.0	—	6.8	14.2	2.9
Executive, administrative, and managerial	8.0	20.7	10.4	13.1	—
Sales	29.3	25.4	—	—	—
Administrative support, including clerical	3.9	9.9	4.4	5.9	3.0
Blue collar	1.9	6.7	1.0	1.1	5.2
Precision production, craft, and repair	4.1	15.9	3.4	3.7	4.7
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors6	3.8	.5	.8	2.7
Transportation and material moving	6.9	11.0	6.1	8.9	6.0
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	4.0	7.3	3.3	4.5	3.2
Service	7.2	9.7	8.0	9.5	10.7

¹ Earnings are the straight-time hourly wages or salaries paid to employees. They include incentive pay, cost-of-living adjustments, and hazard pay. Excluded are premium pay for overtime, vacations, holidays, nonproduction bonuses, and tips. The mean is computed by totaling the pay of all workers and dividing by the number of workers, weighted by hours.

² A classification system including about 480 individual occupations is used to cover all workers in the civilian economy. See appendix B for more information.

³ Establishments classified with 50-99 workers may contain

establishments with fewer than 50 due to staff reductions between survey sampling and collection.

⁴ The relative standard error (RSE) is the standard error expressed as a percent of the estimate. It can be used to calculate a "confidence interval" around a sample estimate.

NOTE: Dashes indicate that no data were reported or that data did not meet publication criteria.