

# Construction-Aggregate Sector

Table 13: Lane County Construction-Aggregate Sector Employment Forecast

2017	2027	# Growth	% Growth	Exits	Transfers	Total Openings
7,115	8,839	1,724	24%	3,644	4,724	10,092

Source: Oregon Employment Department

Construction and mining are two closely related industries in Lane County that have been combined into a single sector. Almost all mining employment in Lane County is local sand and gravel companies that produce construction aggregate.

There are three official types of work in the construction industry: construction of buildings, heavy engineering, and specialty trades. Most of the employment and business in Lane County is in specialty trades such as carpentry, plumbing, masonry and cement, followed by construction of buildings (4,151 and 1,844 respectively).

Like most industry sectors, the Construction-Aggregate Sector has seen growth following losses during the Great Recession. After bottoming out in 2011 at 5,256, employment has grown 1,861, or 35 percent, to reach 7,117 in 2017.

Construction and aggregate are expected to

grow faster than the overall economy growing at 24 percent between 2017 and 2027 for 1,724 new jobs, compared to 11 percent for all industries (Table 13). In addition, there are expected to be 8,368 replacement openings for a total of 10,092 openings over the ten-year period. With above average growth, employment in the sector reaches pre-recession levels, which peaked in 2007 at 8,380, towards the end of the forecast period.

Annual average wages in construction and aggregate are higher than the overall average for all industries at \$51,979 compared to \$42,644. In 2017, Lane County's total payroll in construction and aggregate was \$396,232,801, the fourth highest county in the state.

Even though wages are higher on average than for all industries, most occupations in construction and aggregate require only a high school diploma or less for the typical entry level position, providing good paying jobs at lower educational levels (Table 14).

The industry faces challenges due to an aging workforce with 46 percent of its workers over the age of 45. The majority of the skilled workers are being lost and, according to local employers, it is difficult to attract younger workers who are more interested in high-tech rather than construction. Additionally, a tightening labor market means employers struggle to find employees, especially in companies with specialized occupations like construction.



Students gaining hands on experience at Construction-Utility Career Day

Table 14: Lane County Top Construction-Aggregate Occupations and Entry Level Education

Occupational Title	2017 Employment	Typical Entry Level Education
Construction Laborers	809	Less than high school
Carpenters	756	High school diploma or equivalent
Electricians	481	High school diploma or equivalent
Construction Managers	309	Associate's degree
Office Clerks, General	300	High school diploma or equivalent
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	248	Less than high school
Roofers	245	Less than high school
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	239	High school diploma or equivalent
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	237	High school diploma or equivalent
Cost Estimators	225	Bachelor's degree
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	199	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	196	High school diploma or equivalent
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	192	Postsecondary training (non-degree)
Sheet Metal Workers	173	High school diploma or equivalent
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	171	Less than high school

Source: Oregon Employment Department

"The construction industry has improved in getting the word out regarding family wage jobs in the industry. With the work of the Construction-Aggregate Sector and a huge assist from Elevate Lane County, we have improved the connection with the high schools. The industry is reaching more students

and showing them the potential of a career in construction," according to Stan Picket, President and General Manager for Delta Sand and Gravel and Chair-Elect of Lane Workforce Partnership's Board of Directors.

## LOCAL RESPONSES TO CONSTRUCTION-AGGREGATE WORKFORCE NEEDS:

### Mining an Emerging Workforce:

During the months of February – March 2018, 17 local construction and mining employers and training programs presented to approximately 110 students and parents at nine Lane County schools.

KEZI's public awareness media campaign, Skilled to Work, which first aired in March 2018, promotes trade opportunities for the construction, aggregate, manufacturing, and utility industries.

**Investments:** From 2016–2018, LWP has invested \$162,000 in scholarships related to Construction-Aggregate careers and an additional \$121,513 in On-The-Job Training contracts with local Construction-Aggregate employers.