

Heavy Equipment Guide

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Manitoba to see steady gains in construction employment

April 24, 2012 - Construction will continue to be a leading industry in Manitoba over the next decade with the new residential home building and electrical utility sectors reaching record high employment levels. Industrial, commercial and institutional construction will also see steady gains.

The Construction Sector Council's (CSC) just-released Construction Looking Forward, 2012 to 2020 Key Highlights for Manitoba says that the Manitoba construction industry is entering a second decade of strong expansion. Strong gains in both residential and non-residential markets will keep unemployment rates low, and industry may face challenges meeting the expanding demand requirements over the next several years.

"Residential construction continues to grow, creating significant employment opportunities," says Mike Moore, President of the Manitoba Home Builders' Association. "We will need to actively recruit and train new workers to keep pace with the anticipated 40 percent increase in residential employment."

For non-residential construction, activity continues to exhibit steady growth driven by a number of major utilities projects underway and scheduled. "The proposed construction projects translate into strong demand requirements with industry facing the risk of potential skill shortages and recruiting challenges over the next few years," says Dave Martin, Executive Director of the Allied Hydro Council of Manitoba.

"Industry stakeholders will need to carefully manage worker mobility, not only across projects, but across provinces," he says, noting that "the industry has experience in the recent past with recruiting skilled workers from other markets."

The construction labour force is estimated to rise by 9,100 workers from 2012 to 2020 in response to increased construction activity, and 6,900 workers are expected to retire. Industry will need to recruit 16,000 workers over the next decade to meet industry demand requirements. Sustained recruiting efforts that target a variety of sources, including youth, women, Aboriginal people, other industries and immigrants will continue to be a priority for the industry.

"Clearly, labour markets will continue to be tight and stakeholders are focusing on apprenticeship, industry training and immigration processes to help meet emerging requirements," says Ron Hambley, Executive Vice President of the Winnipeg Construction Association. "These types of programs must remain a priority, as construction will be in competition with other industries and regions for workers."

Each year, the CSC releases nine-year labour forecast scenarios following consultations with industry leaders, including owners, contractors and labour groups, as well as governments and educational institutions.

The national and regional reports will be available online at www.csc-ca.org in March/April. Forecast data is also available at www.constructionforecasts.ca. This website allows for instant access to residential and non-residential construction investment data, as well as details on the supply and demand for more than 30 skilled trades and occupations over the next nine years - all broken down by province and region.

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Construction Sector Council

Website: www.csc-ca.org
