

Executive Summary

To profile Utah's demand for labor and gather information concerning the current nature and number of job openings in Utah, the Department of Workforce Services conducted a 2005 Job Vacancy Study. Roughly 4,500 employers across three geographical areas were surveyed concerning the fourth quarter of 2005. Geographic regions were established and identified as Metropolitan Utah, Southwestern Utah and the Uintah Basin.

Metropolitan Utah

- The job vacancy rate for Metropolitan Utah measured 2.9 percent, meaning there were 2.9 job vacancies per 100 available jobs. This is up from 2.1 percent during the fourth quarter of 2004. The current vacancy rate translates into approximately 26,800 job openings available at any time during the fourth quarter of 2005.
- The average advertised wage for job openings surveyed was \$12.20/hr, up from \$11.20/hr measured a year ago. This increase illustrates that the labor market "slackness" that developed during the previous recession was being removed from the economy.
- Thirteen of 18 industry groups reported a growth in job vacancies since 2004.
- The top five occupations with the most available openings were retail salespersons, cashiers, freight and material laborers, customer service representatives and truck drivers-heavy and tractor-trailer.
- "Difficult-to-fill" occupations are those occupations that are experiencing a labor gap or skill shortage. The top five difficult-to-fill occupations were architectural and civil drafters, computer hardware engineers, plumbers, pharmacists and civil engineers.

Uintah Basin

- The job vacancy rate for the Uintah Basin was 5.2 percent, the highest of any region surveyed.
- The region witnessed almost 900 job openings on average during the period surveyed.
- The average advertised wage for job openings surveyed was \$12.20/hr
- A third of all vacancies in the region were found in the construction and mining industries.
- The most job vacancies were for truck drivers, mining service unit operators, and roustabouts.

Southwestern Utah

- The job vacancy rate for the Southwestern Region was five percent, up from 3.1 percent in 2004.
- Approximately 3,000 job openings were estimated for the region.
- The average offered wage in the region was \$11.22/hr.
- Nearly 40 percent of all vacancies in the region were in the construction and healthcare industries.
- The most available openings were in construction laborers, nursing aides and freight, stock and material laborers.