

TRENDS

Who Has Access to Employer-Provided Benefits in Wyoming?

by: *Mark Harris, Sociologist, Ph.D.*

“Overall, the largest gap in access to benefits is the difference between full- and part-time employees.”

Benefits are a major issue for Wyoming workers, employers, and government. They are of interest to Wyoming workers seeking to secure health insurance and retirement benefits for themselves and their dependents. Public and private organizations are concerned because affordable benefits are an important piece of total compensation for attracting and retaining good employees. Governmental entities are concerned about future taxpayer burdens for those who do not have access to benefits. Given these issues, it is vital to understand the entire benefits picture in Wyoming. This article adds an important piece to that picture.

In a previous publication (hereafter *Benefits Survey*),¹ Research & Planning (R&P) provided detailed information on the characteristics of a representative sample of firms in Wyoming and a description of the types of benefits these firms may offer. The *Benefits Survey*, however, did not describe the demographic (e.g., age and gender) characteristics of individuals working in these firms. This detail is fundamentally important because it provides information on who has access² to employer-provided benefits in Wyoming³

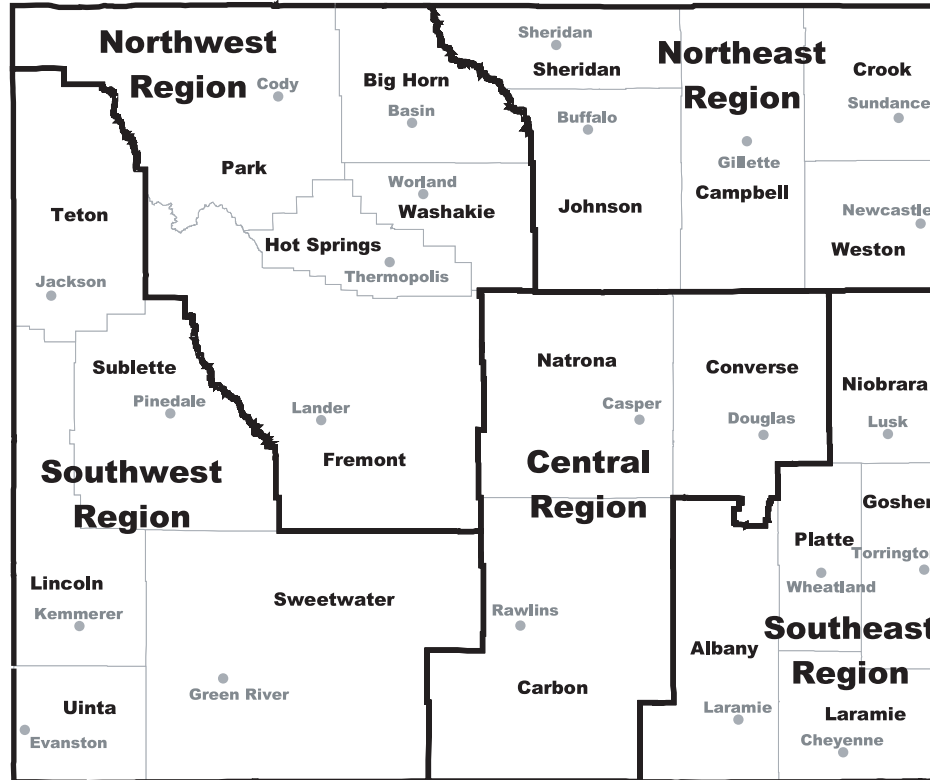
Results indicate that resident full-time employees (compared to part-time employees), middle-aged employees (compared to other age groups), and those

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Wyoming Regions, Counties, and County Seats



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Research & Planning Section, P.O. Box 2760 Casper, WY 82602-2760

Tom Gallagher, Manager

e-mail: tgalla@state.wy.us

307-473-3801

Krista R. Shinkle, Editor

e-mail: kshink@state.wy.us

307-473-3808

Editorial Committee: David Bullard, Valerie A. Davis, Mark A. Harris, Craig Radden Henderson, and Krista R. Shinkle.

Contributors to **Wyoming Labor Force Trends** this month: David Bullard, Carola Cowan, Mark Harris, Douglas W. Leonard, Brad Payne, and Sara Saulcy.

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working in Government (compared to other industries) are more likely to be offered benefits.

Data

Weighted Merged Benefits Data (WMBD) are used to determine who has access to benefits (see <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/0203/imputing.htm> for methodological details). The WMBD data represent employees of firms sampled in the **Benefits Survey**. In addition, we restrict the study to employees who are Wyoming residents⁴ and have worked for their firms for at least four quarters. Employees who work for an employer for at least one year are more likely to have access to benefits than those with less tenure. The data represent a conservative estimate of who has access to benefits in Wyoming.

Analyses presented in this article report the number of individuals, by age and gender, employed by firms that offer benefits (by benefit type). The results reported for this study do not reflect the actual number of employees who have elected to receive (participate in) a particular benefit.⁵ Furthermore, this study does not address the quality⁶ of the benefits offered.

Results

Space limitations prevent us from discussing all of the benefits offered across the age, gender, work status, and industry categories. As such, we restrict our discussion primarily to summary findings and illustrate how the data can be interpreted. Readers can refer to the several tables for specific category comparisons.

Table 1: Full- and Part-Time Resident Attached Employees by Benefit Type in Sampled Wyoming Firms, 2000

	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total
Total Employees	28,940	5,741	34,681
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Row %	83.4%	16.6%	100.0%
PAID LEAVE			
Paid Holidays	24,689	1,420	26,109
Column %	85.3%	24.7%	75.3%
Sick Leave	19,153	885	20,038
Column %	66.2%	15.4%	57.8%
Paid Vacation	26,423	1,898	28,321
Column %	91.3%	33.1%	81.7%
Maternity Leave	4,933	263	5,196
Column %	17.0%	4.6%	15.0%
Paternity Leave	3,249	241	3,490
Column %	11.2%	4.2%	10.1%
INSURANCE			
Health Insurance	26,886	1,471	28,357
Column %	92.9%	25.6%	81.8%
Dependent Health Insurance	25,760	1,421	27,181
Column %	89.0%	24.8%	78.4%
Dental Plan	24,296	1,128	25,424
Column %	84.0%	19.6%	73.3%
Vision Plan	10,690	579	11,269
Column %	36.9%	10.1%	32.5%
Life Insurance	24,427	1,361	25,788
Column %	84.4%	23.7%	74.4%
Disability Insurance	15,856	679	16,535
Column %	54.8%	11.8%	47.7%
RETIREMENT			
Retirement Plan	24,785	2,231	27,016
Column %	85.6%	38.9%	77.9%

Source: Weighted Merged Benefits Data.

Benefit Type and Work Status

Table 1 shows that exposure to benefits varies substantially by benefit type. Among the different types, full-time employees have greatest access to health insurance (92.9%). Among part-time employees, the most common benefit is a retirement plan (38.9%). Both full- and part-time employees have the least exposure to paternity leave⁷ (11.2% and 4.2%, respectively).

(Text continued on page 5)

Table 2: Full- and Part-Time Resident Attached Employees by Industry Category and Benefit Type in Sampled Wyoming Firms, 2000

	Full-Time										
	Agriculture	Mining	Construct.	Manufact.	TCPU*	Wholesale	Retail	FIRE**	Services	Gov.	Total
Full-Time Employees	845	3,142	1,792	2,012	2,437	828	3,167	1,231	4,388	9,098	28,940
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PAID LEAVE											
Paid Holidays	706	2,365	848	1,878	2,090	768	2,047	1,220	3,934	8,833	24,689
Column %	83.6%	75.3%	47.3%	93.3%	85.8%	92.8%	64.6%	99.1%	89.7%	97.1%	85.3%
Sick Leave	487	2,169	503	913	618	440	956	1,121	2,935	9,011	19,153
Column %	57.6%	69.0%	28.1%	45.4%	25.4%	53.1%	30.2%	91.1%	66.9%	99.0%	66.2%
Paid Vacation	760	2,837	1,435	1,892	2,077	823	2,796	1,181	3,782	8,840	26,423
Column %	89.9%	90.3%	80.1%	94.0%	85.2%	99.4%	88.3%	95.9%	86.2%	97.2%	91.3%
Maternity Leave	30	1,070	14	200	22	69	130	254	564	2,580	4,933
Column %	3.6%	34.1%	0.8%	9.9%	0.9%	8.3%	4.1%	20.6%	12.9%	28.4%	17.0%
Paternity Leave	0	53	0	147	2	19	0	33	684	2,311	3,249
Column %	0.0%	1.7%	0.0%	7.3%	0.1%	2.3%	0.0%	2.7%	15.6%	25.4%	11.2%
INSURANCE											
Health Insurance	653	2,930	1,507	1,915	2,244	773	2,616	1,183	4,030	9,035	26,886
Column %	77.3%	93.3%	84.1%	95.2%	92.1%	93.4%	82.6%	96.1%	91.8%	99.3%	92.9%
Dependent Health Ins.	610	2,752	1,494	1,859	2,151	743	2,431	1,136	3,683	8,901	25,760
Column %	72.2%	87.6%	83.4%	92.4%	88.3%	89.7%	76.8%	92.3%	83.9%	97.8%	89.0%
Dental Plan	330	2,810	1,219	1,391	2,106	492	2,221	1,106	3,964	8,657	24,296
Column %	39.1%	89.4%	68.0%	69.1%	86.4%	59.4%	70.1%	89.8%	90.3%	95.2%	84.0%
Vision Plan	11	1,501	538	651	1,455	212	856	341	1,696	3,428	10,689
Column %	1.3%	47.8%	30.0%	32.4%	59.7%	25.6%	27.0%	27.7%	38.7%	37.7%	36.9%
Life Insurance	585	2,676	1,316	1,830	2,081	684	2,146	1,142	3,762	8,205	24,427
Column %	69.2%	85.2%	73.4%	91.0%	85.4%	82.6%	67.8%	92.8%	85.7%	90.2%	84.4%
Disability Insurance	216	2,447	618	1,350	1,667	234	1,040	789	2,356	5,139	15,856
Column %	25.6%	77.9%	34.5%	67.1%	68.4%	28.3%	32.8%	64.1%	53.7%	56.5%	54.8%
RETIREMENT											
Retirement Plan	435	2,839	1,242	1,797	2,102	601	2,305	1,023	3,534	8,908	24,786
Column %	51.5%	90.4%	69.3%	89.3%	86.3%	72.6%	72.8%	83.1%	80.5%	97.9%	85.6%
	Part-Time										
	Agriculture	Mining	Construct.	Manufact.	TCPU*	Wholesale	Retail	FIRE**	Services	Gov.	Total
Part-Time Employees	207	40	172	122	169	78	1,851	140	1,655	1,307	5,741
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PAID LEAVE											
Paid Holidays	0	2	6	7	43	18	263	40	490	551	1,420
Column %	0.0%	5.0%	3.5%	5.7%	25.4%	23.1%	14.2%	28.6%	29.6%	42.2%	24.7%
Sick Leave	0	0	0	3	0	1	79	30	140	632	885
Column %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	1.3%	4.3%	21.4%	8.5%	48.4%	15.4%
Paid Vacation	0	1	5	10	4	14	749	34	701	381	1,899
Column %	0.0%	2.5%	2.9%	8.2%	2.4%	17.9%	40.5%	24.3%	42.4%	29.2%	33.1%
Maternity Leave	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	10	64	185	263
Column %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	7.1%	3.9%	14.2%	4.6%
Paternity Leave	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	53	185	241
Column %	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	3.2%	14.2%	4.2%
INSURANCE											
Health Insurance	9	2	1	51	8	9	470	32	412	477	1,471
Column %	4.3%	5.0%	0.6%	41.8%	4.7%	11.5%	25.4%	22.9%	24.9%	36.5%	25.6%
Dependent Health Ins.	0	2	1	51	8	8	467	32	408	444	1,421
Column %	0.0%	5.0%	0.6%	41.8%	4.7%	10.3%	25.2%	22.9%	24.7%	34.0%	24.8%
Dental Plan	0	0	2	27	8	13	303	32	419	324	1,128
Column %	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	22.1%	4.7%	16.7%	16.4%	22.9%	25.3%	24.8%	19.6%
Vision Plan	0	0	2	1	8	6	44	1	312	205	579
Column %	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	0.8%	4.7%	7.7%	2.4%	0.7%	18.9%	15.7%	10.1%
Life Insurance	9	10	1	25	14	0	119	28	702	453	1,361
Column %	4.3%	25.0%	0.6%	20.5%	8.3%	0.0%	6.4%	20.0%	42.4%	34.7%	23.7%
Disability Insurance	0	3	20	22	28	0	109	24	164	309	679
Column %	0.0%	7.5%	11.6%	18.0%	16.6%	0.0%	5.9%	17.1%	9.9%	23.6%	0.0%
RETIREMENT											
Retirement Plan	89	2	99	79	30	29	574	61	625	643	2,231
Column %	43.0%	5.0%	57.6%	64.8%	17.8%	37.2%	31.0%	43.6%	37.8%	49.2%	38.9%
TOTAL	1,052	3,182	1,964	2,134	2,606	906	5,018	1,371	6,043	10,405	34,681
Percent Full-Time	80.3%	98.7%	91.2%	94.3%	93.5%	91.4%	63.1%	89.8%	72.6%	87.4%	83.4%
Percent Part-Time	19.7%	1.3%	8.8%	5.7%	6.5%	8.6%	36.9%	10.2%	27.4%	12.6%	16.6%

*Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities.

** Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate.

Table 1 (see page 3) also demonstrates that full-time employees have significantly more access to benefits than part-time employees. To illustrate, 91.3 percent of full-time employees have access to paid vacation but only 33.1 percent of part-time employees do.

Industry

Tabular results for industry distributions are presented in Table 2 (see page 4). The percent of full- and part-time resident employees varies substantially across industries. Mining has the highest percentage of full-time employees (98.7%), whereas Retail Trade has the lowest (63.1%). The industry in which one works is a prime determinant of who has access to benefits because of industry variation in the percentages of full- and part-time employment.

Given the volume of exposure numbers presented in Table 2 and the complexity of the embedded patterns, a summary index of industry exposure results are presented in Table 3. A score of one on Table 3 indicates that employees in this industry had the highest relative level of exposure across the different types of benefits.⁸

Table 3: Summary of Index Rankings for Full- and Part-Time Resident Employees Exposed to Benefits by Industry, 2000 (1 = most benefits)

	Full-Time	Part-Time
Agriculture	10	10
Mining	4	9
Construction	9	8
Manufacturing	3	3
TCPU*	6	6
Wholesale Trade	7	5
Retail Trade	8	4
FIRE**	2	3
Services	5	2
Government	1	1

*Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities.

**Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate.

As shown in Table 3, Government had the highest overall ranking for full-time employees exposed to benefits, followed by Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate (FIRE), Manufacturing, and Mining. Retail Trade, Construction, and Agriculture, respectively, have the lowest overall exposure rankings for full-time employees. The pattern for part-time employees is somewhat different. Government again ranks first, followed by Services, FIRE, and Retail Trade. Construction, Mining, and Agriculture have the lowest overall levels of part-time employees exposed to benefits.

Gender

Table 4 (see page 6) indicates that females are more likely than males to be part-time employees (22.2% compared to 11.5%, respectively). When considering only full-time employees, the difference between males and females is negligible. For example, Table 4 shows that full-time females have slightly greater access than males to retirement (86.1% and 85.3%, respectively) and paid vacation (91.5 % and 91.2%, respectively). Males, on the other hand, have slightly greater access to health insurance (93.0% and 92.7%, respectively). With the exception of sick leave (16.5 percentage points), no gender difference for full-time employee benefits is greater than 4.7 percentage points. Apparently, gender is not a significant demarcating factor for exposure to benefits among full-time employees.

Among part-time employees, females have greater exposure to benefits than males across all benefit types. Percentage point differences between female and male part-time employees tend to be larger than that for full-time employees (ranging from 2.0 to 10.7 percentage points). Part-time employees in Construction and Mining are more likely to be male. Agriculture,

Table 4: Full- and Part-Time Resident Attached Employees by Gender and Benefit Type in Sampled Wyoming Firms, 2000

	Full-Time			Total
	Female	Male	Percentage Point Difference	
Total Employees	12,616	16,324		28,940
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	0.0	100.0%
Row %	43.6%	56.4%		100.0%
PAID LEAVE				
Paid Holidays	11,092	13,597		24,689
Column %	87.9%	83.3%	-4.6	85.3%
Sick Leave	9,526	9,627		19,153
Column %	75.5%	59.0%	-16.5	66.2%
Paid Vacation	11,538	14,885		26,423
Column %	91.5%	91.2%	-0.3	91.3%
Maternity Leave	2,138	2,795		4,933
Column %	16.9%	17.1%	0.2	17.0%
Paternity Leave	1,750	1,499		3,249
Column %	13.9%	9.2%	-4.7	11.2%
INSURANCE				
Health Insurance	11,699	15,187		26,886
Column %	92.7%	93.0%	0.3	92.9%
Dependent Health Insurance	11,211	14,549		25,760
Column %	88.9%	89.1%	0.3	89.0%
Dental Plan	10,910	13,386		24,296
Column %	86.5%	82.0%	-4.5	84.0%
Vision Plan	4,646	6,044		10,690
Column %	36.8%	37.0%	0.2	36.9%
Life Insurance	10,611	13,816		24,427
Column %	84.1%	84.6%	0.5	84.4%
Disability Insurance	6,673	9,183		15,856
Column %	52.9%	56.3%	3.4	54.8%
RETIREMENT				
Retirement Plan	10,867	13,918		24,785
Column %	86.1%	85.3%	0.9	85.6%
	Part-Time			
	Female	Male	Percentage	Total
Total Employees	3,610	2,131		5,741
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	0.0	100.0%
Row %	62.9%	37.1%		100.0%
PAID LEAVE				
Paid Holidays	943	477		1,420
Column %	26.1%	22.4%	-3.7	24.7%
Sick Leave	679	206		885
Column %	18.8%	9.7%	-9.1	15.4%
Paid Vacation	1,231	667		1,898
Column %	34.1%	31.3%	-2.8	33.1%
Maternity Leave	192	71		263
Column %	5.3%	3.3%	-2.0	4.6%
Paternity Leave	172	69		241
Column %	4.8%	3.2%	-1.5	4.2%
INSURANCE				
Health Insurance	1,022	449		1,471
Column %	28.3%	21.1%	-7.2	25.6%
Dependent Health Insurance	971	450		1,421
Column %	26.9%	21.1%	-5.8	24.8%
Dental Plan	779	349		1,128
Column %	21.6%	16.4%	-5.2	19.6%
Vision Plan	443	136		579
Column %	12.3%	6.4%	-5.9	10.1%
Life Insurance	999	362		1,361
Column %	27.7%	17.0%	-10.7	23.7%
Disability Insurance	481	198		679
Column %	13.3%	9.3%	-4.0	11.8%
RETIREMENT				
Retirement Plan	1,466	765		2,231
Column %	40.6%	35.9%	-4.7	38.9%
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	16,226	18,455		34,681
Percent Full-Time	77.8%	88.5%		83.4%
Percent Part-Time	22.2%	11.5%		16.6%

Source: Weighted Merged Benefits Data.

Construction, and Mining offer the lowest level of benefit access for part-time employees (see Table 2, page 4).

Age

Table 5 (see page 7) shows that the Less than 25 and 55 or Older age categories have the highest percentages of part-time employment (43.3% and 15.0%, respectively). Not surprisingly, the youngest age category (Less than 25) has the lowest access to benefits across all benefit types for both full- and part-time employees. With the exception of access to paternity leave, which peaks in the 55 or Older age category (13.3% of full-time employees), access to the full-time benefits shown here increases steadily until it peaks in the 45-54 category. Exposure then declines somewhat in the 55 or Older age category. Paid leave benefits for part-time employees also typically peak in the 45-54 age category. However, for insurance and retirement benefits, exposure for part-time employees peaks in the 35-44 age category.

Observations and Additional Questions

Results of this study are useful in elucidating the benefits exposure profile of Wyoming's resident employees. Specifically, the descriptive data presented here demonstrate potential areas of concern. Overall, the largest gap in access to benefits is the difference between full- and part-time employees. The majority of full-time employees are exposed to benefits offerings. For many benefit types among full-time employees there is little room for improvement (e.g., 92.9% for health insurance).

(Text continued on page 8)

Table 5: Full- and Part-Time Resident Attached Employees by Age and Benefit Type in Sampled Wyoming Firms, 2000

	Full-Time Employees					Total
	Less than 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 or Older	
Total Full-Time	2,779	5,940	8,510	7,874	3,837	28,940
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PAID LEAVE						
Paid Holidays	2,114	4,939	7,330	6,987	3,319	24,689
Column %	76.1%	83.1%	86.1%	88.7%	86.5%	85.3%
Sick Leave	1,341	3,619	5,679	5,874	2,640	19,153
Column %	48.3%	60.9%	66.7%	74.6%	68.8%	66.2%
Paid Vacation	2,478	5,316	7,793	7,292	3,544	26,423
Column %	89.2%	89.5%	91.6%	92.6%	92.4%	91.3%
Maternity Leave	328	884	1,422	1,588	711	4,933
Column %	11.8%	14.9%	16.7%	20.2%	18.5%	17.0%
Paternity Leave	220	623	875	1,021	510	3,249
Column %	7.9%	10.5%	10.3%	13.0%	13.3%	11.2%
INSURANCE						
Health Insurance	2,526	5,525	7,916	7,366	3,553	26,886
Column %	90.9%	93.0%	93.0%	93.5%	92.6%	92.9%
Dependent Health Insurance	2,325	5,260	7,589	7,136	3,450	25,760
Column %	83.7%	88.6%	89.2%	90.6%	89.9%	89.0%
Dental Plan	2,203	4,937	7,205	6,786	3,165	24,296
Column %	79.3%	83.1%	84.7%	86.2%	82.5%	84.0%
Vision Plan	797	2,104	3,231	3,082	1,476	10,690
Column %	28.7%	35.4%	38.0%	39.1%	38.5%	36.9%
Life Insurance	2,167	4,956	7,273	6,791	3,240	24,427
Column %	78.0%	83.4%	85.5%	86.2%	84.4%	84.4%
Disability Insurance	1,249	3,191	4,771	4,501	2,144	15,856
Column %	44.9%	53.7%	56.1%	57.2%	55.9%	54.8%
RETIREMENT						
Retirement Plan	2,154	5,056	7,370	6,914	3,291	24,785
Column %	77.5%	85.1%	86.6%	87.8%	85.8%	85.6%
	Part-Time Employees					
	Less than 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 or Older	Total
Total Part-Time	2,123	1,038	1,094	810	676	5,741
Column %	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
PAID LEAVE						
Paid Holidays	452	250	314	245	159	1,420
Column %	21.3%	24.1%	28.7%	30.2%	23.5%	24.7%
Sick Leave	178	145	240	199	123	885
Column %	8.4%	14.0%	21.9%	24.6%	18.2%	15.4%
Paid Vacation	820	326	320	247	185	1,898
Column %	38.6%	31.4%	29.3%	30.5%	27.4%	33.1%
Maternity Leave	70	39	68	66	20	263
Column %	3.3%	3.8%	6.2%	8.1%	3.0%	4.6%
Paternity Leave	58	36	66	62	19	241
Column %	2.7%	3.5%	6.0%	7.7%	2.8%	4.2%
INSURANCE						
Health Insurance	495	266	332	226	152	1,471
Column %	23.3%	25.6%	30.3%	27.9%	22.5%	25.6%
Dependent Health Insurance	480	262	314	219	146	1,421
Column %	22.6%	25.2%	28.7%	27.0%	21.6%	24.8%
Dental Plan	367	233	247	170	111	1,128
Column %	17.3%	22.4%	22.6%	21.0%	16.4%	19.6%
Vision Plan	109	120	161	113	76	579
Column %	5.1%	11.6%	14.7%	14.0%	11.2%	10.1%
Life Insurance	380	243	337	243	158	1,361
Column %	17.9%	23.4%	30.8%	30.0%	23.4%	23.7%
Disability Insurance	198	114	167	116	84	679
Column %	9.3%	11.0%	15.3%	14.3%	12.4%	11.8%
RETIREMENT						
Retirement Plan	656	434	515	365	261	2,231
Column %	30.9%	41.8%	47.1%	45.1%	38.6%	38.9%
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	4,902	6,978	9,604	8,684	4,513	34,681
Percent Full-Time	56.7%	85.1%	88.6%	90.7%	85.0%	83.4%
Percent Part-Time	43.3%	14.9%	11.4%	9.3%	15.0%	16.6%

Source: Weighted Merged Benefits Data.

We wonder if it might be better for dependent health insurance exposure for Wyoming residents to peak during child bearing years (25-34) and health insurance coverage to peak in later years (i.e., 55 or Older). Other areas of potential benefits coverage mismatch concern full-time paternity leave--where females are more exposed to coverage than males (13.9% compared to 9.2%, respectively).

Although there are fewer full-time females than males (43.6% compared to 56.4%, respectively), results of this survey do not support the contention of a gender bias in exposure to benefits. Full-time females have coverage exposure very similar to full-time males, depending upon benefit type. Our results indicate that improving benefits exposure for women would involve increasing the numbers of women who work full-time. As shown in Table 3 (see page 5), full- and part-time employment varies substantially by industry with part-time employment heavily concentrated in Retail Trade (36.9%) and Services (27.4%). As such, gender differences in access to benefits are primarily a function of what industry individuals work in.

Summary

Results from this study indicate that resident full-time employees have distinctively greater exposure to benefits than part-time employees. Also, there are differences between resident female and male exposure to benefits. Part-time females have somewhat of an advantage over males in benefits access. However, full-time males and females have very similar exposure to benefits offerings. Benefits access increases with age, peaks in middle age (35-44 or 45-54, depending upon work status and benefit type), and then declines somewhat in later years.

Additionally, both resident full- and part-time employees who work in Government have greater exposure to benefits than employees in other industries.

Future Research

Benefits exposure data were used in the following article, "Do Benefits Reduce Employee Turnover among Wyoming Firms: A Response to the Workforce Development Council," to examine hypothesized connections between benefits offerings and employee turnover. Wyoming recently co-authored a publication with six other states (Alaska, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and South Dakota) which indicates that, among the seven states, Wyoming has the highest average level of employee turnover.⁹

¹For complete methodology used in the **Benefits Survey**, see Wyoming Department of Employment, Research & Planning, **Employee Benefits in Wyoming: 2000** at <<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/benefits/bentoc.htm>>.

²The terms access and exposure are used interchangeably in this article.

³We do not address who may have access through a spouse's employer, a professional or trade association, or a government program (e.g., Medicaid).

⁴Sylvia Jones, "Defining Residency for the Wyoming Workforce," **Wyoming Labor Force Trends**, November 2002, pp. 1-9.

⁵Obtaining this information would require employers to report on benefits participation for each employee, something that is not done in the **Benefits Survey**. Additional monetary resources, alteration of the survey instrument, and a different collection technique are needed to gather the required data.

⁶To illustrate, fewer employees could be exposed to health insurance in Firm A than Firm B.

However, the quality of insurance (e.g., low deductibles, high employer contribution) may be much better for the employees in Firm A that do have insurance than those in Firm B. Quality issues are beyond the scope of the data collected in the current *Benefits Survey*.

⁷The paternity and maternity leave numbers presented here are beyond what is required by law under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

⁸Specifically, for each benefit type, a ranking from one to ten, representing highest to lowest percent

exposure, was assigned to each industry. These rankings were then summed within each industry across all benefit types. The industry with the lowest sum (i.e., the one offering the overall greatest relative exposure to benefits) was assigned a score of one.

⁹Wyoming Department of Employment, Research & Planning, *Market Dynamics from Administrative Records*, December 2002, <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/w_r_research/MarketDynamics1202.pdf> (February 19, 2003).



Do Benefits Reduce Employee Turnover among Wyoming Firms: A Response to the Workforce Development Council by: Mark Harris, Sociologist, Ph.D.

“Benefits are a more powerful tool for reducing turnover among firms employing predominantly part-time employees.”

Benefits are often touted as a means to reduce employee turnover. Turnover reduction may be a goal for some employers to reduce replacement and training costs, increase productivity, lessen supervisory workload and stress, enhance customer service, or improve product quality.¹

In this article, Research & Planning (R&P) seeks to determine whether offering more benefits reduces employee turnover among Wyoming firms. Results indicate that among the industry groupings examined, firms that offer more benefits have lower employee turnover. Additionally, the effect appears somewhat stronger in firms which employ predominantly part-time workers compared to those which employ predominantly full-time workers.

Data

Data for this article come from three

sources. Benefits data are from a random sample of 1,600 Wyoming firms as part of the 2000 *Benefits Survey*.² The *Benefits Survey* reports whether sampled firms offer various benefits to their full- and part-time employees.³ Turnover rates⁴ (i.e., employee exit rates) are calculated using Wyoming Wage Records data from the same firms. Other characteristics of sampled firms (e.g., firm size, average quarterly wage) come from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Covered Employment and Wages program (ES-202).

Method

Regression models were developed to determine the statistical relationship between the number of “core” benefits⁵ a firm offers and that firm’s level of employee turnover. Specifically, turnover is regressed⁶ on firm size, average quarterly wages, and the number of benefits offered for various industry groupings.⁷ Firm size

Core Benefits

1. Paid Holidays
2. Sick Leave
3. Paid Vacation
4. Health Insurance
5. Dental Plan
6. Life Insurance
7. Retirement Plan

and average quarterly wage are statistically controlled because it is likely that they also affect employee turnover. Holding firm size and average quarterly wage constant, we find a negative relationship between the number of benefits and turnover. In order to control for a firm's industry and proportion of full-time employment, we developed separate models for each group (see bullet points for industry groupings).

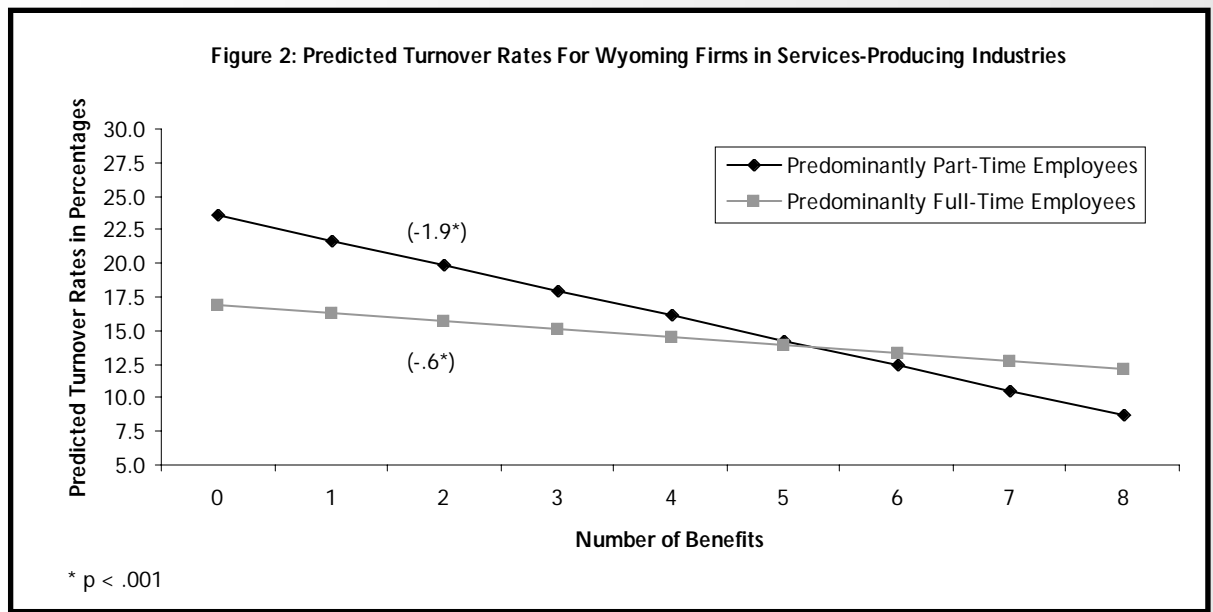
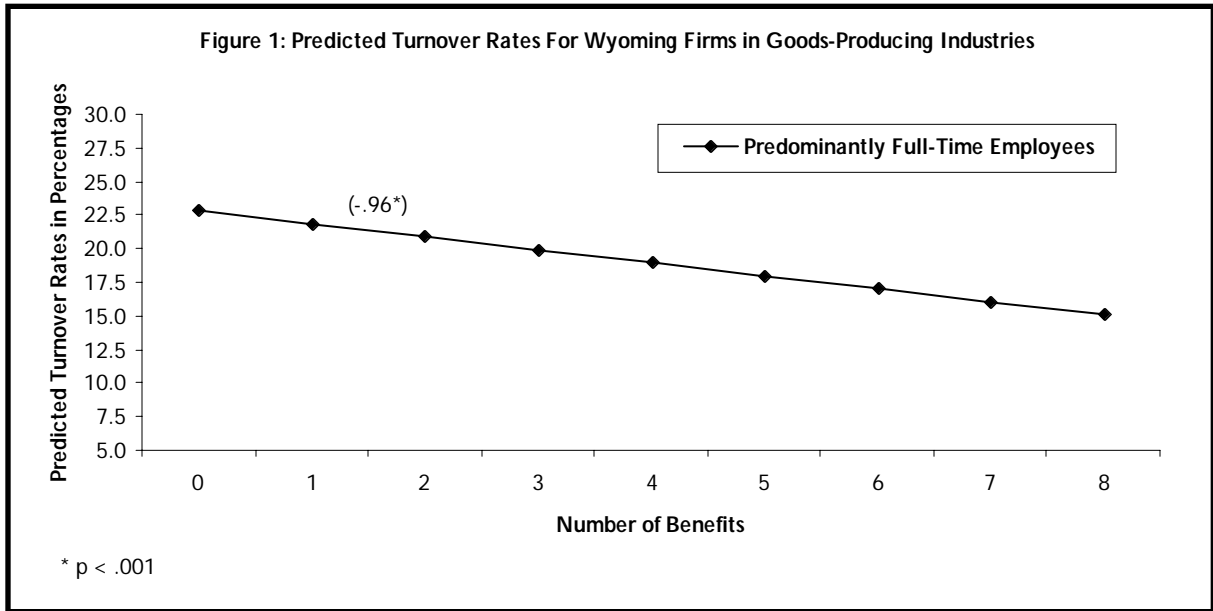
Theoretically, we expect firms offering more core benefits to have lower turnover rates (net of other factors). In this analysis we developed a nine-point additive scale of benefits (0-8) ranging from no benefits to eight benefits. When offered, each of the core benefits adds an incremental digit to the benefits scale. This method assumes that all core benefits are equally important.⁸ Separate analyses were conducted on industry groupings for firms employing predominantly full-time employees and firms employing predominantly part-time employees.⁹ For predominantly full-time firms, the scale of benefits refers to benefits offered to the firm's *full-time* employees. For predominantly part-time firms, the scale refers to benefits offered to the firm's *part-time* employees. The following industry groupings are utilized in this article:

- Goods-producing¹⁰ predominantly full-time¹¹
- Services-producing predominantly full-time
 - Retail Trade predominantly full-time
 - Lower-wage¹² Services predominantly full-time
- Services-producing¹³ predominantly part-time
 - Retail Trade predominantly part-time
 - Lower-wage Services predominantly part-time

Results

Figure 1 (see page 11) shows that benefits are significantly related to turnover among firms in goods-producing industries employing predominantly full-time workers. As hypothesized, turnover is reduced as more benefits are offered. On average, each additional benefit offered results in a .96 percentage point decrease (the regression coefficient for benefits) in turnover. Over the entire range of benefits, predicted turnover rates decrease from 22.8 percent turnover at zero benefits to 15.1 percent at eight benefits.

Figure 2 (see page 11) mirrors the same general pattern for services-producing industries. Note the substantially steeper regression slope for firms employing predominantly part-time employees in comparison to firms with predominantly full-time workers (-1.9 compared to -.6). Although both slopes are statistically significant, the reduction in turnover for each additional benefit offered is larger in firms employing predominantly part-time employees. According to these findings, benefits are a more powerful tool for reducing turnover among firms employing predominantly part-time workers.



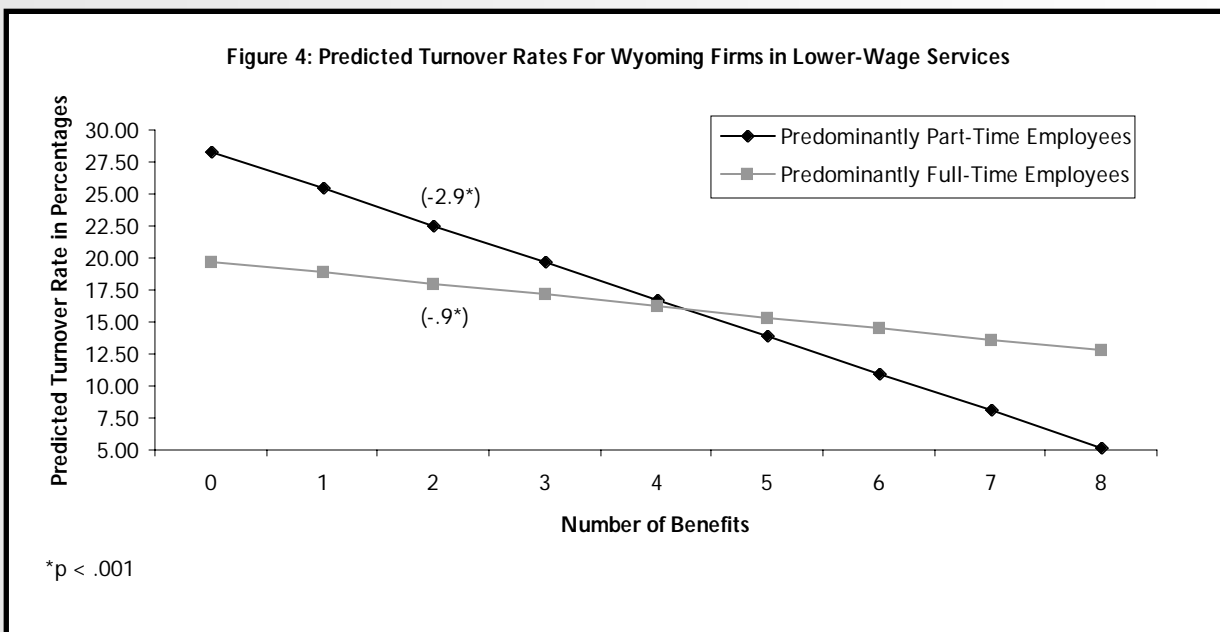
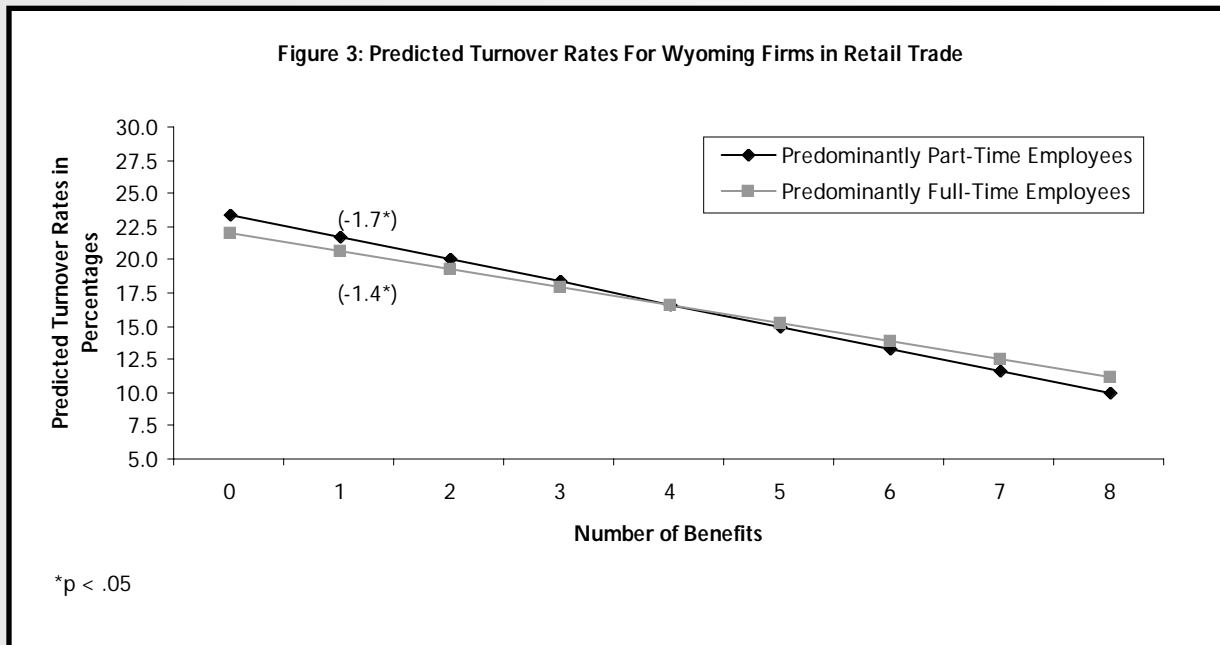
On average, firms in both goods- and services-producing industries that offer more benefits have significantly less turnover. It also appears that, among firms in services-producing industries, those that employ predominantly part-time workers realize a sharper decline (i.e., a steeper negative regression slope) in turnover for each benefit offered than firms employing predominantly full-time workers.

R&P wondered whether these same patterns occur at lower levels of industry aggregation. Within services-producing industries, Retail Trade and lower-wage Services have among the highest rates of turnover.¹⁴ Further, both of these industries have experienced growth (particularly Services) in Wyoming's economy relative to other industries over the last ten years.¹⁵ Finding ways to reduce turnover in these

industries would help stabilize employment for many Wyoming workers. Thus, it is useful to determine if firms that offer more benefits in these sub-industry categories also have lower rates of turnover.

Figures 3 and 4 report predicted turnover rates for Retail Trade and lower-wage Services. Benefits significantly reduce turnover across all industry types shown in

Figures 3 and 4. The effect of benefits on turnover in firms employing predominantly part-time workers in Retail Trade (-1.7) is only slightly higher (-1.4) than predominantly full-time firms (see Figure 3). The pattern for lower-wage Services shown in Figure 4 is similar to that of services-producing industries overall (see Figure 2, page 11), with firms employing predominantly part-time workers seeing a



more pronounced decline in turnover for every additional benefit. Among the regression results presented in Figures 1 through 4, lower-wage Services firms employing predominantly part-time employees experience the largest percent decrease (-2.9) in turnover for every additional benefit offered.

Conclusions and Comments

Our analysis indicates that firms that offer more benefits have lower turnover for all industry groups examined.¹⁶ However, the effect of benefits on turnover varies somewhat by industry group. Adding benefits is a more effective way of lowering turnover among firms that have mainly part-time employees in comparison to those with mostly full-time employees. This may be the case because other positive factors such as the pace and nature of work, environmental conditions in the workplace, autonomy and greater levels of supervisory or general societal respect might mitigate the effect of benefits on turnover in predominantly full-time firms.

Even though providing benefits has been shown here to significantly reduce turnover, providing benefits or additional benefits may not be in the best economic interest of any given firm. To illustrate, a firm will not be economically motivated to provide benefits if turnover cost (i.e., cost of recruiting, hiring, training) is lower than benefit cost. It may be in the economic interest of government to encourage the provision of benefits among firms (e.g., tax incentives) if the cost of turnover to government (e.g., job training and placement services) is higher than the cost of facilitating the provision of benefits.

Future Research

One question not addressed in this

research is the relative importance of benefits on turnover compared to other factors (e.g., direct compensation). Additionally, the benefits survey is an ongoing process.¹⁷ In the future, sufficient data should exist to allow us to examine the relationship between benefits and turnover in greater industry detail.

¹Communities may benefit from reduced turnover because employees with continuous employment may be less likely to need job training and other forms of governmental assistance. High levels of employee turnover in a community likely lead to higher residential mobility as unemployed individuals seek work. High residential mobility has been linked to a host of social ills including increased alcohol and drug usage, increased property and violent crime, and neighborhood disorder and decay.

²Wyoming Department of Employment, Research & Planning, *Employee Benefits in Wyoming: 2000*, <<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/benefits/bentoc.htm>> (February 19, 2003).

³2000 *Benefits Survey* data are weighted to correct for over-sampling of large firms and non-response.

⁴Turnover, or exit, rates represent the average percentage of a firm's workforce that exits quarterly. Rates are calculated across all known quarters for a given firm and theoretically can range from 0 to 100 percent. For further clarification on the methodology used to calculate turnover rates see, Tony Glover, "Turnover Analyses: Definitions, Process, and Quantification," 2001, <<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/staff/Turnover.pdf>> (February 19, 2003).

⁵The scale of core benefits utilized here was delineated empirically using factor analysis and the eight items form a single additive scale (Alpha = .783 for the full-time benefits scale and Alpha = .848 for the part-time benefits scale). Other benefit types exist (maternity/paternity leave, disability insurance, etc.), however, they do not cluster together significantly with the "core" benefits and they have less predictive power for turnover.

⁶We use statistical models to explain and/or

predict labor market phenomena. In this case, we want to explain and predict employee turnover. Thus, the rate of turnover is the dependent variable, meaning it is dependent upon other factors. The factors that we use to explain turnover (e.g., access to benefits) are called independent variables. In our model, access to benefits, firm size, and average quarterly wages are the inputs and an estimate of the rate of employee turnover is the output.

⁷The regression equation is mathematically defined as $Y_{pred} = a + b_1 * (\text{Firm Size}) + b_2 * (\text{Average Quarterly Wage}) + b_3 * (\text{Benefits})$. Firm Size and Average Quarterly Wage are set at the mean level within the groupings.

⁸Other metrics could be developed that weight each of the core benefits differently. However, for ease of interpretability and in the absence of theoretical or empirical data indicating the relative importance of the individual core benefits utilized here, R&P chose a simple additive scale.

⁹The method for determining the number of full- and part-time employees for firms in the 2000 **Benefits Survey** is outlined in Mark Harris and Krista Gerth, "Methods for Imputing Work Status," 2003 <<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/0203/imputing.htm>> (February 20, 2003).

¹⁰Goods-producing firms include those in Agriculture, Mining, Construction, and Manufacturing.

¹¹There are too few firms employing predominantly part-time workers in goods-producing industries to conduct a reliable regression analysis.

¹²Lower-wage Services firms, two-digit Standard Industrial Classification codes (SIC), include Business Services (73), Museums (84), Social Services (83), Amusements & Recreation Services (79), Membership Organizations (86), Personal Services (72), Hotels & Other Lodging Places (70), and Motion Pictures (78). These two-digit SICs have average weekly wages (based on 2000 published data) lower than \$400 dollars (i.e., below the mean level for all two-digit Services major groups). For more information, see <<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/00202pub/00t28.htm>>.

¹³Services-producing firms include those in Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities (TCPU); Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade; Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate (FIRE); Services; and Government.

¹⁴Wyoming Department of Employment, Research & Planning, **Market Dynamics from Administrative Records**, December 2002, <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/w_r_research/MarketDynamics1202.pdf> (February 19, 2003).

¹⁵Mark Harris, "Is Wyoming's Economy Diversifying and Is Economic Diversity in Wyoming Desirable," **Wyoming Labor Force Trends**, September 2002, pp. 1-9.

¹⁶Our regression models simultaneously account for industry, the proportion of full- and part-time employees, firm size, and firms average quarterly wage when ascertaining the effect of benefits availability on turnover. However, the reader should be aware that, although our regression analysis shows support for the theoretical contention that offering benefits reduces turnover, it is possible that other unmeasured factors that we have not included may account for the effect of benefits on turnover. In other words, benefits may be serving as a "proxy" for other important unmeasured characteristics and not actually be significantly predictive of employee turnover. To illustrate with a facetious example, let us assume that firms offering benefits have bosses with positive attitudes and firms not offering benefits have bosses with negative attitudes. Let us also assume that boss "attitude" is what primarily reduces turnover. In such a case, if we measure the effect of boss attitude and benefits availability on turnover simultaneously, benefits availability will not be shown to significantly reduce turnover but boss attitude will. Because of the high correlation between boss attitude and benefits availability, failure to account for boss attitude allows benefits availability to proxy for boss attitude and will lead to the erroneous conclusion that benefits availability significantly reduces turnover when in fact it does not.

¹⁷Wyoming Department of Employment, Research & Planning, **Employee Benefits in Wyoming: 2001**.



Health Insurance Coverage in the United States

by: *Carola Cowan, Economist and Sara Saulcy, Economist*

“The number of uninsured grows by 1.2 million for every one percentage point increase in the unemployment rate.”

In 2002 the Economic Report of the President devoted over 40 pages to the issue of health insurance coverage and costs.¹ The report finds health care, one of the largest sectors of the American economy, representing 13.4 percent of the United States' Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Health care spending is forecasted to rise to 15.9 percent of the GDP by 2010. Over the long term, it will become even more predominant in the economy, continuing a 60-year economic trend and reaching as much as 38 percent of GDP under conservative assumptions.

This article explores the current level of health insurance coverage for the population of the United States, and the reasons why employees decline to participate in employer-sponsored health insurance plans. We also examine factors that contribute to employer decisions about whether or not to offer their employees health insurance coverage.

Health Insurance Coverage

The U.S. Census Bureau has included questions about health insurance coverage in their Current Population Survey (CPS) since 1980. Originally questions were asked about health insurance to supplement the cash income questions with a set of questions on non-cash benefits (e.g., food stamps, subsidized housing, medical assistance). Since most major types of health insurance are received in the form of non-cash benefits, it soon became clear that this set of

questions could be used to reasonably estimate the number of people without health insurance. Since the CPS was already one of the most widely used household economic surveys conducted by the Federal Government, the Census Bureau and others began using the March CPS as the basis for estimates of the uninsured population.²

Since 1980, the Census Bureau has estimated the number of people with health insurance coverage in the United States through their Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Demographic Supplement.³ According to their estimates, 14.6 percent of the population lacked health insurance coverage during the entire year of 2001, up from 14.2 percent in 2000, an increase of 1.4 million people. This reverses two years of falling uninsured rates. A number of studies estimate that uninsured rates in rural areas are higher than rates in urban areas, with most studies placing the percentage of uninsured at approximately 20 percent.⁴

The Census Bureau also states that the number and percentage of people covered by employment-based health insurance dropped in 2001, from 63.6 percent to 62.6 percent. The decline in employment-based health insurance is the main reason the number of uninsured has increased. Compared with 2000, the proportion of employers providing health insurance to their employees fell for firms with fewer than 25 employees, but was unchanged for larger firms.⁵ As the economy slows down,

the number of uninsured is expected to rise even higher. The Kaiser Family Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that the number of uninsured grows by 1.2 million for every one percentage point increase in the unemployment rate.⁶

In Wyoming we see a similar situation. Research & Planning (R&P) has conducted an Employee Benefits Survey of Wyoming employers for the past four years.⁷ One of the questions in the survey regards the availability of health insurance for employees and their dependents. This allows us to estimate how many employees have access to employer-sponsored health insurance. The percentage of companies providing health insurance for their full-time employees dropped from 66.1 percent in 2000 to 63.2 percent in 2001. The drop not only occurred in smaller companies but also in larger companies (see Table 1). The percentage of full-time employees who were offered health insurance dropped 27.4 percentage points in 2001 for companies with 1 to 4 employees (see Table 2).

Although the survey is a useful tool for determining insurance availability, it does

Table 2: Percentage of Full-Time Employees Who are Offered Health Insurance in Wyoming by Firm Size

Number of Employees	Year		Change
	2000	2001	
1-4	74.5	47.1	-27.4
5-9	65.2	70.4	5.2
10-19	81.1	77.8	-3.3
20-49	81.3	85.4	4.1
50-99	97.7	91.0	-6.7
100+	99.4	99.7	0.3
Total	97.7	94.1	-3.6

not tell whether employees actually choose to receive coverage for themselves or their dependents. Therefore, as a new area of research, we plan in our 2003 survey to explore employee participation in employer-sponsored health insurance plans. We will conduct this new research jointly with the University of Wyoming. Among other things, we are seeking to understand why employers opt to provide health insurance coverage for their employees. This information will help legislators and policymakers better understand issues regarding employer-provided health insurance. As always, the voluntary cooperation of employers is needed and appreciated.

Table 1: Percentage of Companies Providing Health Insurance to their Full-Time Employees in Wyoming by Number of Employees

Number of Employees	Year		Change
	2000	2001	
1-4	44.3	40.8	-3.5
5-9	57.1	63.2	6.1
10-19	67.4	72.0	4.6
20-49	74.3	78.6	4.3
50-99	93.8	78.7	-15.1
100+	98.6	96.3	-2.3
Total	66.1	63.2	-2.9

Employee Reasons for Nonparticipation

Although many Wyoming employers provide health insurance to their employees, some employees may choose not to participate in the program. Nationally, 80.0 percent of workers are eligible in firms that offer coverage. Of that 80.0 percent, 17.0 percent elect not to participate in offered insurance programs.⁸ There are several reasons an employee may choose not to participate in an

employer sponsored health insurance plan. One reason is cost. Many employers require employees to share part of the premium costs. Employees may find it difficult to pay their portion of the health insurance premium. Premium costs have been extremely volatile, with growth rates ranging from a low of 0.8 percent in 1996 to highs of 18.0 percent in 1989 and 11.0 percent in 2001.⁹ To offset some of the increase, 75.0 percent of large firms and 42.0 percent of small firms surveyed indicated that they were “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to increase employee premium costs in the next year.¹⁰ Other employers plan on offsetting cost increases by raising deductibles, increasing the burden for employees even further.¹¹

Another reason for employee nonparticipation is coverage through a spouse’s plan. With the increasing number of two income households, this becomes a much greater possibility. If both spouses have employers that offer coverage, the couple may shop for the better deal between the two employers. In some instances it may be more beneficial to be covered under a spouse’s plan because of such things as better coverage, lower premium cost, or one deductible for the whole family. Additionally, an employee covered under a separate insurance plan may decide that the administrative hassles of dealing with two or more insurance plans exceed the advantages. Another reason for not electing coverage through an employer could be that the employees choose to buy coverage on their own, or may qualify for coverage through government programs.

Employer Reasons for Nonparticipation

Employers have their own reasons for not offering health insurance coverage to their employees. Again, costs associated

with health insurance plans may be a factor. Commonly, employers pay at least half of the premium for coverage of an employee. In 2001 the average monthly cost of single and family coverage was \$221 and \$588, respectively. Of that amount, the majority of firms pay between \$150 and \$250 per month for single coverage and from \$500 to \$650 for family coverage.¹² For small employers, cost is the most important factor cited for not offering health insurance.¹³ Another reason may be an increase in paperwork for administering the plan. Policy offerings may be too complicated, or the employer may not be familiar with coverage options. Some employers may not consider the benefits of providing health insurance to their employees to be worth the costs to their company. Others may feel it is not their responsibility since it is not required by law.

Industries such as Construction, Services, and Retail Trade have high turnover or are highly seasonal. Consequently, very few employees would ever become eligible for coverage, making health insurance less valuable to workers and employers alike. The Kaiser Family Foundation reports firms that employ many low-wage workers are least likely to provide insurance, as are companies with high turnover in their workforce. According to their survey, only 33.0 percent of all firms that reported 50.0 percent or more turnover in the last year offered coverage, compared to 68.0 percent for businesses with lower turnover.¹⁴ The costs of benefits may be higher than the cost of turnover if a sufficient pool of willing low-wage labor is available. Tax breaks to employers may increase the cost of turnover relative to benefits and create a structure which encourages employers to provide benefits.

The shortage of employer-provided health insurance in rural areas is even more problematic. “Jobs in small businesses that are less likely to offer health benefits are more common in rural areas, such as farming, general labor, service and repair work.”¹⁵ Part-time or self-employment in the rural economy also are associated with lower health insurance coverage rates.¹⁶

Conclusion

Affordable and available health insurance is expected to continue to be a major issue of importance to legislators, policymakers, and the public as health care costs continue to rise. In rural areas, where it is already difficult to find affordable health care insurance, the issues will demand further attention.

R&P looks forward to providing results of research specific to Wyoming on such issues as participation rates of employees in employer-sponsored health insurance plans for Wyoming, and why employers may or may not choose to provide that option to their employees.

¹Council of Economic Advisors, Executive Office of the President, **Economic Report of the President**, February 2002, p. 145-149.

²Charles T. Nelson and Robert J. Mills, U.S. Census Bureau, “The March CPS Health Insurance Verification Question and Its Effect on Estimates of the Uninsured,” August 2001, <<http://landview.census.gov/hhes/hlthins/verif.html>> (January 9, 2003).

³Ibid.

⁴The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, “The Uninsured in Rural America,” **Kaiser Commission on Key Facts**, April 2001, <<http://www.kff.org/content/2001/2252/2252.pdf>>

<<http://www.kff.org/content/2001/2252/2252.pdf>> (January 8, 2003); U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, **The Rural Uninsured: Highlights from Recent Research**, n.d., <<http://ruralhealth.hrsa.gov/policy/UninsuredSummary.htm>> (January 8, 2003).; National Rural Health Association, **Access to Health Care for the Uninsured in Rural and Frontier America**, n.d., <<http://www.nrharural.org/dc/issuepapers/ipaper15.html>> (January 9, 2003).

⁵U.S. Census Bureau, “Health Insurance Coverage: 2001” n.d., <<http://landview.census.gov/hhes/hlthins/hlthin01/hlth01asc.html>> (December 5, 2002).

⁶The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, “Trends and Indicators in the Changing Health Care Marketplace, 2002,” **Chartbook**, May 2002, p. 16.

⁷For access to the **Employee Benefits Survey**, visit our website at <<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/benefits/bentoc.htm>>.

⁸The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research and Educational Trust, **Employer Health Benefits, 2001 Annual Survey**, p. 3.

⁹The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, **Chartbook**, p. 28.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 30.

¹¹National Center for Policy Analysis, “Employees Paying More for Health Care,” December 10, 2001 <<http://www.ncpa.org/iss/hea/2001/pd121001d.html>> (January 10, 2003).

¹²The Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research and Educational Trust, **Employer Health Benefits, 2001 Annual Survey**, p. 13.

¹³Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, “The Uninsured in Rural America,” **Kaiser Commission on Key Facts**, n.d., <<http://www.kff.org/content/2001/2252/2252.pdf>>

.kff.org/content/2001/2252/2252.pdf, April 2001> (January 8, 2003).

¹⁶U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration,

The Rural Uninsured: Highlights from Recent Research, n.d., <<http://ruralhealth.hrsa.gov/policy/UninsuredSummary.htm>> (January 8, 2003).



Local Area Unemployment Statistics for Fourth Quarter 2002

by: *Brad Payne, Economist*

During fourth quarter 2002, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) employment decreased statewide by 366 jobs or 0.1 percent when compared to fourth quarter 2001 (see the Table, page 20). While employment declined between fourth quarters 2001 and 2002, employment grew 1.3 percent between fourth quarters 2000 and 2001. Similarly, the labor force decreased by 67 or 0.02 percent between fourth quarter 2001 and fourth quarter 2002 while unemployment increased by 299 or 2.9 percent over the same time period. The 2.9 percent increase in unemployment is less than half the percent increase posted between fourth quarters 2000 and 2001 - when unemployment increased 7.7 percent. The unemployment rate during fourth quarter 2002 was 3.9 percent while the unemployment rate during fourth quarter 2001 was 3.8 percent.

Within Wyoming, the Central and Southwest regions experienced negative employment growth while the Northwest and two eastern regions posted positive over-the-year employment growth. Of the regions showing growth, the Northeast region recorded the highest rate of growth (2.2%) by adding 1,024 jobs. Employment

growth in Campbell (648 jobs), Sheridan (322 jobs), and Johnson (190 jobs) counties offset employment losses in Weston and Crook counties.

The statewide increase in unemployment was a result of all but the Southwest region showing unemployment growth. Unemployment in the Central region grew by 7.8 percent (156 individuals) while growing 5.2 percent in the Northeast region, 4.2 percent in the Northwest region, and 2.9 percent in the Southeast region. Within the Central region, Natrona County led the region and the State as the number of unemployed increased by 183 individuals or 13.4 percent.

The most dramatic quarter to quarter increases in the unemployment rates were found in Niobrara, Converse, and Platte counties. Niobrara County's quarter to quarter change in the unemployment rate was 1.2 percent (up from 3.1% in fourth quarter 2001 to 4.3% in fourth quarter 2002). Converse County's unemployment rate increased from 3.6 percent in fourth quarter 2001 to 4.7 percent in fourth quarter 2002 (a change of 1.1%). Platte County's unemployment rate increased from 3.4

Table: Change in Wyoming's Labor Force, Employment, Unemployment, and Unemployment Rates by Region and County, Fourth Quarter 2002

REGION/ County	Labor Force				Employment				Unemployment				Unemployment Rate		
	Fourth Quarter		Change		Fourth Quarter		Change		Fourth Quarter		Change		Fourth Quarter		Percent
	2002	2001	Number	%	2002	2001	Number	%	2002	2001	Number	%	2002	2001	Change
NORTHWEST	46,610	46,411	199	0.4	44,329	44,221	108	0.2	2,281	2,190	91	4.2	4.9	4.7	0.2
Big Horn	5,849	5,966	-117	-2.0	5,602	5,710	-108	-1.9	247	256	-9	-3.5	4.2	4.3	-0.1
Fremont	18,952	18,667	285	1.5	17,812	17,683	129	0.7	1,140	984	156	15.9	6.0	5.2	0.8
Hot Springs	2,381	2,476	-95	-3.8	2,293	2,370	-77	-3.2	89	107	-18	-16.9	3.7	4.3	-0.6
Park	14,896	14,701	194	1.3	14,257	14,024	233	1.7	639	677	-39	-5.7	4.3	4.7	-0.4
Washakie	4,533	4,601	-68	-1.5	4,366	4,434	-68	-1.5	167	167	1	0.4	3.7	3.6	0.1
NORTHEAST	48,277	47,172	1,105	2.3	46,633	45,608	1,024	2.2	1,644	1,564	81	5.2	3.4	3.3	0.1
Campbell	23,893	23,132	761	3.3	23,130	22,482	648	2.9	763	650	113	17.4	3.2	2.8	0.4
Crook	2,895	2,986	-91	-3.0	2,799	2,879	-80	-2.8	96	107	-11	-10.0	3.3	3.6	-0.2
Johnson	3,989	3,828	161	4.2	3,883	3,693	190	5.1	106	135	-29	-21.5	2.7	3.5	-0.8
Sheridan	14,218	13,872	346	2.5	13,658	13,336	322	2.4	560	536	24	4.5	4.0	3.9	0.1
Weston	3,282	3,354	-72	-2.1	3,163	3,218	-55	-1.7	119	136	-17	-12.3	3.6	4.1	-0.4
SOUTHWEST	52,457	53,570	-1,112	-2.1	50,143	51,162	-1,020	-2.0	2,315	2,407	-93	-3.8	4.4	4.5	-0.1
Lincoln	6,551	7,005	-454	-6.5	6,152	6,596	-444	-6.7	399	409	-10	-2.4	6.1	5.8	0.3
Sublette	3,467	3,358	109	3.2	3,384	3,290	94	2.9	83	68	15	22.2	2.4	2.0	0.3
Sweetwater	19,937	20,386	-449	-2.2	19,089	19,457	-368	-1.9	848	929	-81	-8.7	4.3	4.5	-0.3
Teton	11,433	11,666	-234	-2.0	11,027	11,255	-227	-2.0	405	412	-6	-1.5	3.6	3.6	0.0
Uinta	11,070	11,155	-85	-0.8	10,490	10,564	-74	-0.7	580	590	-11	-1.8	5.3	5.3	0.0
SOUTHEAST	74,458	74,085	372	0.5	72,178	71,871	308	0.4	2,279	2,215	65	2.9	3.1	3.0	0.1
Albany	20,075	19,601	474	2.4	19,748	19,241	507	2.6	327	360	-33	-9.3	1.7	1.8	-0.2
Goshen	6,479	6,547	-68	-1.0	6,298	6,375	-77	-1.2	181	172	9	5.0	2.8	2.7	0.1
Laramie	42,396	42,256	141	0.3	40,868	40,765	103	0.3	1,528	1,491	37	2.5	3.6	3.5	0.1
Niobrara	1,227	1,236	-9	-0.7	1,174	1,197	-23	-1.9	53	38	14	37.4	4.3	3.1	1.2
Platte	4,281	4,446	-165	-3.7	4,090	4,293	-203	-4.7	191	153	38	24.6	4.5	3.4	1.1
CENTRAL	49,728	50,358	-629	-1.2	47,581	48,366	-785	-1.6	2,147	1,991	156	7.8	4.3	4.0	0.4
Carbon	7,983	8,215	-232	-2.8	7,680	7,820	-140	-1.8	303	395	-91	-23.1	3.8	4.8	-1.0
Converse	6,388	6,492	-105	-1.6	6,092	6,261	-169	-2.7	295	231	64	27.8	4.7	3.6	1.1
Natrona	35,358	35,651	-293	-0.8	33,809	34,285	-476	-1.4	1,548	1,366	183	13.4	4.4	3.8	0.6
STATEWIDE	271,530	271,597	-67	0.0	260,864	261,230	-366	-0.1	10,665	10,366	299	2.9	3.9	3.8	0.1

percent to 4.5 percent (a change of 1.1%). In Niobrara, Converse, and Platte counties, decreases in the labor force and the number employed, with a corresponding increase in the number of unemployed, contributed to the rise in the unemployment rates.

Carbon and Johnson counties posted the largest declines in the unemployment rates between fourth quarters 2001 and 2002. The unemployment rates fell from 4.8 percent to 3.8 percent in Carbon County (a difference of 1.0%) and 3.5 percent to 2.7 percent in Johnson County

(a difference of 0.8%). While the decrease in the unemployment rate for Carbon County was driven by decreases in unemployment, employment, and the labor force, Johnson County's unemployment rate decrease was a function of a 4.2 percent increase in the labor force and a 21.5 percent decrease in unemployment.



New Publications Available from Research & Planning

Wyoming Wage Survey 2001

A report of occupational employment and wage rates for Unemployment Insurance covered wage and salary jobs in non-farm establishments. This wage information helps employers determine if they are offering competitive wages. Employment and training organizations (such as community colleges), vocational counselors, and individuals use wage data to assist in making career decisions.

Market Dynamics from Administrative Records

This publication represents the cooperative efforts of seven Labor Market Information (LMI) offices. It examines turnover, labor flow, and employment tenure using administrative databases.

Upcoming Publications

Employee Benefits in Wyoming 2001

The Benefits Survey publication assists employers and employees in determining whether or not they are providing or receiving competitive benefit compensation.

Outlook 2010

The primary focus of Outlook 2010 is the analysis of the current labor supply and the projected demand for labor by 2010. Also included is a report on the supply and demand of registered nurses in Wyoming.

Connecting Business and the Wyoming Community College System: A Study of Employment Outcomes of 2001 Graduates from Wyoming Community Colleges

This publication addresses the effectiveness of the Wyoming community college system in developing a skilled workforce. Created from an employer survey, it reports the level of employer satisfaction in the training received by their employees.

Visit our website at
<http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/>

State Unemployment Rates December 2002 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

State	Unemp. Rate
Puerto Rico	10.9
Alaska	7.6
Oregon	6.8
Washington	6.8
California	6.3
Illinois	6.3
District of Columbia	6.1
Idaho	6.1
Louisiana	6.1
Mississippi	6.1
New York	6.1
North Carolina	6.1
South Carolina	5.8
Texas	5.7
United States	5.7
Michigan	5.6
Pennsylvania	5.5
West Virginia	5.5
Alabama	5.4
Arizona	5.4
New Mexico	5.4
Colorado	5.2
New Jersey	5.2
Kentucky	5.1
Ohio	5.0
Rhode Island	5.0
Arkansas	4.9
Florida	4.9
Massachusetts	4.9
Wisconsin	4.9
Missouri	4.8
Nevada	4.8
Indiana	4.7
Montana	4.7
Utah	4.7
Georgia	4.6
New Hampshire	4.6
Oklahoma	4.6
Maine	4.5
Wyoming	4.4
Connecticut	4.2
Kansas	4.2
Tennessee	4.1
Iowa	3.9
Vermont	3.9
Hawaii	3.8
Maryland	3.8
Minnesota	3.7
Virginia	3.6
Delaware	3.5
Nebraska	3.2
North Dakota	3.2
South Dakota	3.1

State Unemployment Rates
December 2002
(Seasonally Adjusted)

State	Unemp. Rate
Puerto Rico	12.3
Alaska	7.4
Oregon	7.0
Washington	6.8
Mississippi	6.7
California	6.6
District of Columbia	6.6
Illinois	6.4
North Carolina	6.4
Louisiana	6.3
New York	6.3
Texas	6.2
Pennsylvania	6.0
South Carolina	6.0
United States	6.0
Michigan	5.9
New Mexico	5.9
Alabama	5.8
Arizona	5.6
Idaho	5.6
Utah	5.6
West Virginia	5.6
Colorado	5.5
New Jersey	5.5
Kentucky	5.4
Rhode Island	5.4
Wisconsin	5.4
Florida	5.3
Ohio	5.3
Massachusetts	5.2
Arkansas	5.1
Nevada	5.0
Missouri	4.9
Georgia	4.8
Indiana	4.8
New Hampshire	4.8
Maine	4.7
Oklahoma	4.7
Tennessee	4.7
Connecticut	4.6
Kansas	4.6
Wyoming	4.4
Hawaii	4.2
Montana	4.2
Vermont	4.2
Maryland	4.1
Delaware	3.9
Iowa	3.9
Minnesota	3.9
Virginia	3.9
Nebraska	3.4
North Dakota	3.0
South Dakota	3.0

Wyoming Unemployment Increases in December

by: *David Bullard, Senior Economist*

Wyoming's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased from 4.2 percent in November 2002 to 4.4 percent in December, but remained well below the U.S. unemployment rate of 6.0 percent. Wyoming job growth continued at a slow pace (1,200 jobs or 0.5%), mainly because of job losses in Mining (especially oil & gas) and Manufacturing. In contrast, the U.S. lost jobs in over-the-year comparisons (-0.2%) as the nation struggled with recession.

From November to December 2002, Wyoming lost 1,400 jobs or 0.6 percent. A decrease of similar magnitude was seen in December 2001. Seasonal decreases in Mining (-300 jobs or -1.6%), Construction (-1,200 jobs or -6.5%), and Manufacturing (-500 jobs or -4.5%) were only partially offset by gains in Services (400 jobs or 0.7%) and Government (300 jobs or 0.5%).

When compared to December 2001, Wyoming employment grew by 1,200 jobs or 0.5 percent. Job gains in Construction (1,300 jobs or 8.1%), Services (700 jobs or 1.3%), and Government (1,000 jobs or 1.6%) offset losses in Mining (-900 jobs or -4.6%) and Manufacturing (-600 jobs or -5.4%). Within Mining, coal mining grew by 200 jobs, oil & gas extraction fell by 900 jobs, and other Mining industries fell slightly. Within Services, job gains were seen in hotels & other lodging places (300 jobs or 4.1%) and private social services (400 jobs or 6.1%).

As expected, unemployment increased from November to December in 22 of Wyoming's 23 counties. Teton County's unemployment rate fell from 4.6 percent in November to 4.0 percent in December as the winter tourist season started. Lincoln County posted the highest unemployment rate in December (7.2%) and Albany County posted the lowest (1.9%).

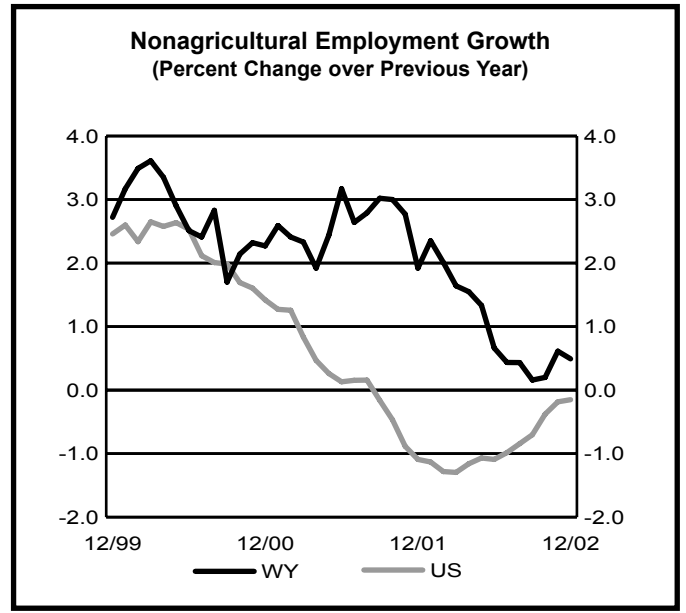


Wyoming Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment¹

by: David Bullard, Senior Economist

“Job gains in Construction, Services, and Government offset losses in Mining and Manufacturing.”

WYOMING STATEWIDE*	Employment in Thousands			Percent Change Total Employment		LARAMIE COUNTY	Employment in Thousands			Percent Change Total Employment	
	DEC02(p)	NOV02(r)	DEC01	NOV 02	DEC 01		DEC02(p)	NOV02(r)	DEC01	NOV 02	DEC 01
TOTAL NONAG. WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	245.0	246.4	243.8	-0.6	0.5	TOTAL NONAG. WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	39.2	38.8	38.3	1.0	2.3
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	46.8	48.8	47.0	-4.1	-0.4	TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	3.9	3.9	3.7	0.0	5.4
Mining	18.8	19.1	19.7	-1.6	-4.6	Mining & Construction	2.4	2.4	2.1	0.0	14.3
Coal Mining	5.2	5.2	5.0	0.0	4.0	Manufacturing	1.5	1.5	1.6	0.0	-6.3
Oil & Gas Extraction	11.0	11.1	11.9	-0.9	-7.6	TOTAL SERVICE PRODUCING	35.3	34.9	34.6	1.1	2.0
Crude Petrol-Natural Gas	3.2	3.2	3.5	0.0	-8.6	Transportation & Public Utilities	2.9	2.9	2.9	0.0	0.0
Oil & Gas Field Services	7.8	7.9	8.4	-1.3	-7.1	Trade	9.5	9.3	9.2	2.2	3.3
Nonmetallic Minerals	2.5	2.5	2.6	0.0	-3.8	Wholesale Trade	0.9	0.8	0.9	12.5	0.0
Construction	17.4	18.6	16.1	-6.5	8.1	Retail Trade	8.6	8.5	8.3	1.2	3.6
General Building Contractors	4.1	4.2	3.8	-2.4	7.9	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1.9	1.9	1.8	0.0	5.6
Heavy Construction	4.9	5.5	4.5	-10.9	8.9	Services	8.6	8.5	8.5	1.2	1.2
Special Trade Construction	8.4	8.9	7.8	-5.6	7.7	Total Government	12.4	12.3	12.2	0.8	1.6
Manufacturing	10.6	11.1	11.2	-4.5	-5.4	Federal Government	2.6	2.5	2.5	4.0	4.0
Durable Goods	4.9	5.0	5.1	-2.0	-3.9	State Government	3.8	3.7	3.6	2.7	5.6
Nondurable Goods	5.7	6.1	6.1	-6.6	-6.6	Local Government	6.0	6.1	6.1	-1.6	-1.6
Printing & Publishing	1.6	1.5	1.6	6.7	0.0						
Petroleum & Coal Products	1.1	1.2	1.2	-8.3	-8.3	NATRONA COUNTY*					
TOTAL SERVICE PRODUCING	198.2	197.6	196.8	0.3	0.7	TOTAL NONAG. WAGE & SALARY EMPLOYMENT	33.4	33.4	33.4	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Public Utilities	13.9	14.1	14.1	-1.4	-1.4	TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	5.6	5.7	5.9	-1.8	-5.1
Transportation	9.1	9.3	9.3	-2.2	-2.2	Mining	2.0	2.0	2.2	0.0	-9.1
Railroad Transportation	2.7	2.8	2.9	-3.6	-6.9	Construction	1.8	1.9	1.9	-5.3	-5.3
Trucking & Warehousing	3.8	3.8	3.8	0.0	0.0	Manufacturing	1.8	1.8	1.8	0.0	0.0
Communications	2.1	2.1	2.1	0.0	0.0	TOTAL SERVICE PRODUCING	27.8	27.7	27.5	0.4	1.1
Telephone Communications	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	Transportation & Public Utilities	1.6	1.6	1.6	0.0	0.0
Electric, Gas & Sanitary Services	2.7	2.7	2.7	0.0	0.0	Transportation	1.2	1.2	1.2	0.0	0.0
Electric Services	1.9	1.9	1.9	0.0	0.0	Communications & Public Utilities	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0
Trade	54.7	54.6	54.8	0.2	-0.2	Trade	8.9	8.9	8.9	0.0	0.0
Wholesale Trade	8.1	8.1	7.9	0.0	2.5	Wholesale Trade	2.5	2.5	2.4	0.0	4.2
Durable Goods	4.8	4.8	4.7	0.0	2.1	Retail Trade	6.4	6.4	6.5	0.0	-1.5
Nondurable Goods	3.3	3.3	3.2	0.0	3.1	Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	46.6	46.5	46.9	0.2	-0.6	Services	10.1	10.1	9.9	0.0	2.0
Building Materials & Garden Supply	2.4	2.4	2.1	0.0	14.3	Personal & Business Services	2.2	2.2	2.1	0.0	4.8
General Merchandise Stores	5.7	5.7	5.7	0.0	0.0	Health Services	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0
Department Stores	4.8	4.8	4.9	0.0	-2.0	Government	5.9	5.8	5.8	1.7	1.7
Food Stores	5.0	5.1	5.1	-2.0	-2.0	Federal Government	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.0	16.7
Auto Dealers & Service Stations	8.1	8.1	8.3	0.0	-2.4	State Government	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0
Gas Stations	4.0	4.1	4.3	-2.4	-7.0	Local Government	4.5	4.4	4.5	2.3	0.0
Apparel & Accessory Stores	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.0	-14.3	Local Education	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.3	0.0
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.0	0.0						
Eating & Drinking Places	16.5	16.5	16.6	0.0	-0.6						
Miscellaneous Retail	6.0	5.8	6.0	3.4	0.0						
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	8.4	8.4	8.4	0.0	0.0						
Depos-Nondepos & Security Brokers	4.3	4.3	4.3	0.0	0.0						
Depository Institutions	3.5	3.5	3.5	0.0	0.0						
Insurance	2.0	2.0	1.8	0.0	11.1						
Services	56.6	56.2	55.9	0.7	1.3						
Hotels & Other Lodging Places	7.6	7.6	7.3	0.0	4.1						
Personal Services	2.1	2.1	2.0	0.0	5.0						
Business Services	8.2	8.4	8.3	-2.4	-1.2						
Automotive & Misc. Repair Services	3.3	3.3	3.4	0.0	-2.9						
Amusements (Rec Services & Mot. Pics.)	3.3	2.7	3.6	22.2	-8.3						
Health Services	11.9	11.9	11.8	0.0	0.8						
Offices of Doctors of Medicine	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.4	3.4						
Legal Services	1.3	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0						
Social Services	7.0	6.9	6.6	1.4	6.1						
Membership Organizations	3.7	3.7	3.8	0.0	-2.6						
Engineering & Management	4.5	4.5	4.3	0.0	4.7						
Government	64.6	64.3	63.6	0.5	1.6						
Total Federal Government	7.4	7.4	7.2	0.0	2.8						
Department of Defense	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.0	0.0						
Total State Government	14.8	14.8	14.3	0.0	3.5						
State Education	5.9	5.9	5.7	0.0	3.5						
Total Local Government	42.4	42.1	42.1	0.7	0.7						
Local Hospitals	5.5	5.5	5.5	0.0	0.0						
Local Education	23.8	23.4	23.6	1.7	0.8						



¹Current Employment Statistics (CES) estimates include all full- and part-time wage and salary workers in nonagricultural establishments who worked or received pay during the week which includes the 12th of the month. Self-employed, domestic services, and personnel of the armed forces are excluded. Data are not seasonally adjusted.

*Published in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

(p) Subject to revision. (r) Revised.

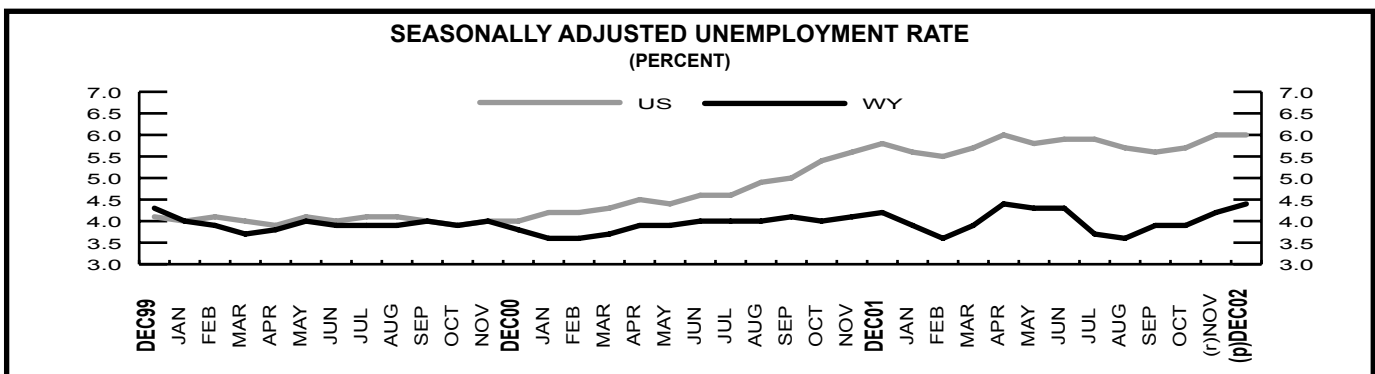
Economic Indicators

by: David Bullard, Senior Economist

“The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased 2.4 percent from its December 2001 level.”

	Dec 2002 (p)	Nov 2002 (r)	Dec 2001 (b)	Percent Change Month	Year
Wyoming Total Civilian Labor Force(1)	270,312	271,456	269,881	-0.4	0.2
Unemployed	12,012	10,736	11,513	11.9	4.3
Employed	258,300	260,720	258,368	-0.9	0.0
Wyoming Unemployment Rate/Seas. Adj.	4.4%/4.4%	4.0%/4.2%	4.3%/4.2%	N/A	N/A
U.S. Unemployment Rate/Seas. Adj.	5.7%/6.0%	5.7%/6.0%	5.4%/5.8%	N/A	N/A
U.S. Multiple Jobholders	7,554,000	7,183,000	7,266,000	5.2	4.0
As a percent of all workers	5.6%	5.3%	5.4%	N/A	N/A
U.S. Discouraged Workers	398,000	381,000	344,000	4.5	15.7
U.S. Part Time for Economic Reasons	4,278,000	4,080,000	4,388,000	4.9	-2.5
Hours & Earnings for Production Workers					
Wyoming Mining					
Average Weekly Earnings	\$923.10	\$920.40	\$920.32	0.3	0.3
Average Weekly Hours	41.6	40.6	43.7	2.5	-4.8
U.S. Mining Hours & Earnings					
Average Weekly Earnings	\$755.23	\$762.27	\$771.76	-0.9	-2.1
Average Weekly Hours	42.5	42.8	43.9	-0.7	-3.2
Wyoming Manufacturing Hours & Earnings					
Average Weekly Earnings	\$661.06	\$655.07	\$627.13	0.9	5.4
Average Weekly Hours	38.3	37.8	38.1	1.3	0.5
U.S. Manufacturing Hours & Earnings					
Average Weekly Earnings	\$646.99	\$633.13	\$625.00	2.2	3.5
Average Weekly Hours	41.5	40.9	41.2	1.5	0.7
Wyoming Unemployment Insurance					
Weeks Compensated (2)	22,435	15,041	12,433	49.2	80.4
Benefits Paid	\$5,096,680	\$3,400,662	\$2,666,133	49.9	91.2
Average Weekly Benefit Payment	\$227.18	\$226.09	\$214.44	0.5	5.9
State Insured Covered Jobs (1)	222,015	221,962	218,162	0.0	1.8
Insured Unemployment Rate	2.3%	1.8%	1.8%	N/A	N/A
Consumer Price Index for All U.S. Urban Consumers (CPI-U) (1982 to 1984 = 100)					
All Items	180.9	181.3	176.7	-0.2	2.4
Food & Beverages	177.8	177.4	175.2	0.2	1.5
Housing	181.1	181.2	176.9	-0.1	2.4
Apparel	121.5	125.5	123.7	-3.2	-1.8
Transportation	154.2	155.2	148.5	-0.6	3.8
Medical Care	291.3	290.5	277.3	0.3	5.0
Recreation (Dec. 1997=100)	106.5	106.4	105.3	0.1	1.1
Education & Communication (Dec. 1997=100)	109.2	109.3	106.9	-0.1	2.2
Other Goods & Services	295.8	295.6	286.4	0.1	3.3
Producer Prices (1982 to 1984 = 100)					
All Commodities	133.0	133.2	128.1	-0.2	3.8
Wyoming Building Permits					
New Privately Owned Housing Units Authorized	125	131	104	-4.6	20.2
Valuation	\$16,377,000	\$17,338,000	\$9,466,000	-5.5	73.0

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised. (b) Benchmarked. (1) Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program Estimates. (2) Not Normalized.



Wyoming County Unemployment Rates

by: Brad Payne, Economist

“Teton County’s unemployment rate fell from 4.6 percent in November to 4.0 percent in December as the winter tourist season started.”

REGION County	Labor Force			Employed			Unemployed			Unemployment Rate		
	Dec 2002 (p)	Nov 2002 (r)	Dec 2001 (b)	Dec 2002 (p)	Nov 2002 (r)	Dec 2001 (b)	Dec 2002 (p)	Nov 2002 (r)	Dec 2001 (b)	Dec 2002 (p)	Nov 2002 (r)	Dec 2001 (b)
NORTHWEST	45,955	46,656	45,664	43,317	44,368	43,146	2,638	2,288	2,518	5.7	4.9	5.5
Big Horn	5,737	5,884	5,835	5,446	5,649	5,544	291	235	291	5.1	4.0	5.0
Fremont	18,807	19,066	18,489	17,507	17,925	17,353	1,300	1,141	1,136	6.9	6.0	6.1
Hot Springs	2,363	2,380	2,455	2,253	2,297	2,326	110	83	129	4.7	3.5	5.3
Park	14,561	14,807	14,352	13,815	14,135	13,569	746	672	783	5.1	4.5	5.5
Washakie	4,487	4,519	4,533	4,296	4,362	4,354	191	157	179	4.3	3.5	3.9
NORTHEAST	48,037	48,360	46,774	46,159	46,736	45,068	1,878	1,624	1,706	3.9	3.4	3.6
Campbell	23,911	23,923	23,105	23,095	23,188	22,441	816	735	664	3.4	3.1	2.9
Crook	2,804	2,949	2,895	2,692	2,846	2,764	112	103	131	4.0	3.5	4.5
Johnson	3,878	3,998	3,697	3,744	3,895	3,545	134	103	152	3.5	2.6	4.1
Sheridan	14,200	14,188	13,771	13,524	13,626	13,150	676	562	621	4.8	4.0	4.5
Weston	3,244	3,302	3,306	3,104	3,181	3,168	140	121	138	4.3	3.7	4.2
SOUTHWEST	52,496	51,854	53,460	49,901	49,454	50,876	2,595	2,400	2,584	4.9	4.6	4.8
Lincoln	6,445	6,571	6,869	5,984	6,168	6,421	461	403	448	7.2	6.1	6.5
Sublette	3,336	3,481	3,216	3,250	3,396	3,149	86	85	67	2.6	2.4	2.1
Sweetwater	20,067	19,800	20,491	19,110	18,967	19,458	957	833	1,033	4.8	4.2	5.0
Teton	11,651	10,879	11,824	11,182	10,376	11,407	469	503	417	4.0	4.6	3.5
Uinta	10,997	11,123	11,060	10,375	10,547	10,441	622	576	619	5.7	5.2	5.6
SOUTHEAST	74,394	74,669	73,916	71,874	72,401	71,442	2,520	2,268	2,474	3.4	3.0	3.3
Albany	20,079	19,989	19,601	19,706	19,679	19,182	373	310	419	1.9	1.6	2.1
Goshen	6,328	6,573	6,371	6,121	6,400	6,183	207	173	188	3.3	2.6	3.0
Laramie	42,614	42,575	42,416	40,957	41,039	40,780	1,657	1,536	1,636	3.9	3.6	3.9
Niobrara	1,186	1,242	1,181	1,116	1,184	1,129	70	58	52	5.9	4.7	4.4
Platte	4,187	4,290	4,347	3,974	4,099	4,168	213	191	179	5.1	4.5	4.1
CENTRAL	49,429	49,918	50,066	47,048	47,760	47,834	2,381	2,158	2,232	4.8	4.3	4.5
Carbon	7,779	8,024	8,012	7,422	7,730	7,557	357	294	455	4.6	3.7	5.7
Converse	6,281	6,428	6,342	5,926	6,128	6,082	355	300	260	5.7	4.7	4.1
Natrona	35,369	35,466	35,712	33,700	33,902	34,195	1,669	1,564	1,517	4.7	4.4	4.2
STATEWIDE	270,312	271,456	269,881	258,300	260,720	258,368	12,012	10,736	11,513	4.4	4.0	4.3
Statewide Seasonally Adjusted										4.4	4.2	4.2
U.S.....										5.7	5.7	5.4
U.S. Seasonally Adjusted.....										6.0	6.0	5.8

Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Benchmarked 02/02. Run Date 12/02.

Data are not seasonally adjusted except where otherwise specified.

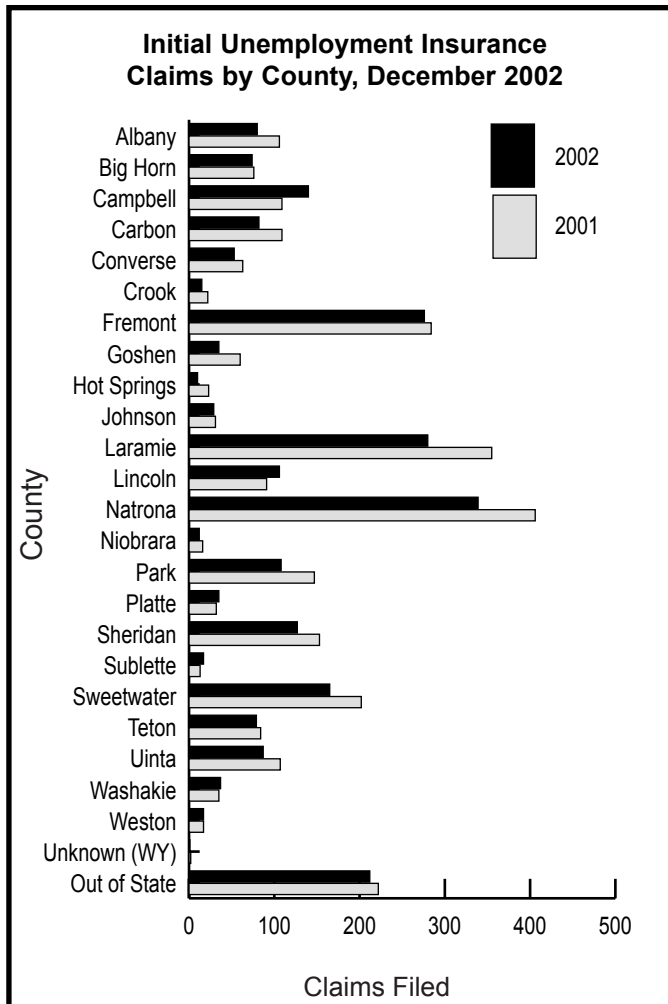
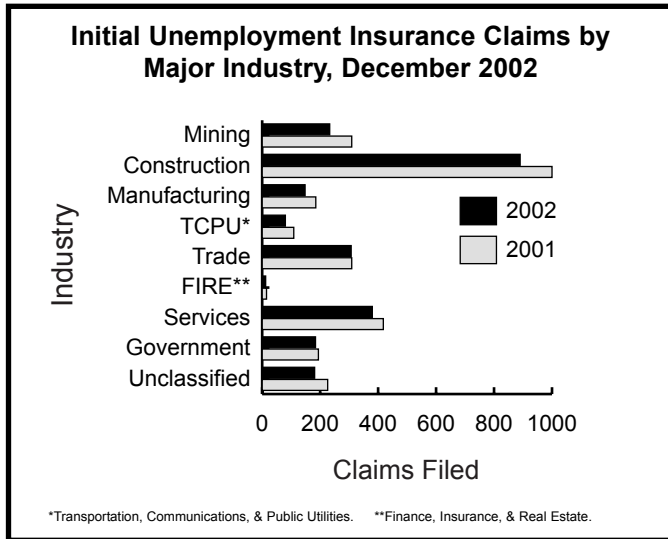
(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised. (b) Benchmarked.

NOTE: The Current Population Survey (CPS) estimated the 2001 annual average Wyoming unemployment rate at 3.9 percent.

The 90 percent confidence interval for this estimate suggests that in 9 of 10 cases, the interval 3.4 to 4.4 percent would contain the actual rate.

Wyoming Normalized Unemployment Insurance Statistics: Initial Claims by: Douglas W. Leonard, Research Analyst

“Statewide initial claims fell by 12.7 percent compared to December 2001. Mining and Construction accounted for the majority of the change.”



WYOMING STATEWIDE	Claims Filed			Percent Change	
	Dec 02	Nov 02	Dec 01	Dec 02	Dec 01
TOTAL CLAIMS FILED	2,415	2,424	2,765	-0.4	-12.7
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	1,271	977	1,494	30.1	-14.9
Mining	233	226	309	3.1	-24.6
Oil & Gas Extraction	195	197	257	-1.0	-24.1
Construction	890	656	1,000	35.7	-11.0
Manufacturing	148	95	185	55.8	-20.0
TOTAL SERVICES PRODUCING	963	1,276	1,045	-24.5	-7.8
Transportation, Comm., & Pub. Utilities	80	81	109	-1.2	-26.6
Transportation	71	64	94	10.9	-24.5
Communications & Public Utilities	9	17	15	-47.1	-40.0
Trade	307	370	309	-17.0	-0.6
Wholesale Trade	35	52	41	-32.7	-14.6
Retail Trade	272	318	268	-14.5	1.5
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	12	18	15	-33.3	-20.0
Services	380	563	418	-32.5	-9.1
Personal & Business Services	107	184	152	-41.8	-29.6
Health Services	31	34	28	-8.8	10.7
Government	184	244	194	-24.6	-5.2
Local Government	51	87	74	-41.4	-31.1
Local Education	14	19	22	-26.3	-36.4
UNCLASSIFIED	181	171	226	5.8	-19.9

LARAMIE COUNTY					
LARAMIE COUNTY	Claims Filed			Percent Change	
	Dec 02	Nov 02	Dec 01	Dec 02	Dec 01
TOTAL CLAIMS FILED	278	281	357	-1.1	-22.1
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	136	115	184	18.3	-26.1
Mining	13	1	8	1200.0	62.5
Oil & Gas Extraction	2	0	0	0.0	0.0
Construction	109	108	153	0.9	-28.8
Manufacturing	14	6	23	133.3	-39.1
TOTAL SERVICES PRODUCING	131	148	151	-11.5	-13.2
Transportation, Comm., & Pub. Utilities	13	14	31	-7.1	-58.1
Transportation	13	11	22	18.2	-40.9
Communications & Public Utilities	0	3	9	0.0	0.0
Trade	45	32	42	40.6	7.1
Wholesale Trade	4	1	8	300.0	-50.0
Retail Trade	41	31	34	32.3	20.6
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	4	5	4	-20.0	0.0
Services	47	70	63	-32.9	-25.4
Personal & Business Services	24	38	32	-36.8	-25.0
Health Services	4	5	8	-20.0	-50.0
Government	22	27	11	-18.5	100.0
Local Government	5	9	5	-44.4	0.0
Local Education	1	3	2	-66.7	-50.0
UNCLASSIFIED	11	18	22	-38.9	-50.0

NATRONA COUNTY					
NATRONA COUNTY	Claims Filed			Percent Change	
	Dec 02	Nov 02	Dec 01	Dec 02	Dec 01
TOTAL CLAIMS FILED	336	276	407	21.7	-17.4
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	204	120	258	70.0	-20.9
Mining	25	26	55	-3.8	-54.5
Oil & Gas Extraction	23	24	54	-4.2	-57.4
Construction	137	88	179	55.7	-23.5
Manufacturing	42	6	24	600.0	75.0
TOTAL SERVICES PRODUCING	126	139	136	-9.4	-7.4
Transportation, Comm., & Pub. Utilities	3	9	10	-66.7	-70.0
Transportation	2	6	10	-66.7	-80.0
Communications & Public Utilities	1	3	0	-66.7	0.0
Trade	54	44	53	22.7	1.9
Wholesale Trade	10	14	6	-28.6	66.7
Retail Trade	44	30	47	46.7	-6.4
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	3	0	1	0.0	200.0
Services	59	70	65	-15.7	-9.2
Personal & Business Services	14	36	22	-61.1	-36.4
Health Services	10	11	10	-9.1	0.0
Government	7	16	7	-56.3	0.0
Local Government	2	6	2	-66.7	0.0
Local Education	1	1	1	0.0	0.0
UNCLASSIFIED	6	17	13	-64.7	-53.8

Wyoming Normalized Unemployment Insurance Statistics: Continued Claims by: Douglas W. Leonard, Research Analyst

“Statewide continued claims were 29.6 percent higher than in December 2001. This is the third consecutive month that claims are increasing at a decreasing rate.”

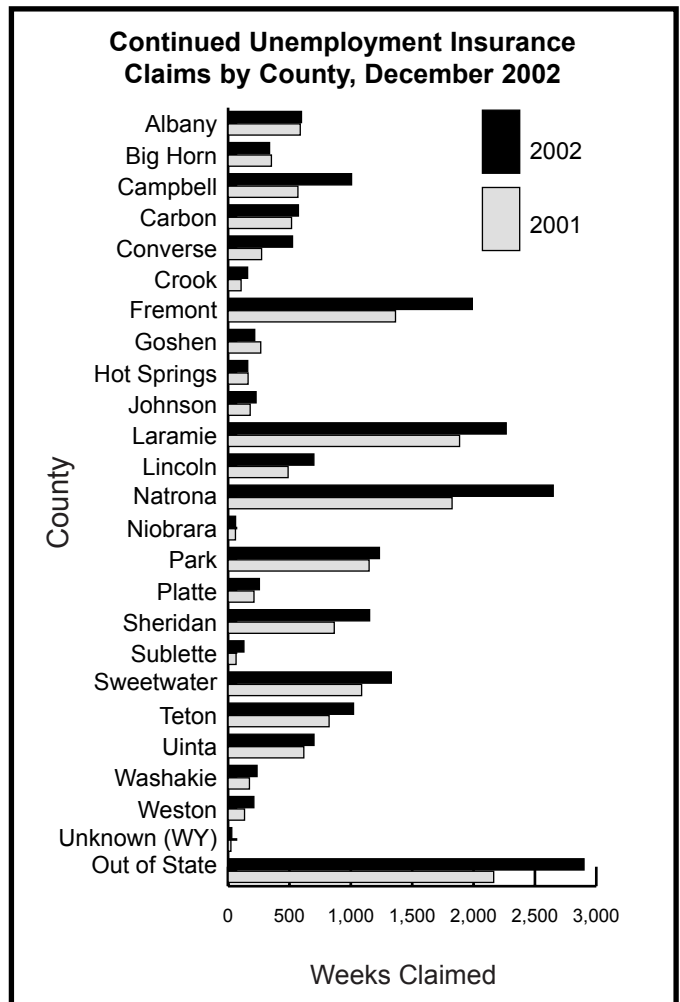
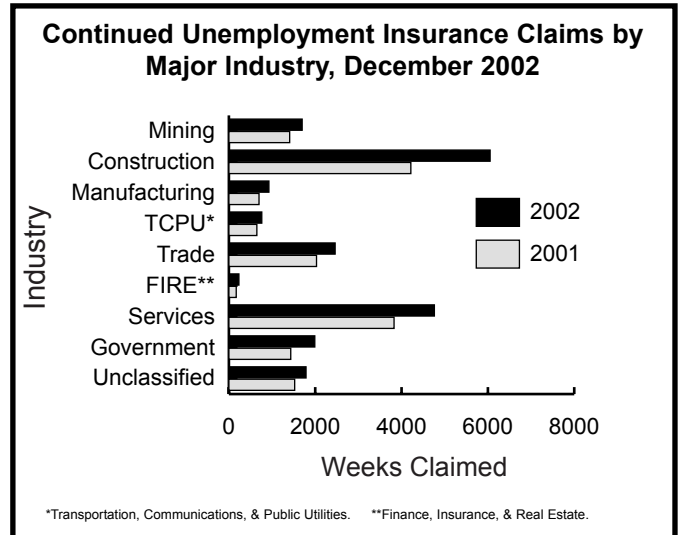
WYOMING STATEWIDE	Weeks Claimed			Percent Change Weeks Claimed	
	Dec 02	Nov 02	Dec 01	Nov 02 Dec 02	Dec 01 Dec 02
	Dec 02	Nov 02	Dec 01		
TOTAL CLAIMS FILED	20,667	15,757	15,952	31.2	29.6
TOTAL UNIQUE CLAIMANTS	6,674	5,247	5,311	27.2	25.7
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	8,675	5,952	6,321	45.7	37.2
Mining	1,697	1,256	1,408	35.1	20.5
Oil & Gas Extraction	1,453	1,078	1,166	34.8	24.6
Construction	6,051	4,075	4,215	48.5	43.6
Manufacturing	927	621	698	49.3	32.8
TOTAL SERVICES PRODUCING	10,205	8,540	8,107	19.5	25.9
Transportation, Comm., & Pub. Utilities	762	608	648	25.3	17.6
Transportation	619	454	509	36.3	21.6
Communications & Public Utilities	143	154	139	-7.1	2.9
Trade	2,461	2,084	2,030	18.1	21.2
Wholesale Trade	392	365	325	7.4	20.6
Retail Trade	2,069	1,719	1,705	20.4	21.3
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	232	231	170	0.4	36.5
Services	4,760	4,143	3,826	14.9	24.4
Personal & Business Services	1,478	1,157	1,075	27.7	37.5
Health Services	343	299	270	14.7	27.0
Government	1,990	1,474	1,433	35.0	38.9
Local Government	693	550	422	26.0	64.2
Local Education	189	201	78	-6.0	142.3
UNCLASSIFIED	1,787	1,265	1,524	41.3	17.3

LARAMIE COUNTY

TOTAL CLAIMS FILED	2,265	1,825	1,888	24.1	20.0
TOTAL UNIQUE CLAIMANTS	736	611	631	20.5	16.6
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	913	678	736	34.7	24.0
Mining	4	6	10	-33.3	-60.0
Oil & Gas Extraction	4	5	10	-20.0	-60.0
Construction	816	585	653	39.5	25.0
Manufacturing	93	87	73	6.9	27.4
TOTAL SERVICES PRODUCING	1,210	1,015	1,009	19.2	19.9
Transportation, Comm., & Pub. Utilities	148	158	143	-6.3	3.5
Transportation	100	95	86	5.3	16.3
Communications & Public Utilities	48	63	57	-23.8	-15.8
Trade	278	214	294	29.9	-5.4
Wholesale Trade	30	30	48	0.0	-37.5
Retail Trade	248	184	246	34.8	0.8
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	42	29	60	44.8	-30.0
Services	577	456	361	26.5	59.8
Personal & Business Services	279	199	168	40.2	66.1
Health Services	64	61	34	4.9	88.2
Government	165	158	151	4.4	9.3
Local Government	50	35	29	42.9	72.4
Local Education	18	18	11	0.0	63.6
UNCLASSIFIED	142	132	143	7.6	-0.7

NATRONA COUNTY

TOTAL CLAIMS FILED	2,649	2,157	1,825	22.8	45.2
TOTAL UNIQUE CLAIMANTS	864	716	642	20.7	34.6
TOTAL GOODS PRODUCING	1,288	1,052	901	22.4	43.0
Mining	219	230	269	-4.8	-18.6
Oil & Gas Extraction	183	193	247	-5.2	-25.9
Construction	947	731	549	29.5	72.5
Manufacturing	122	91	83	34.1	47.0
TOTAL SERVICES PRODUCING	1,243	992	844	25.3	47.3
Transportation, Comm., & Pub. Utilities	90	60	69	50.0	30.4
Transportation	76	51	54	49.0	40.7
Communications & Public Utilities	14	9	15	55.6	-6.7
Trade	357	287	292	24.4	22.3
Wholesale Trade	104	99	97	5.1	7.2
Retail Trade	253	188	195	34.6	29.7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	43	49	10	-12.2	330.0
Services	617	505	408	22.2	51.2
Personal & Business Services	207	166	175	24.7	18.3
Health Services	77	56	62	37.5	24.2
Government	136	91	65	49.5	109.2
Local Government	63	50	40	26.0	57.5
Local Education	15	14	12	7.1	25.0
UNCLASSIFIED	118	113	80	4.4	47.5



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