



# Business Services

*Connecting job seekers to business*

## Highlights On Carpenters

- Carpenters are #15 on the Top 25 list of job openings in the Twin Cities.
- Carpenters earn a median wage of \$23.67 per hour.
- Union contractors have apprentice to journeymen ratios that must be met. This allows new and inexperienced individuals to enter the career.

Attend an informational meeting to find out how to get started and talk with agents who know the companies that are hiring. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month at 5 PM at:

Carpenter's District Council  
700 Olive Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55101  
651-646-7207

## Careers Outlook: Construction Industry Needs Workers Now!

The latest U.S. Department of Labor ([www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov)) study on the construction industry states that the industry will be adding 1 million jobs between 2002 and 2012. We are already part way through this timeframe and are seeing a strong demand for workers. This industry is considered one of the largest industries with approximately 6.7 million currently working.

There are many occupations within this industry that a job seeker can pursue. With the right skills and training, these occupations can provide livable wages and full family benefits. The current administration has targeted this industry as part of its "High Growth Job Training Initiative." This initiative may lead to more job training programs that will introduce people into the construction industry.

The industry is challenged to improve its image in regards to safety and skill requirements. Research is being done on how best to introduce this industry to both youth and "non-traditional labor pools."

For more information:

**Women in the Trades** 550 Rice St., St. Paul, MN 55103, 651-228-9955

**Construction Careers:** [www.constructioncareers.org](http://www.constructioncareers.org)

- A great MN website about construction careers and apprenticeships

**Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity:** [www.tchabitat.org](http://www.tchabitat.org) 612-331-4090

- For volunteering and "hands-on" experience in this industry

**American Council for Construction Education:** [www.acce-hq.org](http://www.acce-hq.org)

- A website for people to learn more about construction training

**St. Paul College:** [www.saintpaul.edu](http://www.saintpaul.edu) 651-846-1370

- One of many colleges in the metro-area that teach courses in construction trades

## Construction Training Programs

There are a few programs in the metro-area that provide great entry-level training for people seeking careers in construction. Goodwill Easter Seals offers one of the programs. It is a ten-week program that works with the student both in the classroom and on construction sites. The course includes 25 hours of weekly training to learn about tool use, safety, math and measuring, blueprints, and other required industry skills. They also introduce students to different unions and work with them on job readiness. For more information, call **Goodwill Easter Seals** at 651-379-5800 or view their website [www.goodwilleasterseals.org](http://www.goodwilleasterseals.org).

Continued on back ...

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Careers in the construction trades have well-defined career ladders. You begin as an apprentice. Through work experience and training, you can become a journeyman. Journeymen can become foremen, masters, managers or business owners.

Another program that orients students to different construction trades is through Minnesota B.U.I.L.D. and Merrick Community Center. The program works with low-income women and minority individuals who are interested in the construction trades but have no true experience. The curriculum includes five weeks of training designed and delivered by construction personnel. The program covers OSHA and hazardous materials training, bricklaying, carpentry, cement finishing, and painting. When the students complete the training, they choose a trade and a job counselor helps them find work in that specific trade. The job counselor also works on job retention to ensure that the student/worker is doing well in their new occupation. This program is offered a twice per year. Students must attend an orientation/interviewing process before being accepted. For more information, call Jerome Balsimo at **Merrick Community Center** at 651-771-9339 or check out the Minnesota B.U.I.L.D. website <http://www.gwdc.org/FF/partners/mn-build.htm>.

### Highlight on Laborers

“Call the Laborers’ Union hall between 7 and 8 a.m. Mon - Fri and ask to speak with a field agent. Agents know where the jobs are and can advise you on applying for work. When you apply, be sure to look like a laborer, wear your work boots and jeans.”

*Business Agent  
Construction and  
General Laborers’  
Local 132*

A great starting point in the construction field is to begin work as a laborer. Construction Craft Laborers of the Laborers International Union work under a variety of contracts. The two main contracts are the Metropolitan Builders Contract and the Highway and Infrastructure Contract. If you do not have previous experience in construction, an entry-level position with a highway contractor may be a good place to start. The median hourly wage for a laborer in the Twin Cities area is \$20.55.

Some contractors will hire individuals with little or no work experience because, as skilled as laborers tend to be, some jobs are still done with a shovel, a work ethic, sweat equity, and a desire to learn. You do not need to be a member of the union to obtain work as a construction laborer.

Employers are able to hire from the union hall or from applications that have been submitted to their offices. To seek work as a laborer, you must apply with a union contracting company that has a contract with the Laborers’ Union. You can obtain a complete list of contractors by visiting the Laborers’ union hall. Once you are employed by a union contractor and have applied to the union for membership, you will be registered for the laborers’ apprenticeship program. When your work season ends, you are encouraged to attend training courses at the Laborers’ Training Center in Lino Lakes. There you will have an opportunity to learn new skills and be better able to chart your own course in the construction community. The Laborers’ Union Local 132 is located at 346 Larpenteur Avenue in Saint Paul, MN, 55113, 651-487-1070.

### What Skills and Personal Characteristics are Required to Work in Construction?

John Holland’s occupational research classifies many of the construction occupations in the “Realistic” category. Realistic occupations typically require:

- **Interest** in machines and the outdoors.
- **Skills** that include mechanical ingenuity and dexterity, and physical coordination.
- **Values** that include tradition, practicality, and common sense.

**Next Issue:**  
Summer 2005  
Focus on  
Manufacturing

Other factors to consider are:

- Most construction sites are not accessible via public transportation; you must have your own transportation.
- Often there is a period of unemployment in the winter; good planning can help you through this.
- You may be working overtime and/or non-traditional work hours. This will require additional resources for childcare and coverage of family responsibilities.