

2022

Industry insights from
construction employers and
tradespeople.

BC CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SURVEY

WAGES & SALARIES SPECIAL EDITION

"The data shows that construction is an industry under pressure: more projects to build despite more labour and material shortages, more taxes, more government, more costs, more rules. These are essential livelihoods worthy of our utmost support." – Chris Atchison, BCCA President

PRESENTED BY:



British
Columbia
Construction
Association



Trades Training Fund



RESPONDENT OVERVIEW

A total of 1,000 survey respondents provided information from all seven development regions of British Columbia. The survey was conducted during the Fall of 2021.

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Less than 1:	8%
1-5:	4%
5-10:	26%
10+:	42%

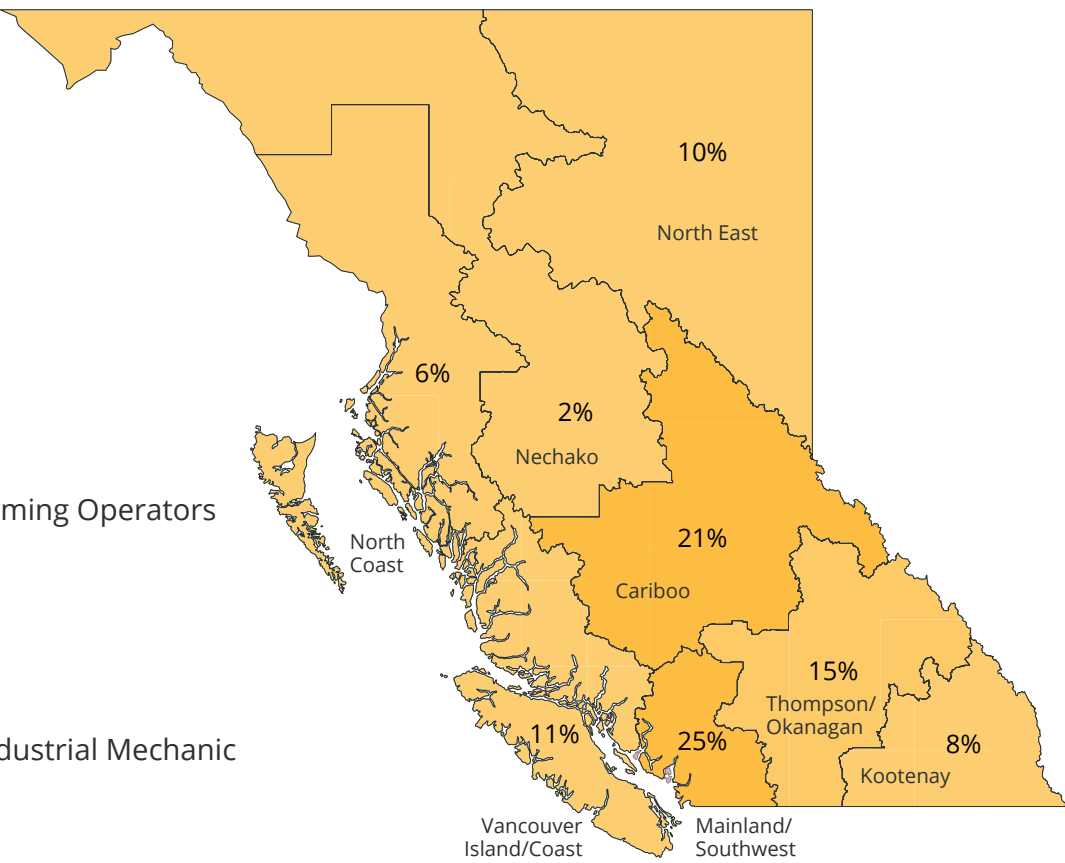
TOP TRADES REPRESENTED (IN ORDER)

1. Carpenter
2. Construction Estimator
3. Contractor / Supervisor
4. Concrete Finisher
5. Helper and Labourer
6. Concrete, Clay and Stone Forming Operators
7. Electrician
8. Plumber
9. Crane Operator
10. Construction Inspector
11. Welder
12. Construction Millwright / Industrial Mechanic
13. Land Surveyor

UNION AND NON-UNION

28% of respondents work in a unionized environment, while **72%** are non-union.

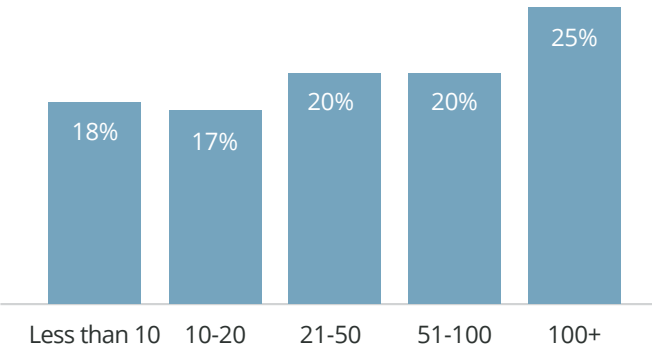
LOCATION OF RESPONDENTS' HEAD OFFICES



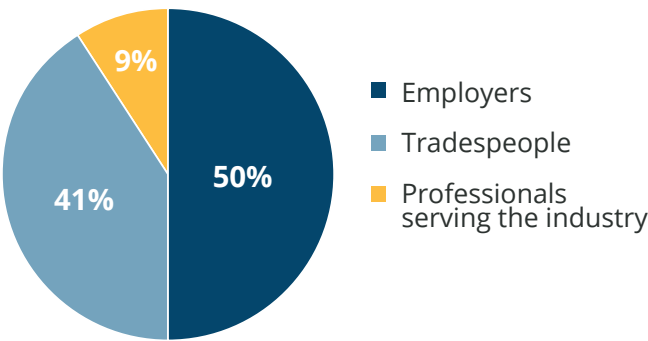
"What keeps me up at night? Bonding concerns, Covid's impact on project scheduling, employee management, my personal health and stress levels."

"I'm losing interest in working in the industry because of the pressure to work quicker to benefit others and not myself."

COMPANY SIZE BY EMPLOYEE



PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS



INDUSTRY TRENDS

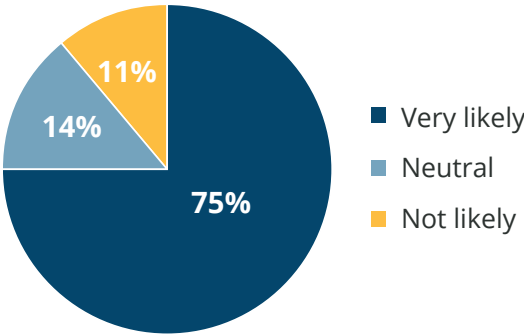
SKILLED WORKFORCE

HEALTH

Tradespeople rated their physical, financial, and mental health for 2021 compared to pre-COVID (2019):

- PHYSICAL HEALTH: 2% HIGHER
- FINANCIAL HEALTH: 9% HIGHER
- MENTAL HEALTH: 10% LOWER

HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOU WILL BE WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION IN 3 YEARS?



EMPLOYERS

PUBLIC PROJECTS

20% of contractors are less likely to bid on public projects this year – a trend that has continued for 3 years despite increased project opportunities.

TOP CONCERNS

- Skilled labour shortage (80%)
- Prompt payment (52%)
- Safety (48%)
- Small business taxes (26%)
- Public sector procurement practices (21%)

ON DIVERSITY

The culture is changing.

- 84% of employers surveyed have implemented diversity policies (up from 64% in 2019).
- 45% of employers surveyed say their company is more diverse than it was 3 years ago.

ON TECHNOLOGY

Companies are spending more on technology but they aren't planning for that spending.

- 66% of employers surveyed say their investment in technology has increased in the past year, up from 61% last year.
- 42% of employers say they haven't allocated any budget towards new technology. This is down from 50% last year.

- 69% of all respondents are less likely to recommend a career in construction this year.
- 80% of all respondents who reported working on residential projects also worked on ICI projects.

"Between the Federal and Provincial government I lose about 40% of my income to taxes. I pay just as much every week in tax as some of my friends make working. If my Father made this much money 40 years ago he would have been considered 'Upper class'. I'm barely surviving."



SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE

A shortage of workers at every skill level continues to be the number one pressure in the industry. Many employers told us they’re saying no to good projects simply because they can’t get the people they need. Tradespeople are reporting improvements in wages, benefits, and culture.

MOST RESPONDENTS ARE:

- Male** (83%)
- Journeyman or Red Seal** (57%)
- 25-44 years old** (65%)
- Credentialed** (76%)



THEY WORK:

- Full time** (95%)
- Year-round** (84%)
- Open shop** (65%)
- Overtime** (59%)

29% of female respondents are apprentices and 45% are Journeymen or Red Seals. Women are 5.5x more likely than their male counterparts to recommend a job in the construction trades, and 95% think a more diverse construction workforce is a good idea compared to only 66% of men. Diversification of gender, race, ethnicity, and age is the key to alleviating the workforce shortages across the construction industry.

Entry Level Worker Looking for direction	Apprentice Working hard and moving up	Journeyman/Red Seal In constant demand
<div>79% believe a more diverse construction workforce is a good idea</div> <div>21% are in the process of getting their credentials</div> <div>Most likely to... Still be in the construction industry in 3 years time</div>	<div>53% received a raise in the past year</div> <div>95% are working full time</div> <div>Most likely to... Recommend a career in the construction trades to others</div>	<div>52% received a raise in the past year</div> <div>95% are working full time</div> <div>Most likely to... Take a job for more pay</div>

Workers are getting more skilled, with 78% of survey respondents reporting they are fully credentialed and 14% working on their ticket. More women are receiving subsidized training and mentorship than men.



EMPLOYERS

The construction industry’s contribution to BC’s GDP is up a whopping 22%, growing from \$18.8BN in 2017 to \$23BN today, and it remains the #1 employer in BC’s goods sector, with 215,133 British Columbians relying directly on construction for a paycheck. That’s larger than any other goods-producing sector.

MOST RESPONDENTS ARE:

- Medium size (40%)
- Open shop (79%)
- Requiring workers to be credentialed (70%)
- Working in 1 region of BC (64%)



- They have a diversity policy in place (84%)
- They offer employee benefits (91%)
- They pay higher wages than last year (76%)

Contractors are less likely to bid on public sector projects even as the province announces record-level spending, with 20% of respondents reporting they are less likely to bid on tax-payer funded projects. This is largely due to concerns around prompt payment, workforce availability, and public sector procurement practises.

Small Companies Less than 20 employees	Medium Companies 21-100 employees	Large Companies More than 100 employees
<div>75% offered higher hourly wages than last year</div> <div>47% offer subsidized training</div> <div>Most likely to... Be concerned about prompt payment legislation</div>	<div>96% offer benefits</div> <div>98% offer full time work</div> <div>Most likely to... Have challenges retaining women on staff</div>	<div>82% offered raises last year</div> <div>92% are paying for overtime</div> <div>Most likely to... Be concerned about skilled labour shortages</div>

The average company size has decreased 5% over the last five years to an average of 6.53 workers. Approximately 90% of companies in the industry employ less than 20 workers.

TRADE WAGES 2022

The wage data below is compiled from the 415 survey responses provided by tradespeople working in BC’s construction industry this year.

Average hourly wages across all trades	
Years working	Wage
Less than 1 year	\$20.90/hr
1-5 years	\$25.64/hr
5-10 years	\$33.80/hr
> 10 years	\$40.78/hr

Construction continues to pay, on average, 30% higher than minimum wage for most entry-level workers, with more employers providing benefits like subsidized training and paid overtime. Given the demand for labour and the increase in projects, more workers are getting paid overtime and working all year round.

Reasons for changing jobs in the past year	
1. Took a job for more pay	32%
2. Took a job in a different region	20%
3. Left job due to COVID-related reasons	16%
4. Took a job in a different trade	10%

Getting your ticket and specializing in a trade is definitely worth the investment, although many apprentices find it difficult to take time off work to do their technical training, can’t find seats, or don’t have an employer ready to sponsor their ticket.

“Cost of living is driving most eligible workers either away from the province or to large companies that can provide large wages for low skill.”

Survey respondents work in the following trades
Automotive Services Technician
Boiler Maker
Brick Layer
Cabinet Maker
Carpenter
Concrete Finisher
Concrete, Clay and Stone Forming Operators
Construction Estimator
Construction Inspector
Construction Millwright / Industrial Mechanic
Contractor / Supervisor
Crane Operator
Electrical Mechanic
Electrician
Elevator Constructor / Mechanic
Floor Covering Installer
Gas Fitter
Glazier
Helper and Labourer
Insulator
Ironworker
Land Surveyor
Landscape
Plumber
Roofer
Sheet Metal Worker
Steam Fitter
Welder

Wages in these tables reflect information provided by survey respondents. It is meant to be used as a guideline only. Statistical relevance of each category will vary, dependant on number of survey respondents contributing.

IN YOUR WORDS - WHAT KEEPS YOU AWAKE AT NIGHT?

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“Lack of payment has crippling ramifications for not only our business but tradespeople, suppliers, industry professionals and the community at whole.”

“I have had trucks and equipment sitting unused this past year due to a shortage of employees.”

“Lack of people, no one wants to work in construction anymore. We have turned down millions in negotiated work because we can’t get people.”

“Labour shortages!!!! I pass on many projects because I know I can’t find the workers. Also profits aren’t there to pay higher wages and I have done random surveys with other company owners who are all struggling financially. Honestly I am not having fun anymore - far too many headaches for very little money”

“It’s the cost of material. Cable tripled in price this year and other stuff even more, like pipes and conduit. We might run out of work because people won’t hire us because they can’t afford these prices.”

“Construction is a club. If you’re in the bad books of someone they try to make your work life miserable, if you’re in the good books, life is easy.”

“Speaking from the position as a subcontractor. It feels like the trades take on the most risk with the least amount of reward. Material shortages and price increases have only increased this further. The general contractors usually side with the owner to increase the chance of landing the next contract and it isolates trades as they have no one advocating for them.”

“Supply chain, non-compensable Covid related delays, unfair supplementary conditions attached to CCDC contracts by clients, bankruptcy of Trade Partners.”

“Scheduling in construction used to be bad, but now it’s nearly impossible.”

“Nothing keeps me up at night except customers that don’t or won’t pay the bills on time.”

“Materials pricing and availability changing drastically, sometimes more than once, over the course of a large job. The workload to hunt down materials and to constantly have to juggle the outward projections of cost with clients is really stressful. It’s nearly impossible to predict project outcomes in regards to completion deadlines and getting paid.”

“Clients are unforgiving to the supply chain challenges. Consultant groups are far too busy, leaving us contractors with 50% drawings during construction which lead to added costs for the client, which in turn sours them on construction.”

“Our biggest frustration is the lack of motivated and qualified employees.”

“Bidding a project and winning low bid only to be told we would have to cut our price, but not the products or services. In other words we seem to have to buy our projects. So much for open, honest and fair bidding.”

“Making payroll when progress payments are not forthcoming.”

“We are a union shop and we will not participate in any project that has a CBA agreement attached. It’s a bit of a protest but it is unfair in light of true competition and personal rights and freedoms.”

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BC CONSTRUCTION STAT PACK

SPRING 2022

#1

Construction's Rank as an
Employer in BC's Goods Sector

\$226B

Value of Proposed Construction
Projects in British Columbia

\$134B

Value of Current Construction
Projects in British Columbia

9.3%

BC Construction Industry
Contribution to BC's GDP

INDUSTRY & WORKFORCE TRENDS

5-YEAR TREND

\$134B



Value of current construction
projects in British Columbia

79%

\$23B



Total dollar contribution by the
construction industry to BC's GDP

22%

26,262



Number of construction
companies in BC
(92% have less than 20 employees)

11%

171,470



Number of construction trades
workers in BC's labour force

5%*

\$66,591



Average yearly wage of BC
construction employees
(\$14.0B cumulative yearly wage)

14%

27,630



Number of construction job
openings in BC due to retirements
and expansion by 2027

4%**

5,653



Number of construction jobs in
BC that will be unfilled due to
labour shortages by 2027

20%

5.70%



Percentage of the construction trades
workforce in BC that is female (# of
women in the construction trades is 9,774)

24%*

BCCA PROVINCE-WIDE EMPLOYER SERVICES:

*Three year trend

**Four year trend



For more insight, visit us at
www.bccassn.com/stats