

April Labour Market Report for Saskatchewan

This report was prepared by the Sask Trends Monitor for the Saskatchewan Construction Association on May 5, 2017

Provincial Employment

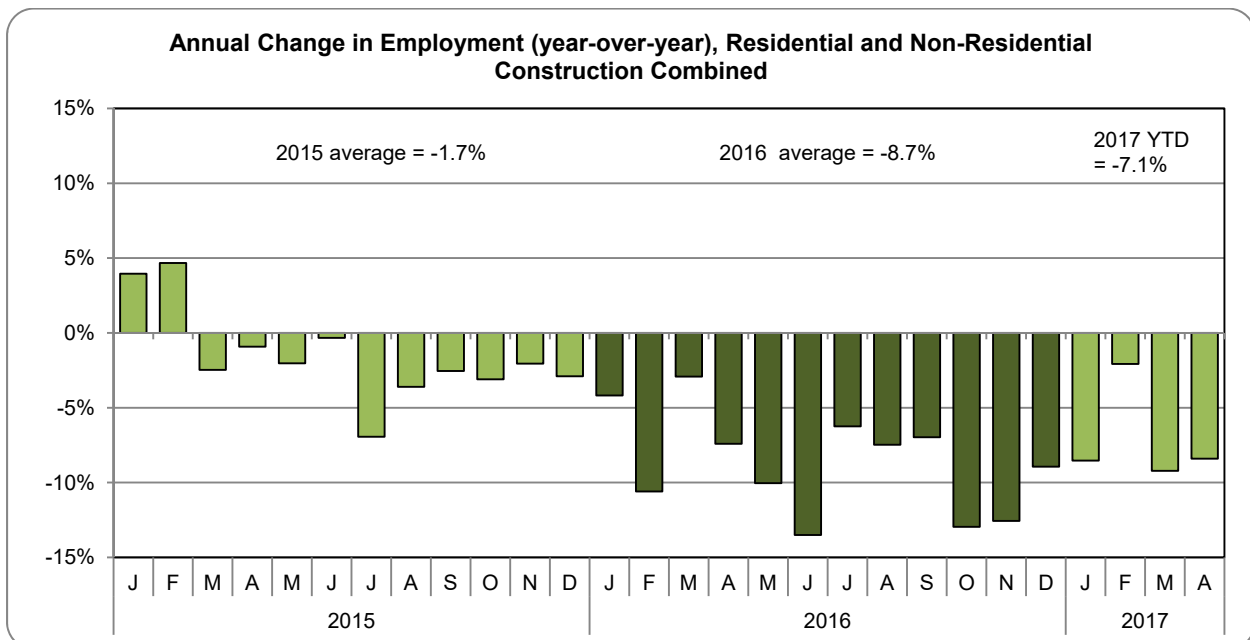
The Saskatchewan labour market is stagnant in early 2017. Total employment in April was unchanged from a year ago and the number of jobs created in the first four months of the year is up by only 0.3%. This is still an improvement over the 0.9% drop in 2016.

Construction employment continues to be well below last year's levels. Counting heavy construction and both the residential and non-residential building sectors, construction employment in April was 45,800 which is 8.4% lower than the 50,000 a year ago. The year-to-date figures for the first four months show a 7.1% decline in employment.

Compared with April a year ago employment is:

- down 10% in heavy and engineering construction;
- up 1% in residential and non-residential building construction; and
- down 13% in trade contracting firms.

The drop in employment was evident among both the self-employed (-5%) and paid workers (-10%). The average hours fell by more than 10% to an average of 32.4 hours per week so even those with a job are not putting in as many hours.

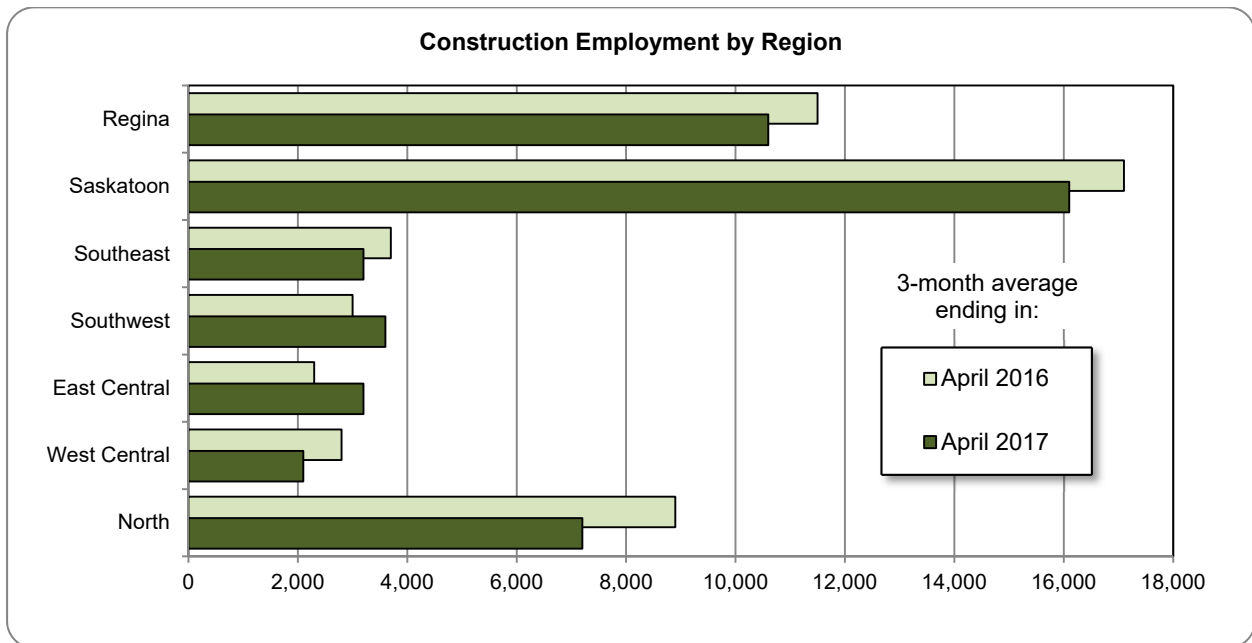


Regional Employment¹

The weakness in construction employment in the early 2017 was widespread across the province with declines in five of the seven sub-provincial regions used in the Labour Force Survey including rare declines in both Regina and Saskatoon.

In absolute numbers, the largest declines were in the northern part of the province which lost 1,700 construction jobs in the last twelve months. Employment is also down in the west central region.

The only parts of the province showing a substantial increase are on the east side (Melville/Yorkton) where employment in the three months ending in April 2017 was 39% higher than a year ago and in the southwest corner where the increase is 20%.



¹ In the Labour Force Survey, the regional data measure where you live not where you work.

Construction Wage Rates

After three consecutive years of wage increases that were well above the rate of inflation, the April figures confirm that the weak labour market is exerting downward pressure on construction wages. On a year-over-year basis, construction wage rates in April were down for the fourth consecutive month whereas they were effectively unchanged in the province as a whole.

In April 2017, the average hourly wage rate among paid workers in construction was \$29.43. This is 4.0% lower than in April 2016 and brings the year-to-date decline to 3.9%.

