

Global Foresight, Inc. 2006 Report on Industry Trends

Carpentry

Carpentry will continue to evolve as more efficient processes and operations are implemented to reduce construction time to increase productivity, such as the trend toward increased pre-fabrication. In addition, new adhesives, wireless tools, and improvements within carpentry equipment will help to keep pace with growing demand for housing and construction.

Employment Outlook

Carpenters make up one of the largest building trade groups in the United States, holding approximately 1.2 million jobs in 2000. Of these, about 25 percent are self-employed, about 33 percent are employed by general building contractors, 20 percent are employed by specialty trade contractors, and 12 percent are employed in heavy construction. The remainder work in the manufacturing, government, retail, and education sectors.

Employment within the industry is expected to be excellent over the next ten years. High turnover rates allow for readily available jobs. Employers in the industry note that it has become difficult to find skilled carpenters because job seekers search for work that is less strenuous and in comfortable environments. Seasonality and demand also affect employees; depending on a given area, weather and the demand for construction services will vary.

(Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Trends & Emerging Issues

Macro Trends:

- The current pace of innovation in the materials industry is unparalleled; more new materials have been created in the last 20 years than in the prior history of materials science.
- In the U.S., in 2005, an estimated 2,064,700 housing units were started and 1,930,300 were completed.
- Sustainable and eco-friendly design is a major focus of the building and construction.
- Tighter restrictions on immigration may increase the hourly rates of carpentry, and will be passed to the consumer.
- As baby boomers enter their high income-producing years, they will be purchasing new or existing homes. In addition, the aging U.S. housing stock will need to be updated or replaced. Out of the 100 million homes in the United States, nearly 60 percent are at least 22 years old.

Market Trends:

- According to a report in *Engineering News Record* carpenters have been dying an average of six years younger than other Americans. Carpenters have a 150 times greater chance of dying from mesothelioma, an asbestos-related disease. Cancer deaths for carpenters have been 50 percent higher than the general population, while deaths from emphysema, bronchitis, and asthma have been three times higher.
- The aging baby boom population is shifting from do-it-yourself (DIY) re-modeling projects to do-it-for-me, providing a growing market for skilled carpenters.

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- As timber costs rise the construction industry continues to look for alternative building materials such as engineered wood products (EWP), concrete, structural foam sandwich panels, and laminated fiberboard structural sheathing.
- Pre-fabricated products will alter construction and quality;
- Advances in batteries, wireless technology and tools will aid productivity.

Forecasts

- By 2012, there will be a need for an additional 1.1 million special trade contractors in the U.S.
- 18 million new homes and apartments units will need to be built over the next decade in order to meet demand in the United States.
- New homes of the future will be built primarily with off-site manufactured content such as structural panels, prefabricated components and assemblies, resulting in improved quality and better energy usage performance.

Resources

Associations:

[United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners](#)
[Associated Builders and Contractors](#)
[Associated General Contractors of America](#)
[National Association of Home Builders](#)
[Home Builders Institute](#)

Articles & Reports:

[Building Green](#)

Bureau of Labor Statistics
www.bls.gov