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Wages and Benefits Rise as Saskatchewan Construction Firms Look to Hire

Prince Albert, Saskatchewan - Saskatchewan construction companies continue to increase wage rates and enhance benefits to attract new employees, according to a recent survey by the Merit Contractors Association of Saskatchewan.

The survey covers pay, benefits and bonus structures across Saskatchewan's growing non-union construction sector.

Over the past three years, general labourers have received an increase of 27% to an average of \$18.53/hr., while first-year apprentices are now making 21% more than in 2010. The average experienced journeyman is now making \$33.19/hr.

"There has never been a better time to enter the construction sector in Saskatchewan," said Karen Low, Executive Director of the Merit Contractors Association of Saskatchewan. "Our members are looking for workers from near and far. And they are paying top dollar to attract them."

The survey also confirms what many economists have predicted: Saskatchewan will continue to lead the nation in economic growth. Of those nearly 200 construction firms surveyed, 57% expect the amount of work to increase over the next year, with 34% expecting it to remain the same.

With concerns about labour availability in the province, Saskatchewan contractors are continuing to seek new recruits from across the country. Low says an important part of their recruitment pitch is not only increased wages, but also enhanced benefits, which range from pension contributions and incentives for working out of town to vehicle, tool and clothing allowances.

"Almost three-quarters of our members offer bonuses to their employees," said Low. "That's a sure sign these employers are willing to invest in their employees."

As of Thursday, September 12, 2013 the popular saskjobs.ca website had 4611 available jobs posted under the category "trades, transport and construction."

"We would encourage those looking for work to visit saskjobs.ca," said Low. "There are great opportunities to learn a construction trade, build a career and raise a family right here in Saskatchewan."

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