



Frequently Asked Questions on the Prevailing Wage On-Line Survey

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Need Help?

- [Equal Rights Division](#)
- [Send E-Mail to:](#)

1. What is this survey for and whose idea was it to conduct it?

Answer: The purpose of the prevailing wage rate survey is to establish wage rates that are normally paid in an area to construction workers. Several years ago the department met on numerous occasions with a focus group representing multiple organizations affected by Wisconsin's prevailing wage laws to study changes needed to improve the administration of such laws. The decision to conduct annual surveys was unanimously decided by all parties involved and passed into law by the legislature.

2. Do I have to complete the survey and if I don't, what is the penalty?

Answer: Yes. By law you are required to complete and return the annual prevailing wage rate survey form but there is no monetary penalty if you do not. Failure to complete and return the survey, however, eliminates your opportunity to influence the prevailing wage rates established for public works projects the following year.

3. Our company does not work on public works projects so do I still have to report?

Answer: Yes. The prevailing wage rates are predominantly based upon wages paid on private construction projects.

4. Can I use last year's survey form?

Answer: No. The pre-assigned form number changes annually. The use of a past year's form may preclude the department from using your information.

5. I lost/didn't get the survey form. What do I do?

Answer: Call (608) 267-9331 from June through October only to obtain a new form.

6. Do we have to report every single project?

Answer: Ideally you should report all projects to reflect the most realistic wage rate information. However, if it is not feasible to do so give priority to projects with the greatest number of reportable hours and those done in counties in which you have the greatest interest.

7. Can several projects be reported on one line?

Answer: Projects located in several municipalities but still in the same county can be reported on one line for residential or agricultural construction (project type E) only. By combining project information in various municipalities within a single county on one line, the ability to use such information in an administrative review is lost. **Under no circumstances** should you combine projects in more than one county on the same line.

8. What is a "public project"?

Answer: A "public project" is one that is subject to predetermined state or federal wage rates from the State of Wisconsin, a local governmental unit or the

U.S. Department of Labor. The term “public project” DOES NOT mean that it is merely open to or used by the public.

9. Do I report projects performed outside the State of Wisconsin?

Answer: No. Only report projects on which your employees performed construction work in the state of Wisconsin.

10. What if I don't know the exact location of a project?

Answer: At a minimum you must report the correct county where the work was done. If you do not know the correct county, do not report the project.

11. Do I report projects that are still underway during the survey reporting period?

Answer: Yes. Report all hours worked-to-date during the survey reporting period.

12. I install residential septic systems. Is that project type B (sewer, water or tunnel construction) work?

Answer: No. The installation of residential septic systems must be reported as project type E (residential or agricultural construction) work.

13. Do I have to report every employee?

Answer: Ideally you should report all journeypersons you employ on each project that you report. However, if it is not feasible to do so you should report as many as you can especially in the counties in which you have the greatest interest. Also see the answer to Question 15.

14. What is a “journeyperson?”

Answer: A journeyperson is a worker who is normally proficient in a particular trade at all levels. They may have served an apprenticeship or may have gained an equivalent level of proficiency through experience or training to learn their skills.

15. How do we report helpers, foremen, apprentices, pre-apprentices, etc.?

Answer: Don't. Report only journeypersons.

16. Can we use an average for the pay rate, fringe benefits or hours?

Answer: No. Under no circumstances should you average rates of pay or fringe benefits. Report actual hourly wage rates and fringe benefits paid. Total hours must be reported for each rate of pay on each project. In the absence of the exact number of hours, come up with your best conservative estimate. Your records must substantiate the hours you report.

17. How do I report employees who are on salary or paid on a “piece-work” basis?

Answer: An employee's salary or piece-rate must be converted to an hourly cash equivalent for each hour worked. Only report if the conversion to an hourly cash equivalent is feasible. You cannot average the hourly wages.

18. Do I report shop/travel time?

Answer: No. Only report hours worked on the job site.

19. My employees do everything. Do I just call them "laborers?"

Answer: No. You must report your workers' classifications according to the actual work they perform on the project, e.g., as a carpenter, plumber, electrician, etc. See the [Dictionary of Occupational Classifications](#)

20. How do I report workers who work in more than one job classification?

Answer: If a worker is performing more than one job classification on one project you must report each of these classifications on a separate line.

21. I'm the owner of the company. Do I report my hours?

Answer: No.

22. Do I report temporary/part-time employees?

Answer: Do not report the hours worked by temporary workers who are on the payroll of a "temporary help agency." However, all employees, both temporary, part-time and full-time who are on your payroll, should be reported.

23. Do I report clerical/office workers?

Answer: No. Only employees who perform manual labor on the project site should be reported.

24. How do I figure/calculate fringe benefits?

Answer: To convert the cost of a fringe benefit that was paid weekly, divide the cost of such benefit by 40 hours. To convert the cost of a fringe benefit that was paid monthly, divide the cost of such benefit by 173 hours. To convert the cost of a fringe benefit that was paid annually, divide the cost of such benefit by 2080 hours. If an employee did not earn any fringe benefits on the reported project, please enter "0."

25. What fringe benefits do I report? Do I report Social Security, FICA, etc.?

Answer: Normally only those payments that directly benefit the employee are considered economic fringe benefits such as vacation or holiday pay, health insurance, pension, etc. Payments required by law are not considered economic fringe benefits and cannot be reported.

26. How do I report overtime hours?

Answer: Include the overtime hours worked by your employees on each project

but only report the hours at the straight time wage rate.

27. What does the column "union" mean?

Answer: The checking of "yes" or "no" in this column indicates whether the employer is voluntarily paying the employee according to the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

28. Does the department provide a formatted spreadsheet or other application to submit the survey electronically?

Answer: Yes and No. The department has a formatted spreadsheet available at: [DWD Prevailing Wage Survey](#) which can be saved to your computer and used throughout the year. The department no longer has an online application, but several union organizations and other contractor associations provide an online application for survey reporting purposes.

29. Can I use punctuation marks in my survey information provided on the disk?

Answer: No. Do not use punctuation marks anywhere in the survey spreadsheet, other than decimal points in the wage rate or fringe benefit columns.

30. Can I get an extension on the deadline date?

Answer: No. You must meet the deadline date required on the survey form.

31. I've made an error on my survey form that I have already sent to the department. How can I correct this?

Answer: Errors discovered should be corrected immediately in writing to the department. You may do so by striking through the erroneous information and writing the correct information above it in red ink. You should attach a cover letter to the corrected survey form to alert the department that you are correcting information that has already been submitted.

32. Can anybody see what I submit? Is it confidential?

Answer: All survey information received by the department is subject to Wisconsin's Open Records Law.

33. Where do I send the completed survey form?

Answer: The mailing address is:

Labor Standards Bureau
P.O. Box 7887
Madison, WI 53707-7887

This address information also appears at the top of the survey form and on the cover of the survey booklet. If you completed your survey electronically, submit it via email to pwsurvey@dwd.wisconsin.gov following the "Email Instructions" appearing in the survey booklet.

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