

September 2022

# Labor Market Analysis

## Fire Technology



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Prepared by the Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence

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**COVID-19 Statement:** This report includes employment projection data by Lightcast. Lightcast’s projections are modeled on recorded (historical) employment figures and incorporate several underlying assumptions, including the assumption that the economy during the projection period will be at approximately full employment or potential output. To the extent that a recession or labor shock, such as the economic effects of COVID-19, can cause long-term structural change, they may impact the projections. At this time, it is not possible to quantify the impact of COVID-19 on projections of industry and occupational employment. Other measures such as unemployment rates and monthly industry employment estimates will reflect the most recent information on employment and jobs in the state and, in combination with input from local employers, may help validate current and future employment needs as depicted here.

*If for any reason this document is not accessible or if you have specific needs for readability, please contact us and we will do our utmost to accommodate you with a modified version. To make a request, contact Nora Seronello by phone at (209) 575-6894 or by email [seronellon@mjc.edu](mailto:seronellon@mjc.edu).*

# Summary

Please note the COVID-19 statement on page 2 when considering this report's findings.

This study conducted by the Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence examines labor market demand, wages, skills, and postsecondary supply for Fire Technology. Three occupations related to Fire Technology were identified for Merced College:

- 33-1021, First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers
- 33-2011, Firefighters
- 33-2021, Fire Inspectors and Investigators

## Key findings:

- **Occupational demand** — There were 1,501 workers employed in jobs related to Fire Technology in 2021 in the North Central Valley/Northern Mother Lode (NCV/NML) subregion. The largest occupation is firefighters with 1,280 workers, a projected growth rate of 5% over the next five years, and 110 annual openings.
- **Wages** — First-line supervisors of firefighting and prevention workers earn the highest entry-level wage, \$36.99/hour in the subregion.
- **Employers** — Employers with the most job postings in the subregion are Daily Dispatch, City Lodi, and City Stockton.
- **Occupational titles** — The most common occupational title in job postings in the subregion is Municipal Fire Fighting and Prevention Supervisors. The most common job title is Battalion Chief.
- **Skills and certifications** — The top baseline skill is building effective relationships, the top specialized skill is fire protection, and the top software skill is public administration. The most in-demand certification is an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).
- **Education** — A postsecondary nondegree award is typically required for firefighters, first-line supervisors of firefighting and prevention workers, and fire inspectors and investigators.
- **Supply** — Analysis of postsecondary completions shows that on average 135 awards were conferred in the Central Valley/Mother Lode region each year.

Based on a comparison of occupational demand and supply, there is an undersupply of 51 trained workers in the subregion and 235 workers in the region. Please note that all students need to attend an academy to become firefighters in the state of California. The Center of Excellence recommends that Merced College work with the regional directors, the college's advisory board, and local industry in the expansion of programs to address the shortage of Fire Technology workers in the region.

# Introduction

The Central Valley/Mother Lode Center of Excellence was asked by Merced College to provide labor market information for Fire Technology. The geographical focus for this report is the North Central Valley/Northern Mother Lode (NCV/NML) subregion, but regional demand and supply data has been included for broader applicability and use. The average living wage for a single adult in the NCV/NML subregion is \$12.65/hour.<sup>1</sup> Analysis of the program and occupational data related to Fire Technology resulted in the identification of applicable occupations. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System codes and titles used in this report are:

- 33-1021, First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers
- 33-2011, Firefighters
- 33-2021, Fire Inspectors and Investigators

The occupational titles, job descriptions, sample job titles, and knowledge and skills from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and O\*NET OnLine are shown below.

## **First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers**

**Job Description:** Directly supervise and coordinate activities of workers engaged in firefighting and fire prevention and control.

**Knowledge:** Public Safety and Security, Customer and Personal Service, Education and Training, Building and Construction, Administration and Management

**Skills:** Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Social Perceptiveness, Coordination, Judgment and Decision Making

## **Firefighters**

**Job Description:** Control and extinguish fires or respond to emergency situations where life, property, or the environment is at risk. Duties may include fire prevention, emergency medical service, hazardous material response, search and rescue, and disaster assistance.

**Knowledge:** Public Safety and Security, Customer and Personal Service, Education and Training, Building and Construction, English Language

**Skills:** Critical Thinking, Coordination, Judgment and Decision Making, Service Orientation, Active Listening

## **Fire Inspectors and Investigators**

**Job Description:** Inspect buildings to detect fire hazards and enforce local ordinances and state laws, or investigate and gather facts to determine cause of fires and explosions.

**Knowledge:** Public Safety and Security, Customer and Personal Service, Building and Construction, Law and Government, Education and Training

**Skills:** Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Speaking, Writing, Reading Comprehension

# Occupational Demand

The NCV/NML subregion employed 1,501 workers in Fire Technology occupations in 2021 (Exhibit 1). The largest occupation is firefighters with 1,280 workers in 2021. This occupation is projected to grow by 5% over the next five years and has the greatest number of projected annual openings, 110.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "living wage" in Center of Excellence reports is calculated by averaging the self-sufficiency wages from the Insight Center's California Family Needs Calculator for each county in the subregion: <https://insightccd.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california/>.

**Exhibit 1. Fire Technology employment and occupational projections in the NCV/NML subregion**

Occupation	2021 Jobs	2026 Jobs	5-Year Change	5-Year % Change	Annual Openings
Firefighters	1,280	1,339	60	5%	110
First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers	162	172	10	6%	13
Fire Inspectors and Investigators	59	65	6	10%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,501</b>	<b>1,576</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>130</b>

## Wages

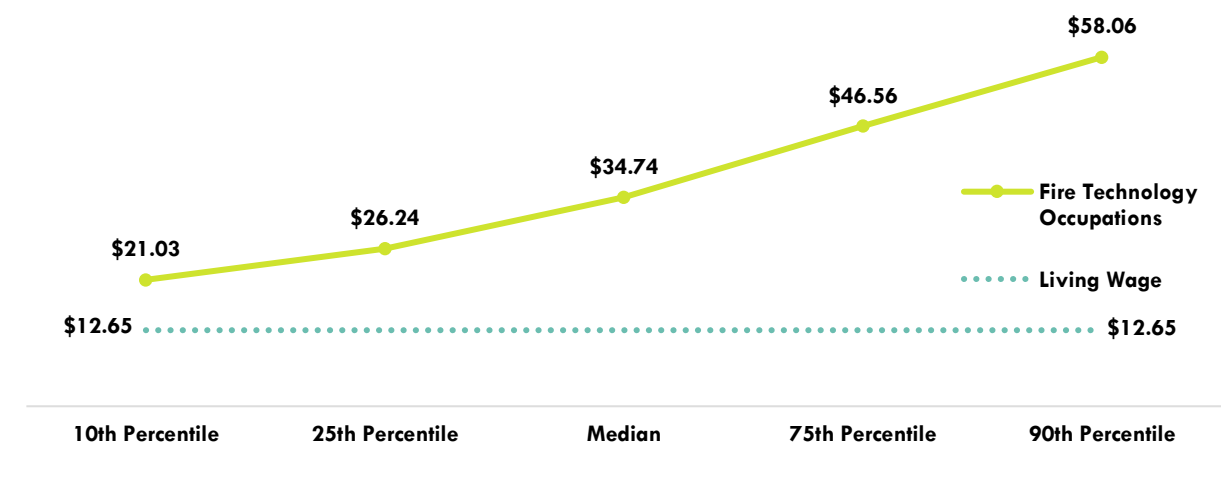
Exhibit 2a shows the hourly wages of the Fire Technology occupations. First-line supervisors of firefighting and prevention workers earn the highest entry-level wage, \$36.99/hour in the subregion<sup>2</sup>. Please note 10<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> percentiles are considered entry-level wages while 75<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> are considered experienced wages, either by gained by long term employment, received extra training, etc.

**Exhibit 2a. Fire Technology hourly wages in the NCV/NML subregion**

Occupation	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	Pct. 75 Hourly Earnings
First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers	\$36.99	\$46.35	\$60.26
Firefighters	\$21.81	\$32.52	\$38.13
Fire Inspectors and Investigators	\$19.94	\$25.35	\$41.29

Exhibit 2b shows the average hourly wages for Fire Technology occupations, the average entry-level wage exceeds the average living wage for the North Central Valley/Northern Mother Lode NCV/NML subregion.

**Exhibit 2b. Fire Technology average hourly wages in the NCV/NML subregion**



<sup>2</sup> Entry-level wages are derived from the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile.

# Job Postings

There were 73 job postings for the three occupations in the NCV/NML subregion from March 2022 to August 2022.<sup>3</sup> The employers with the most job postings are listed in Exhibit 3.

## Exhibit 3. Top employers of Fire Technology by number of job postings

Employer	Job Postings	% Job Postings
Daily Dispatch	6	10%
City Lodi	5	8%
City Stockton	5	8%
City Modesto	3	5%
Rural Metro Corporation	3	5%
State of California	3	5%
Conservation Legacy	2	3%
Defense Logistics Agency	2	3%
Kern County	2	3%
Prevent Incorporated	2	3%

Exhibit 4 shows how job postings for the targeted occupations in the NCV/NML subregion are distributed across five O\*NET OnLine occupations. The occupational title Municipal Fire Fighting and Prevention Supervisors is listed in 31 job postings. Note how this occupational title dominates the job posting results. Common job titles in postings include Battalion Chief in eight job postings, Fire Chief in five job postings, and Fire Captain in four job postings.

## Exhibit 4. Top occupational titles in job postings for Fire Technology

Occupational Title	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Municipal Fire Fighting and Prevention Supervisors	31	42%
Municipal Firefighters	20	27%
Fire Inspectors	14	19%
Forest Fire Fighting and Prevention Supervisors	6	8%
Forest Firefighters	2	3%

## Salaries

Exhibit 5 shows the “Market Salaries” for Fire Technology occupations. These are calculated by Burning Glass using a machine learning model built off of millions of job postings every year. This accounts for adjustments based on locations, industry, skills, experience, education requirements, among other variables.

## Exhibit 5. Salaries for Fire Technology occupations

Market Salary Percentile	Salary Amount
10th Percentile	\$35,632
25th Percentile	\$40,046
50th Percentile	\$54,308
75th Percentile	\$77,746
90th Percentile	\$100,715

<sup>3</sup> Other than occupation titles and job titles, the categories below can be counted one or multiple times per job posting, and across several areas in a single posting. For example, a skill can be counted in two different skill types, and an employer can indicate more than one education level.

## Education

Of the 73 job postings, 41 listed an education level preferred for the positions being filled. Among those, 63% requested high school or vocational training, 41% requested a bachelor's degree, and 39% requested an associate degree (Exhibit 6). A job posting can indicate more than one education level. Hence, the percentages shown in the chart below may total more than 100%.

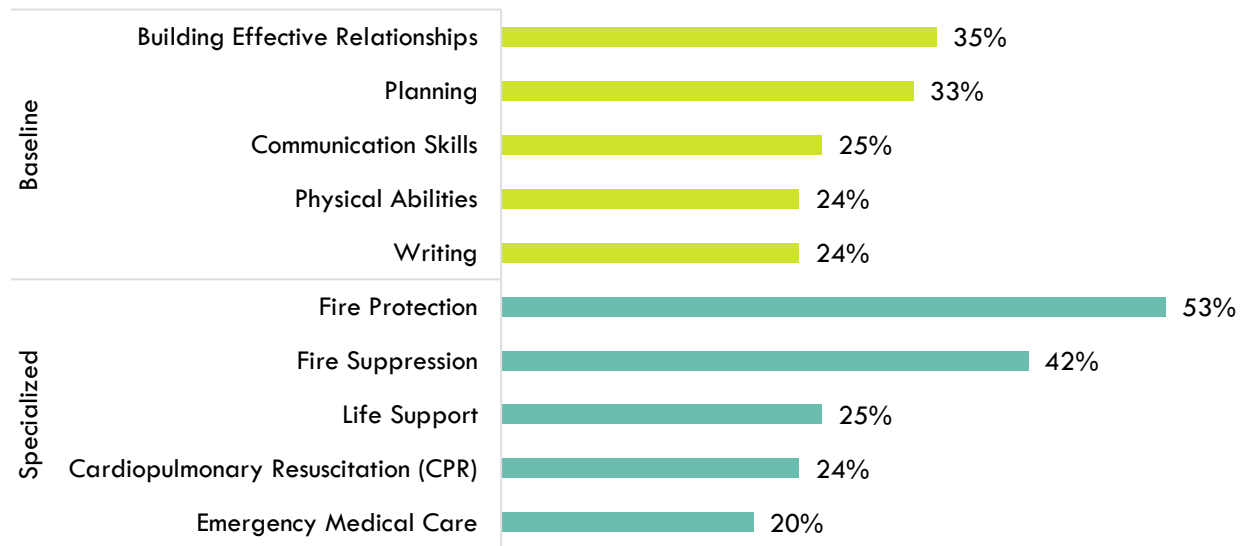
**Exhibit 6. Education levels requested in job postings for Fire Technology**

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
High school or vocational training	26	63%
Bachelor's degree	17	41%
Associate's degree	16	39%
Master's degree	2	5%

## Baseline and Specialized Skills

Exhibit 7 depicts the top baseline and specialized skills for the targeted occupations. The three most important baseline skills are building effective relationships, 35% of job postings, planning, 33%, and communication skills, 25%. The top three specialized skills are fire protection, 53% of job postings, fire suppression, 42%, and life support, 25%.

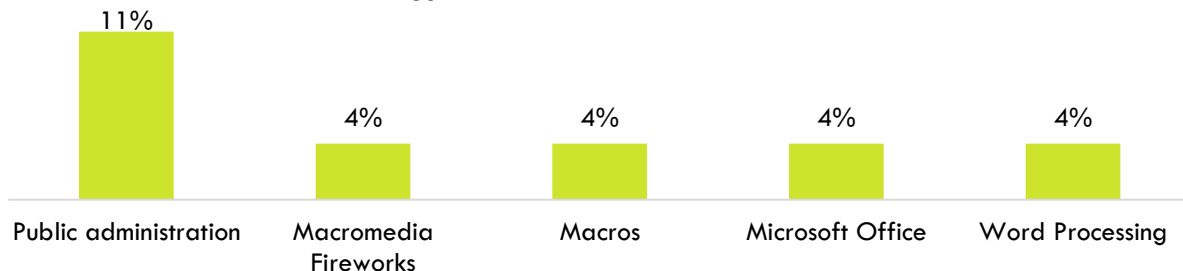
**Exhibit 7. In-demand Fire Technology baseline and specialized skills**



## Software Skills

Analysis also included the software skills most in demand by employers. Public administration and Macromedia fireworks were the top two software skills identified in job postings (Exhibit 8).

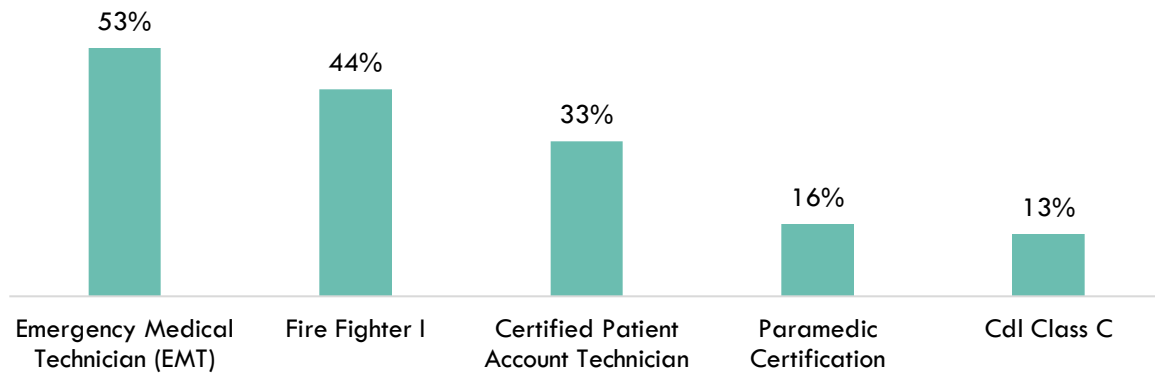
**Exhibit 8. In-demand Fire Technology software skills**



## Certifications

Of the 73 job postings, 45 contained certification data. Among those, 53% indicated a need for a Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). The next top certifications are fire fighter 1 and certified patient account technician (Exhibit 9).

**Exhibit 9. Top Fire Technology certifications requested in job postings**



## Education, Work Experience & Training

A postsecondary nondegree award is typically required for firefighters, first-line supervisors of firefighting and prevention workers, and fire inspectors and investigators (Exhibit 10).

**Exhibit 10. Education, work experience, training, and Current Population Survey results for Fire Technology occupations<sup>4</sup>**

Occupation	Typical Entry-level Education	Work Experience Required	Typical On-The-Job Training	CPS
Firefighters	Postsecondary nondegree award	None	Long-term	59.4%
First-Line Supervisors of Firefighting and Prevention Workers	Postsecondary nondegree award	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term	55.2%
Fire Inspectors and Investigators	Postsecondary nondegree award	5 years or more	Moderate-term	44.1%

<sup>4</sup> "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey," Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/>.



# Supply

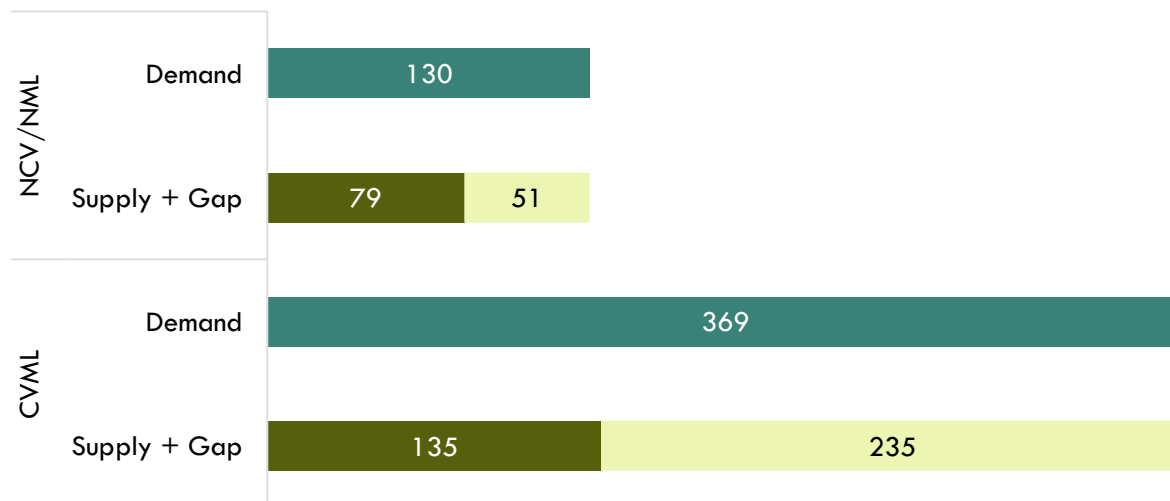
Analysis of program data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) included the TOP code and title: 213300 - Fire Technology. Analysis of the last three years of data shows that, on average, 135 awards were conferred in the Central Valley/Mother Lode region each year (Exhibit 11).

**Exhibit 11. Postsecondary supply for Fire Technology occupations in the region**

TOP/ CIP Code- Title	College	Associate Degree	Certificate 16 < 30 Semester Units	Certificate 18 < 30 Semester Units	Certificate 30 < 60 Semester Units	Subtotal
<b>213300 - Fire Technology</b>	Bakersfield	25			8	32
	Columbia	15	5	25		44
	Fresno City	9			1	10
	Merced	7			2	9
	Modesto	18			8	26
	Porterville				4	4
	Sequoias	8			1	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>82</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>135</b>

There is an undersupply of 51 Fire Technology workers in the NCV/NML subregion and 235 workers in the region (Exhibit 12).

**Exhibit 12. Fire Technology workforce demand (annual job openings), postsecondary supply of students (awards), and additional students needed to fill gap in the NCV/NML subregion and region**



# Student Outcomes

Exhibit 13 summarizes employment and wage outcomes from the California Community College Chancellor's Cal-PASS Plus LaunchBoard for the TOP code related to Fire Technology. Of note, 51 fire technology students received a degree or certificate or attained apprenticeship journey status; 14 students transferred; 88% of students obtained a job closely related to their field of study; 11% had a median change in earnings; and 64% of students attained a living wage.

### Exhibit 13. Regional metrics for the TOP code related to Fire Technology

Metric	Fire Technology 213300
Students Who Got a Degree or Certificate or Attained Apprenticeship Journey Status	51
Number of Students Who Transferred	14
Job Closely Related to Field of Study	88%
Median Change in Earnings	11%
Attained a Living Wage	64%
* denotes data not available.	

## Conclusion

The entry-level wages of the three occupations exceed the NCV/NML subregion's average living wage. There were 73 job postings in the past six months for occupations related to Fire Technology in the subregion. Analysis of skills and certification requirements in job postings indicates:

- The top baseline skill is building effective relationships, and the top specialized skill is fire protection.
- The top software skill is public administration.
- The top certification is an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT).

There is an undersupply of trained workers, a shortage of 51 in the NCV/NML subregion and 235 in the region.

## Recommendation

Based on these findings, it is recommended that Merced College work with the regional directors, the college's advisory board, and local industry in the expansion of programs to address the shortage of Fire Technology workers in the region.

# Appendix A: Methodology & Data Sources

## Data Sources

Labor market and educational supply data compiled in this report derive from a variety of sources. Data were drawn from external sources, including the Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office Management Information Systems Data Mart and the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Below is the summary of the data sources found in this study.

Data Type	Source
Labor Market Information/Population Estimates and Projections/Educational Attainment	Economic Modeling Specialists, Intl. (Lightcast). Lightcast occupational employment data are based on final Lightcast industry data and final Lightcast staffing patterns. Wage estimates are based on Occupational Employment Statistics (QCEW and Non-QCEW Employees classes of worker) and the American Community Survey (Self-Employed and Extended Proprietors). Occupational wage estimates also affected by county-level Lightcast earnings by industry: economicmodeling.com.
Typical Education Level and On-the-job Training	Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) uses a system to assign categories for entry-level education and typical on-the-job training to each occupation for which BLS publishes projections data: <a href="https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm">https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/educational-attainment.htm</a> .
Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Estimates	California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division: <a href="http://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov">labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov</a> .
Job Posting and Skills Data	Burning Glass: <a href="http://burning-glass.com/">burning-glass.com/</a> .
Additional Education Requirements/ Employer Preferences	The O*NET Job Zone database includes over 900 occupations as well as information on skills, abilities, knowledge, work activities and interests associated with specific occupations: <a href="http://ononline.org">ononline.org</a> .

## Key Terms and Concepts

**Annual Job Openings:** Annual openings are calculated by dividing the number of years in the projection period by total job openings.

**Education Attainment Level:** The highest education attainment level of workers age 25 years or older.

**Employment Estimate:** The total number of workers currently employed.

**Employment Projections:** Projections of employment are calculated by a proprietary Economic Modeling Specialists, Intl. (Lightcast) formula that includes historical employment and economic indicators along with national, state and local trends.

**Living Wage:** The cost of living in a specific community or region for one adult and no children. The cost increases with the addition of children.

**Occupation:** An occupation is a grouping of job titles that have a similar set of activities or tasks that employees perform.

**Percent Change:** Rate of growth or decline in the occupation for the projected period; this does not factor in replacement openings.

**Replacements:** Estimate of job openings resulting from workers retiring or otherwise permanently leaving an occupation. Workers entering an occupation often need training. These replacement needs, added to job openings due to growth, may be used to assess the minimum number of workers who will need to be trained for an occupation.

**Total Job Openings (New + Replacements):** Sum of projected growth (new jobs) and replacement needs. When an occupation is expected to lose jobs, or retain the current employment level, number of openings will equal replacements.

**Typical Education Requirement:** represents the typical education level most workers need to enter an occupation.

**Typical On-The-Job Training:** indicates the typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the skills needed in the occupation.