



Tradesmen Fast Facts

IRWIN Tools started National Tradesmen Day in 2011. The goal is to honor tradesmen by giving them the respect they deserve, as well as to encourage young people to consider a career in the trades.

- “Skilled trades” topped Manpower’s Talent Shortage Survey as the hardest position to fill for four years running.
- For every three tradesmen who retire, there’s only one trained person to fill his or her work boots. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than one-third of tradesmen are over age 50. A tradesman’s average age is 55.
- The Hudson Institute predicts the supply of skilled laborers in the U.S. will not catch up to demand until 2050.
- As of April 2013, the U.S. unemployment rate stands at 7.5%. Meanwhile, there are 600,000 available jobs in the skilled trades, and there aren’t enough people to fill those jobs.
- Senior level executives say the looming skilled labor shortage will cost them \$50 million. And one third of those with revenues over \$1 billion indicated it would cost them at least \$100 million.
- High schools have all but eliminated shop class and have deemphasized skilled trades in their curriculums. The result: only 6 percent of high school students consider a career in the trades.
- By 2030, 79 million skilled tradesmen will retire, while only 41 million new workers will enter the workforce.
- Skilled tradesmen can make above-average incomes. For example, an average plumber earns an annual salary of \$51,600. By comparison, per capita income in the U.S. in 2012 for all fields was \$27,915 according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- According to a report by Manpower, the lack of skilled tradesmen will impede the progress of building projects and jeopardize the global economy. Ten Million new skilled workers are needed by 2020.