Southwest Minnesota WSA 6
2011 Regional Profile
Demographic & Economic Profile

Prepared On:
March 1, 2012

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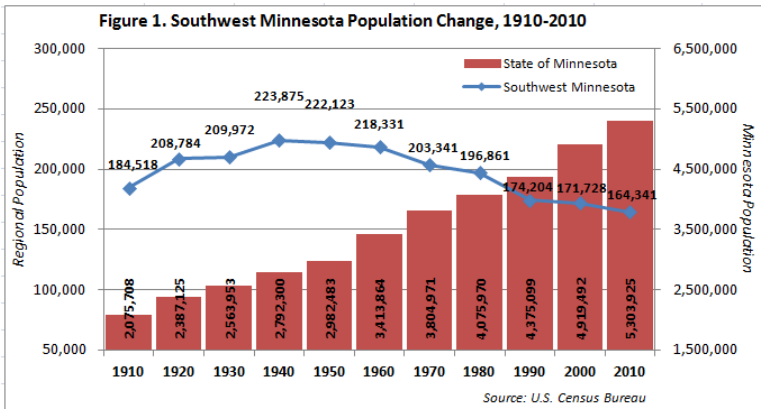
Southwest Minnesota (WSA 6) Demographic & Economic Profile

Population Trends

According to data from the 2010 Census, the 14-county Southwest Minnesota WorkForce Service Area (WSA 6) is now home to just under 165,000 people, after losing almost 7,400 people over the last decade, a -4.3 percent decrease. That population decline was in contrast to the growth experienced in the state of Minnesota as a whole, which gained about 385,000 additional people over the last 10 years, a 7.8 percent increase. Southwest Minnesota now accounts for about 3.1 percent of the state's total population, down from 3.5 percent in 2000.

Southwest Minnesota's recent population decline was part of a long-term trend. Over the last century, Southwest Minnesota lost about 20,000 people, a -10.9 percent decrease, after starting with just under 185,000 people in 1910. The 14-county region peaked in population in 1940, with 223,875 people, and has lost almost 60,000 people over the last 70 years. The first major decline occurred from 1960 to 1970, and the largest decline happened from 1980 to 1990, when the region lost more than 22,000 residents. (See Figure 1.)



In the last decade, five of the ten fastest declining counties in the state were located in the region, including the first (Swift Co.), sixth (Lac qui Parle Co.), seventh (Big Stone Co.), eighth (Jackson Co.), and tenth (Lincoln Co.) fastest declining counties. All five of these counties declined over -8.0 percent in the last ten years, while just two counties in the region – Lyon and Nobles – saw a population increase from 2000 to 2010.

After gaining 432 new residents in the last decade, Lyon County remained the largest county in Southwest Minnesota and the 41st largest (out of 87 counties) in Minnesota, with 25,857 people. Nobles County was the fastest growing county in the region, after adding 546 residents from 2000 to 2010, a 2.6 percent increase. Redwood County lost 756 people since 2000, and is now the 54th largest county in the state, with 16,059 people. Chippewa County had 12,441 people, making it the 62nd largest, just ahead of Cottonwood County, which was 63rd largest with 11,687 people. After large population declines, both Yellow Medicine and Jackson County had between 10,000 and 10,500 people in 2010, making them the 67th and 68th largest counties in the state. Swift County fell below the 10,000 mark in the 2010 Census, with 9,783 people, making it the 69th largest county. Rock County and Pipestone County were the 71st and 72nd largest counties, with both having around 9,600 residents. Depending on perspective, Murray County is either the 74th largest or the 14th smallest county in the state, with 8,725 people. Lac qui Parle County is the 12th smallest county in the state, with 7,259 people. After falling below 6,000 people, Lincoln County is now the 8th smallest county in the state, with 5,896 people. Big Stone County was the smallest county in the region, with 5,269 people, and the 6th smallest in the entire state. (See Table 1.)

Table 1. Population Change, 2000 to 2010			2000 to 2010	
Geography	**2010**	**2000**	**Change**	**Percent**
Big Stone Co.	5,269	5,820	-551	-9.5%
Chippewa Co.	12,441	13,088	-647	-4.9%
Lac qui Parle Co.	7,259	8,067	-808	-10.0%
Swift Co.	9,783	11,956	-2,173	-18.2%
Yellow Medicine Co.	10,438	11,080	-642	-5.8%
Region 6W	**45,190**	**50,011**	**-4,821**	**-9.6%**
Cottonwood Co.	11,687	12,167	-480	-3.9%
Jackson Co.	10,266	11,268	-1,002	-8.9%
Lincoln Co.	5,896	6,429	-533	-8.3%
Lyon Co.	25,857	25,425	+432	+1.7%
Murray Co.	8,725	9,165	-440	-4.8%
Nobles Co.	21,378	20,832	+546	+2.6%
Pipestone Co.	9,596	9,895	-299	-3.0%
Redwood Co.	16,059	16,815	-756	-4.5%
Rock Co.	9,687	9,721	-34	-0.3%
Region 8	**119,151**	**121,717**	**-2,566**	**-2.1%**
Southwest Minnesota	**164,341**	**171,728**	**-7,387**	**-4.3%**
State of Minnesota	**5,303,925**	**4,919,492**	**+384,433**	**+7.8%**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau				

Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, and Yellow Medicine are the five counties that make up Economic Development Region 6W, which now has 45,190 people after losing 4,821 people from 2000 to 2010. There are nine counties in Economic Development Region 8, including Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock. Combined, these counties lost 2,566 people, a -2.1 percent decline. (See Table 1.)

There are 371 cities and townships throughout the region, including 114 cities – ranging in size from 12 people in the city of Kinbrae in Nobles County to 13,680 residents in the city of Marshall in Lyon County – and 257 townships – ranging in size from 53 people in Toqua township in Big Stone County to 2,011 people living in Ortonville in Big Stone County. There were just four cities with more than 5,000 people in the region, and another 21 cities with between 1,000 and 5,000 people. The next 16 cities in the region had between 500 and 999 people, meaning the remaining 75 cities in the region had fewer than 500 people, including 52 cities that had fewer than 250 people. Likewise, just four of the 257 townships in the region had more than 500 people, meaning the other 253 townships were very small communities.

After gaining 945 net new residents from 2000 to 2010, the city of Marshall in Lyon County is still the largest city in the region, and the 72nd largest city in Minnesota, with 13,680 people. The city of Worthington, in Nobles County, was the second largest city in the region with 12,764 people, and it gained the most people from 2000 to 2010, after adding 1,481 people. Those were the only two cities in the region with more than 10,000 people. There were also only two other cities in the region with more than 5,000 people: Montevideo in Chippewa County with 5,383 people; and Redwood Falls in Redwood County, with 5,254 people. The next three largest cities in the region all had between 4,000 and 5,000 people, led by Luverne with 4,745 people; Windom with 4,646 people; and Pipestone with 4,317 people. (See Table 2.) Notably, six of the seven largest cities in the region gained population between 2000 and 2010, which was in direct contrast to the rest of the region, where more than two-thirds of the cities lost population over the last decade. Instead, 76 of the 114 cities in the region lost population from 2000 to 2010.

Table 2. Largest Cities in Southwest Minnesota, 2010

City	2010 Pop.	2000 Pop.	2000-2010 Change	
Marshall, Lyon Co.	13,680	12,735	+945	+7.4%
Worthington, Nobles Co.	12,764	11,283	+1,481	+13.1%
Montevideo, Chippewa Co.	5,383	5,346	+37	+0.7%
Redwood Falls, Redwood Co.	5,254	5,459	-205	-3.8%
Luverne, Rock Co.	4,745	4,617	+128	+2.8%
Windom, Cottonwood Co.	4,646	4,490	+156	+3.5%
Pipestone, Pipestone Co.	4,317	4,280	+37	+0.9%
Jackson, Jackson Co.	3,299	3,501	-202	-5.8%
Benson, Swift Co.	3,240	3,376	-136	-4.0%
Granite Falls, Yellow Med/Chippewa	2,897	3,070	-173	-5.6%
Tracy, Lyon Co.	2,163	2,268	-105	-4.6%
Slayton, Murray Co.	2,153	2,072	+81	+3.9%
Mountain Lake, Cottonwood Co.	2,104	2,082	+22	+1.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The next four largest cities in the region all lost around 5 percent of their population from 2000 to 2010. Jackson, with 3,299 people, lost 202 people; Benson, with 3,240 people, lost 136 people; Granite Falls, which spans Yellow Medicine and Chippewa County, lost 173 people and now has 2,897 people; and Tracy lost 105 people to finish with 2,163 people. In contrast, the other two cities in the region with more than 2,000 people saw gains in population, with Slayton adding 81 people over the last decade, to 2,153 people; and Mountain Lake welcoming 22 new residents, finishing with 2,104 people.

The city of Appleton had 2,871 people at the 2000 Census, then lost 1,459 people over the decade because the correctional facility closed. That -50.8 percent decline made Appleton the second fastest declining city in the state of Minnesota. However, Appleton still had 1,412 people, making it the 18th largest city in the region, and one of 12 cities in the region with between 1,000 and 2,000 people. The other eleven cities were Canby (1,795 people), Lakefield (1,694 people), Madison (1,551 people), Dawson (1,540 people), Minneota (1,392 people), Clara City (1,360 people), Fulda (1,318 people), Cottonwood (1,212 people), Adrian (1,209 people), Edgerton (1,189 people), and Tyler (1,143 people). Only one-third of these cities gained population, while Edgerton saw the biggest gain, adding 156 people from 2000 to 2010.

Strangely, the fastest growing cities in the region were small cities, led by Louisburg in Lac qui Parle County, which grew 80.8 percent from 2000 to 2010, from 26 to 47 people. Next, the city of Comfrey in Cottonwood County jumped 60 percent, from 10 to 16 people. With 871 people, Walnut Grove was the third fastest growing – and the third largest growing, behind Worthington and Marshall –city in the region, jumping 45.4 percent after gaining 272 people over the last decade. Lynd, Hills, Edgerton, Windom, and Luverne were the only other cities in the region to gain more than 100 people from 2000 to 2010.

In sum, about two-thirds of the region's population (108,633 people) lived in cities, as compared to one-third of residents (55,708 people) who lived in townships. From 2000 to 2010, the region's cities combined lost just 581 residents, a -0.5 percent decline, while townships lost 6,806 residents, a -10.9 percent decrease. Just 31 of the 257 townships in the region gained population, while the other 226 townships lost population. The smallest townships were seeing some of the fastest declines in the region.

Demographic Characteristics

Southwest Minnesota's population is older than the state's population. Nearly one in five (19.0%) people in the region were 65 years and over in 2010, as compared to just 12.9 percent statewide. Four of the ten counties with the highest percentage of their population aged 65 years and over in the state were located in the region, led by Big Stone County (25.1%) with the third highest percentage, followed by Lincoln (24.5%) in fourth, Lac qui Parle (23.8%) in fifth, and Murray County (22.4%) in seventh. Overall, the five counties in Region 6W were significantly older than the state, with 20.9 percent being 65 years and over, and another 29.1 percent were 45 to 64 years of age, as compared to 27.1 percent in the state. Region 8 was also older than the state, with 18.3 percent of the population being 65 years and over, but younger populations in Lyon and Nobles County kept the region more in line with the state overall. (See Table 3.)

In contrast, 39,231 people in the region were under 18 years of age, accounting for just under one in every four people in the region (23.9%), as compared to about 24 percent of both the Minnesota (24.2%) and United States (24.0%) populations. About 6.6 percent of the region's population was under 5 years of age, including 6.9 percent in Region 8. Surprisingly, the 5- to 14-year-old age group was the second largest age group in the region, with 21,324 people in 2010, accounting for 13 percent of the total population. (See Table 3.)

Table 3. Southwest Minnesota Population by Age Group, 2010

	Southwest Minnesota (WSA 6)		Region 6W	Region 8	*State of Minnesota*
	Number	**Percent**	**Percent**	**Percent**	***Percent***
Total Population	**164,341**	**100.0%**	**45,190**	**119,151**	***100.0%***
0-4 Years	10,924	6.6%	6.0%	6.9%	*6.7%*
5-14 Years	21,324	13.0%	12.3%	13.2%	*13.3%*
15-24 Years	20,032	12.2%	10.9%	12.7%	*13.6%*
25-34 Years	18,030	11.0%	10.3%	11.2%	*13.5%*
35-44 Years	17,896	10.9%	10.5%	11.0%	*12.8%*
45-54 Years	24,116	14.7%	15.4%	14.4%	*15.2%*
55-64 Years	20,812	12.7%	13.7%	12.3%	*11.9%*
65 Years & Over	31,207	19.0%	20.9%	18.3%	*12.9%*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 U.S. Census

The region had one 4-year university (Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall) and had five campuses of a 2-year community and technical college (Minnesota West Community & Technical College in Canby, Granite Falls, Jackson, Pipestone, and Worthington) spread throughout the region, but the region had a smaller percentage of people in the 15- to 24-year-old age group. These young adults comprise just 12.2 percent of the region's population, as compared to 13.6 percent in the state. Migration patterns show that people in this age group are very mobile, often moving one place to get an education, and then another to get a job.

Southwest Minnesota's population also lags the state in the percentage of people in their "prime working years." Just over 36 percent of the region's population was between 25 and 54 years of age, as compared to 41.5 percent of the state. However, the largest cohort in the region is the 45- to 54-year-old age group, with nearly 24,116 people, or 14.7 percent of the population. Southwest Minnesota's smaller 25- to 44-year-old age cohort also helps to explain the region's slightly smaller percentage of young children. Conversely, a much larger percentage of the region's population was 55-years-old or older as compared to the state. Just over 20,800 people – or 12.7 percent of the population – were 55 to 64 years of age, as compared to 11.9 percent in the state. Again, Region 6W was older, while Region 8 was more in line with the state. (See Table 3.)

Because of the larger older age groups, only one county in the region had a younger median age than the state of Minnesota. In fact, Lyon County – thanks to the college – had the 8th youngest median age in the state at 34.1 years, while the state's median age was 37.4 years in 2010. Nobles County was the next youngest county (37.5 years) in the region, and was the 22nd youngest in the state. The rest of the counties in the region had median ages over 40, including Rock (41.4 years), Pipestone (42.3 years), Redwood (42.6 years), Yellow Medicine (42.9 years), Chippewa (43.1 years), Jackson (44.1 years), Cottonwood (44.2 years), Swift (44.4 years); as well as four counties with median ages over 45 years: Lincoln (46.2 years), Murray (46.8 years), Big Stone (48.5 years), and Lac qui Parle County (48.9 years). Lac qui Parle had the third oldest median age in the state, followed by Big Stone in fifth, and Murray County with the tenth oldest median age. As in the rest of the state and the nation, the population has been aging throughout the region. From 2000 to 2010, Minnesota's median age increased exactly 2 years. Three of the 14 counties saw smaller increases in median age – Nobles (+0.0 years), Lyon (+0.1 years), and Rock County (+1.5 years) – while four others saw similar increases in median age – Pipestone (+2.1 years), Cottonwood (+2.5 years), Yellow Medicine (+2.5 years), and Chippewa County (+2.6 years). The other 7 counties increased much faster than the state, including Redwood (+3.1 years), Lincoln (+3.2 years), Jackson (+3.3 years), Murray (+4.4 years), Big Stone (+4.9 years), Swift (+5.1 years), and Lac qui Parle County (+5.5 years). The bigger jumps in median age show that Southwest Minnesota was aging faster than the state as a whole.

The aging trend is due to the region's demographic shifts over the last decade. Despite the overall population decline, four of the age groups saw increases from 2000 to 2010, while the other four age groups saw declines. Surprisingly, the number of people aged 65 years and over declined in the region, falling -7.0 percent (-2,352 people) over the last 10 years. Also surprisingly, the number of children under 5 years of age in the region increased by 7.6 percent (+775 people) from 2000 to 2010. Those two demographic changes seem to defy the region's population declines and aging trends. (See Table 4.)

Table 4. Southwest Minnesota Population by Age Group, 2000-2010

Age Group	2000 Population	2010 Population	2000-2010 Change Number	Percent
0 to 4 years	10,149	10,924	+775	+7.6%
5 to 14 years	24,669	21,324	-3,345	-13.6%
15 to 24 years	22,373	20,032	-2,341	-10.5%
25 to 34 years	17,896	18,030	+134	+0.7%
35 to 44 years	25,157	17,896	-7,261	-28.9%
45 to 54 years	21,996	24,116	+2,120	+9.6%
55 to 64 years	15,929	20,812	+4,883	+30.7%
65 years & over	33,559	31,207	-2,352	-7.0%
Total Population	**171,728**	**164,341**	**-7,387**	**-4.3%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

However, the two fastest growing age groups were the 45- to 54-year-old age group (+2,120 people), which increased by 9.6 percent, and the 55- to 64-year-old age group (+4,883 people), which jumped 30.7 percent from 2000 to 2010. The 25- to 34- year-old age group (+134 people) also saw a small 0.7 percent increase, likely corresponding to the increase in children under 5 years of age as noted above. In contrast, the region saw big drops in the number of 5- to 14-year-olds (-3,345 people) and 15- to 24-year-olds (-2,341 people), but the biggest decline occurred in the number of 35- to 44-year-olds (-7,261 people), which dropped nearly 30 percent over the last decade. As noted, the region also lost more than 2,350 senior citizens. (See Table 4.)

In addition to losing senior citizens, the region was also actually losing Baby Boomers, at least according to analysis using the *Simplified Cohort Approach*. Born between 1946 and 1964, Baby Boomers were between the ages of 35 and 54 during the 2000 Census. At that time, there were 47,153 Baby Boomers (people between the ages of 35 and 54 years of age) in Southwest Minnesota, comprising 27.5 percent of the total population (denoted by the green and blue cells in Table 4). In 2010, Baby Boomers had advanced to the 45- to 64-year-old age group (again denoted by green and blue cells), and now included 44,928 people, or 27.3 percent of the county's population, a net loss of 2,225 Baby Boomers, a -4.7 percent decline. Nationally, the number of Baby Boomers declined by -1.6 percent, but there were still over 80 million people in that age group. In Minnesota, the number of Baby Boomers fell -3.5 percent, now comprising about 1.44 million people, with many of them appearing to be moving south.

Likewise, the region lost large numbers of people (-4,637 people) from the 5- to 14-year-old age groups in 2000 to the 15- to 24-year-old age group in 2010; likely as they moved on to colleges or work opportunities outside of the region. Due to the presence of a 4-year college, Lyon County saw an increase in this age group, while the rest of the region saw out-migration of young adults. The region also saw a big decline (-4,343 people) in the 15- to-24-year-old age group in 2000 to the 25- to 34-year-old age group in 2010, as these young adults moved into the labor force, seeking opportunities elsewhere. However, the region held perfectly steady in the 35- to 44-year-old age group in 2010 as compared to the 25- to 34-year-old age group in 2000, a continuation of a "Rural Rebound" trend identified by University of Minnesota researcher Ben Winchester.[1] The idea is that these middle-aged adults are moving into the region for a variety of reasons, ranging from smaller town ideals, better schools for their children, more safety and security, and to get out of the big city lifestyle. The challenge is to encourage more people to do so, and to keep them in the region once their children graduate from school.

Population Projections

As life expectancies continue to increase and the Baby Boom generation continues to move through the population pyramid, the percentage of the population aged 65 years and over living in Southwest Minnesota is projected to reach almost 30 percent by the year 2035. Population projections from the Minnesota State Demographic Center expect the region's aging trend to intensify in the future. Nearly 40,200 residents in Southwest Minnesota could be 65 years and over by 2025, and perhaps 44,830 people will be in the oldest age groups by 2035, making it easily the fastest growing age group in the county in the next 20 years. The expected gain of 12,740 senior citizens over the next two decades is nearly enough to make up for the loss of people in all of the other age groups; with the region expected to have essentially the same population in 2035 as it will have in 2015. (See Table 5.) In comparison, the state of Minnesota as a whole is projected to grow 12.9 percent from 2015 to 2035, an increase of over 700,000 people.

[1] Brain gain in rural Minnesota. http://www.extension.umn.edu/community/brain-gain/

According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, the total number of people in Southwest Minnesota is expected to decline just -0.7 percent from 2015 to 2035, a loss of only 1,180 people. As described above, only two age groups are expected to grow over the next two decades – the number of people aged 65 years and over is projected to gain 12,740 people, while the number of 15- to 24-year-olds is expected to increase 1.7 percent, a gain of 300 people. In contrast, the other five age groups are projected to decline. The smallest decrease is in the 35- to 44-year-old age group, which could lose about 450 people; while the number of school-aged children is expected to drop about -6.0 percent, a loss of 1,820 people. The region is projected to lose just over 3,000 people in the 25- to 34-year-old age group over the next 20 years, a -16.1 percent decline. The biggest losses are projected in the 45- to 64-year-old age groups, which is to be expected because of the impact of the Baby Boom generation. Within Southwest Minnesota, the two regions were seeing similar trends. Region 8 was expected to grow 0.1 percent from 2015 to 2035, while Region 6W was projected to decline -2.9 percent.

Table 5. Southwest Minnesota Population Projections

Age Group	2015	2025	2035	2015-2035
0 to 14 years	31,080	31,120	29,260	-5.9%
15 to 24 years	17,520	17,720	17,820	+1.7%
25 to 34 years	18,790	16,090	15,770	-16.1%
35 to 44 years	17,610	19,580	17,160	-2.6%
45 to 54 years	21,300	17,390	19,160	-10.0%
55 to 64 years	23,630	20,310	16,840	-28.7%
65 years & over	32,090	40,190	44,830	+39.7%
Total Population	**162,020**	**162,400**	**160,840**	**-0.7%**

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

Households, Families, Births and Deaths

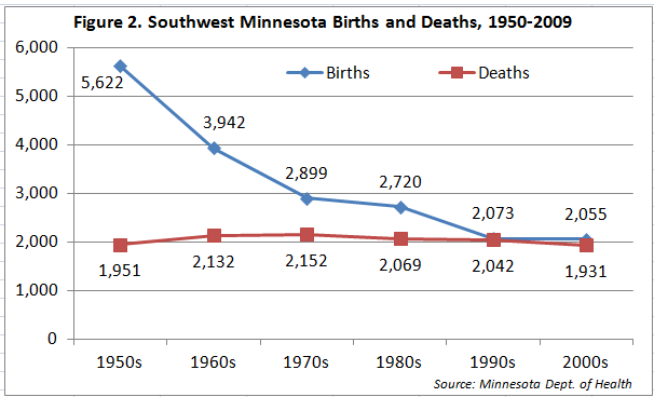
Perhaps surprisingly, more than half of the counties in Southwest Minnesota have a higher percentage of family households than the state as a whole (64.6%). The highest percentages were in Nobles (68.3%) and Rock County (68.0%), followed by Murray (66.7%), Yellow Medicine (66.1%), and Lac qui Parle County (65.9%). Jackson (65.5%), Redwood (65.0%), and Chippewa County (64.8%) are also slightly above the state rate. The other six counties in the region have lower percentages of family households than the state, including Cottonwood (64.4%), Big Stone (63.5%), Pipestone (63.5%), Swift (63.1%), and Lincoln County (62.7%). The lowest percentage of family households in the region was in Lyon County (62.2%), likely due to the presence of a 4-year college.

Perhaps not surprisingly, every county in Southwest Minnesota had a higher percentage of married family households than the state (50.8%). Again, the lowest percentage was in Lyon County (51.0%), due to the large number of college students. The highest percentage was in Murray County, at 58.2 percent, followed by Rock (57.6%), Lac qui Parle (56.3%), Yellow Medicine (54.9%), Nobles (54.6%), Big Stone (54.1%), Jackson (53.9%), Lincoln (53.8%), Cottonwood (53.7%), Redwood (52.9%), Chippewa (52.7%), Pipestone (52.4%), and Swift (52.3%). However, only two of those counties had a higher percentage of married couple families with children under 18 years of age in the household than the state (21.2%) – Rock (22.3%) and Lyon County (21.4%). The other 12 counties were below the state level, with the lowest percentages being in Big Stone (17.2%) and Lac qui Parle County (17.4%). In contrast, every county had smaller percentages of single-parent families with a female head of household than the state (5.9%), including Lac qui Parle (3.4%), Murray (3.5%), Big Stone (3.6%), and Lincoln County (3.6%). Three counties had a higher percentage of male head of household single-parent families than the state (4.3%), including Nobles (5.3%), Jackson (4.5%), and Yellow Medicine (4.4%).

Only one county in the region – Nobles County at 2.64 people – had a larger average household size than the state of Minnesota (2.48 people), while 11 of the counties had average households with less than 2.4 people, including Lac qui Parle (2.25 people), Lincoln (2.24 people), and Big Stone County (2.24 people). Nobles County had the 10th largest average household size in the state, while Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, and Big Stone were all among the 10 smallest in the state. Likewise, only Nobles County (3.15 people – 6th largest in the state) had a larger average family size than the state (3.05 people), while both Big Stone (2.8 people) and Lac qui Parle County (2.78 people) again had among the 10 smallest average family sizes in the state.

Like the majority of counties in Minnesota, the number of births in Southwest Minnesota was declining over time, from a high of 5,622 births per year in the 1960s (which would include the back end of the Baby Boom generation) to 2,055 births per year in the 2000s, according to data from the Minnesota Department of Health. Much like overall population, the number of births fell from the 1960s to the 1970s, then again from the 1980s to the 1990s. The region saw a -47.9 percent decline in births over the last half century, while the state saw a -6.0 percent decline from 1960 to 2009. Every county saw a decline in births from 1960 to 2009, ranging from a -29.3 percent decline in Nobles County to more than -60 percent declines in Big Stone (-65.0%), Lac qui Parle (-63.7%), and Murray County (-67.8%). (See Figure 2.)

Meanwhile, the number of deaths in Southwest Minnesota has remained remarkably steady over time. Again according to the Minnesota Department of Health, the number of deaths in the 14-county region has remained between 1,931 deaths per year in the 2000s to 2,152 deaths per year in the 1970s. The comparison of those two statistics – birth rate and death rate – has pushed the region toward a neutral rate of natural increase. In the 2000s, Southwest Minnesota averaged about 120 more births than deaths per year, a small natural rate of increase. However, that was due to the large rates of natural increase in Lyon and Nobles County, as well as a small increase in Rock County; while the other 11 counties had negative natural rates due to having more deaths than births.



Net Migration

In addition to births and deaths, another important component of population change is net migration, which is the comparison of people moving in versus people moving out. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey data from 2006 to 2010, about 10,000 people moved into Southwest Minnesota from a different county in the state, a different state, or from another nation in the prior year. That included nearly 6,300 people who moved from a different county in Minnesota, about 3,400 people who moved from a different state, and just over 550 people who moved from abroad. The American Community Survey also estimates that about 10,500 people moved from one house to another within the same county in the region in the past year, while the remaining 141,600 people lived in the same house. However, that data does not show the number of people moving out of the counties for comparison. Instead, data from the State Demographic Center estimated that the 14-county region had a net out-migration of about 5,341 people from 2000 to 2005, with the largest in and out migration occurring in Lyon and Nobles County, followed by smaller amounts of out-migration in Redwood, Swift, Yellow Medicine, and Pipestone County.

Also according to the American Community Survey data, more than 95 percent (95.7%) of the residents in Southwest Minnesota were born in the United States, including nearly three-fourths (73.4%) who were born in the state of Minnesota. Another 22 percent were born in some other state in the United States. Just under 7,000 residents – or about 4.3 percent of the population – were born outside the United States. Of those, about 2,275 were naturalized U.S. citizens, while the other 4,700 were not U.S. citizens. Nobles County had the largest number of people who were not U.S. citizens, with 2,250 people, followed by Lyon (862 people) and Cottonwood County (311 people), while six of the counties in the region had fewer than 100 non-citizens.

Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin

While the total population was declining, Southwest Minnesota's population was becoming more diverse. The 14-county region lost more than 11,500 white people from 2000 to 2010, a -7.1 percent decrease, with white people still comprising almost 93 percent of the region's total population. In contrast, the number of residents of other races increased in the region over the last decade. The number of Black or African American residents increased 73.9 percent in the last decade, but still made up just 1.5 percent of the region's population. Southwest Minnesota also saw rapid growth in the number of American Indians (+32.3%), Asian or Other Pacific Islanders (+33.2%), and people of Some Other Race (+69.1%) over the last decade, though all of those race categories still comprise relatively small percentages of the total population. (See Table 6.)

With 10,066 people, Southwest Minnesota (6.1%) now has a higher percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents than the state (4.7%), after welcoming a rapid 93.8 percent increase over the last decade. The largest numbers of Hispanic residents are in Nobles and Lyon County, followed by Cottonwood and Chippewa County.

Table 6. Race (one or more race) and Origin, 2010	Southwest Minnesota		Change, 2000-2010	*Minnesota*
	Number	Percent		*Percent*
Total Population:	**164,341**	**100.0%**	**-4.3%**	***100.0%***
White	152,200	92.6%	-7.1%	*87.4%*
Black or African American	2,487	1.5%	+73.9%	*6.2%*
American Indian & Alaska Native	2,635	1.6%	+32.3%	*1.9%*
Asian & Native Hawaiian	3,956	2.4%	+33.2%	*4.8%*
Some other race	5,451	3.3%	+69.1%	*2.3%*
Hispanic or Latino origin	*10,066*	*6.1%*	*+93.8%*	*4.7%*

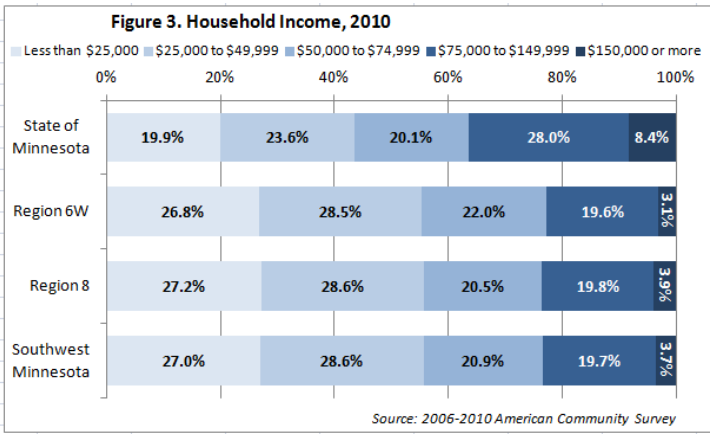
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In fact, at 22.5 percent, Nobles County had the highest percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents in the entire state, while Cottonwood (6.2%) was 12th, Lyon (6.0%) was 14th, and Chippewa (4.9%) was 21st. In contrast, Big Stone (0.8%) had the fourth-lowest percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents, and Lincoln County (1.2%) was 16th lowest. Nobles County (13.6%) also had the highest percentage of residents of Some Other Race in the state, followed by Cottonwood (3.0%) in 11th, Lyon (3.0%) in 12th, Chippewa (3.0%) in 13th, and Pipestone County (2.5%) in 15th. Nobles County (6.1%) also had the fifth-highest percentage of Asian residents in the state, followed by Redwood (3.5%) in ninth, Cottonwood (3.1%) in 11th, and Lyon County (3.0%) in 12th. Redwood County (6.3%) had the ninth highest percentage of American Indian residents in the state, followed by Yellow Medicine (3.8%) in 14th and Pipestone (2.2%) in 21st. In contrast, 99 percent of Big Stone County's population was white, tying it for the least diverse county in the state of Minnesota, with Kittson and Fillmore County. Lincoln County (98.6%) had the eighth highest percentage of white people in the state, followed by Lac qui Parle (98.4%) in 12th, Rock (97.8%) in 19th, and Swift County (97.5%) in 24th.

Income and Poverty Statistics

According to data from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, incomes were relatively low in Southwest Minnesota. Median household incomes ranged from $40,292 in Cottonwood County to $50,288 in Yellow Medicine County, which was still nearly $7,000 lower than the state's median household income of $57,243. Yellow Medicine was the only county with a median household income above $50,000 in the region, making it the 28th highest in the state. The next highest income in the region was in Lyon County ($46,872), followed by Jackson ($46,869), Murray ($45,657), Lac qui Parle ($45,550), and Rock County ($45,411). The rest of the counties in the region had median household incomes below $45,000 per year, including Lincoln ($44,672), Redwood ($44,181), Chippewa ($43,956), Nobles ($43,040), Big Stone ($42,870), Swift ($41,486), Pipestone ($40,589), and Cottonwood County ($40,292). The last three – Swift, Pipestone, and Cottonwood – were among the ten lowest median household incomes in the state.

Due to the lower incomes, more than one-fourth (27.0%) of households in Southwest Minnesota earned less than $25,000 per year, as compared to less than one-fifth (19.9%) of households in the state. Another 28.6 percent of households earned between $25,000 and $49,999 in the region, meaning that well over half (55.6%) of households in Southwest Minnesota were earning less than $50,000 per year, as compared to 43.5 percent of households in the state. In both the state and the region, just over 20 percent of households were earning between $50,000 and $75,000 per year. Conversely, less than one-fourth of the households in Southwest Minnesota were earning $75,000 or more, including less than 4.0 percent that were earning $150,000 or more each year. In comparison, 28 percent of the state's households were earning $75,000 to $150,000; and another 8.4 percent were earning $150,000 or more in 2010. (See Figure 3.)



Due to having such high percentages of people aged 65 years and over, Southwest Minnesota also has high numbers of households receiving Social Security income. In fact, four of the ten counties with the highest percentage of households receiving Social Security income in the state were in the region, led by Big Stone (43.9%) in second place, Lincoln (42.7%) in third, Cottonwood (39.6%) in sixth, and Swift (39.2%) in eighth. In sum, about one-third (34.2%) of the households in the 14-county region were receiving Social Security income, as compared to just one-fourth (25.3%) of households in the state. The lowest percentage was in Lyon County (26.1%), though that was still above the state percentage. However, despite the older population, the region has a lower percentage of households receiving retirement income than the state. About 15.2 percent of the households in the state were receiving retirement income, which was about 2.5 percent higher than the region, where just 12.6 percent of households were receiving retirement income. The highest percentage in the region was in Big Stone County (18.0%), followed by Yellow Medicine County (17.2%). The rest of the counties in the region were much lower, including Nobles (13.6%), Chippewa (13.5%), Lac qui Parle (13.3%), Swift (13.1%), Cottonwood (12.8%), Lincoln (12.6%), Murray (12.5%), Pipestone (11.9%), Rock (11.7%), Redwood (11.7%), Jackson (10.2%), and Lyon County (10.0%). In fact, Lyon County had the second lowest percentage in the state.

Despite the lower incomes, all but two counties in the region had lower poverty rates than the state of Minnesota in 2010, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) program. Only Nobles (13.8%) and Yellow Medicine County (12.7%) had a higher poverty rate than Minnesota (11.5%), and both of those counties saw the biggest increases in poverty rates over the last decade, both rising more than 4.2 percent. The other 12 counties in the region had lower poverty rates than the state, led by Murray County at 8.9 percent, while Redwood (9.6%), Jackson (9.7%), Lac qui Parle (9.8%), Swift (9.9%), Chippewa (10.0%), and Lincoln County (10.0%) all had poverty rates at or below 10 percent. Again despite the lower incomes, the region also saw smaller increases in poverty during the last decade, with 10 of the 14 counties seeing less than a 2.3 percent increase, which is half as fast as poverty increased in the state of Minnesota as a whole (+4.6%). The smallest increases in poverty occurred in Big Stone (+0.5%), Lincoln (+0.7%), Swift (+0.8%), Murray (+1.2%), and Cottonwood (+1.4%). (See Table 7.)

Table 7. Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2010

Geography	All Ages in Poverty, 2010	*All Ages in Poverty, 2000*	*Change, 2000-2010*
Big Stone Co.	11.3%	*10.8%*	*+0.5%*
Chippewa Co.	10.0%	*7.8%*	*+2.2%*
Cottonwood Co.	11.0%	*9.6%*	*+1.4%*
Jackson Co.	9.7%	*7.8%*	*+1.9%*
Lac qui Parle Co.	9.8%	*7.6%*	*+2.2%*
Lincoln Co.	10.0%	*9.3%*	*+0.7%*
Lyon Co.	11.4%	*7.7%*	*+3.7%*
Murray Co.	8.9%	*7.7%*	*+1.2%*
Nobles Co.	13.8%	*9.6%*	*+4.2%*
Pipestone Co.	10.5%	*8.4%*	*+2.1%*
Redwood Co.	9.6%	*7.5%*	*+2.1%*
Rock Co.	10.8%	*6.9%*	*+3.9%*
Swift Co.	9.9%	*9.1%*	*+0.8%*
Yellow Medicine	12.7%	*8.0%*	*+4.7%*
Minnesota	**11.5%**	***6.9%***	***+4.6%***
United States	**15.3%**	***11.3%***	***+4.0%***

Source: U.S. Census, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

Home Sales and Mortgage Status

In line with median incomes, median home sales prices were much lower in Southwest Minnesota than the state, ranging from $120,000 in Lyon County to $42,000 in Lac qui Parle County in 2010, in comparison to $169,900 statewide, according to data from the State Demographic Center. Lac qui Parle County's median home sales price was the fourth lowest in the state, ahead of Traverse ($33,000), Red Lake ($35,000), and Mahnomen County ($38,000). Half of the counties in the region had median home sales prices between $60,000 and $70,000, which were all among the 15 lowest median home sales prices in the state. In contrast, the highest median home sales prices in the region were in Lyon ($120,000), Nobles ($98,000), and Rock County ($97,750). While the state suffered a -2.9 percent decline in sales prices from 2009 to 2010 – after falling -8.6 percent from 2008 to 2009 – only two counties in Southwest Minnesota saw sales price declines. Instead, five of the 14 counties in the region saw more than 15 percent increases in sales prices, led by Yellow Medicine (+27.4%), Cottonwood (+25.9%), and Pipestone County (+22.8%). Only Murray (-7.9%) and Lac qui Parle County (-3.4%) saw price declines. (See Table 8.)

Similarly, while the state was still seeing a decline in the number of home sales in 2010, after falling nearly -18 percent from 2008 to 2009, nine of the 14 counties in the region saw an increase in the number of home sales. The largest jump in sales happened in Murray County, which went from 27 to 45 sales in the last year; while Cottonwood (+29.0%), Yellow Medicine (+18.0%), Swift (+15.8%), and Lac qui Parle County (+15.4%) also saw big increases in home sales.

Table 8. Southwest Minnesota Housing Prices, 2009-2010

Geography	Jan-Sep 2010 Number of Home Sales	Jan-Sep 2009 Number of Home Sales	*2009-2010 Change in Sales*	Jan-Sep 2010 Median Home Sales Price	*2009-2010 Change in Price*
Big Stone Co.	26	33	*-21.2%*	$61,000	*+1.7%*
Chippewa Co.	60	63	*-4.8%*	$89,325	*+14.5%*
Cottonwood Co.	80	62	*+29.0%*	$69,900	*+25.9%*
Jackson Co.	45	60	*-25.0%*	$80,000	*+10.3%*
Lac qui Parle Co.	45	39	*+15.4%*	$42,000	*-3.4%*
Lincoln Co.	29	30	*-3.3%*	$60,000	*+15.4%*
Lyon Co.	145	137	*+5.8%*	$120,000	*+4.2%*
Murray Co.	45	27	*+66.7%*	$69,000	*-7.9%*
Nobles Co.	147	142	*+3.5%*	$98,000	*+12.3%*
Pipestone Co.	64	60	*+6.7%*	$67,850	*+22.8%*
Redwood Co.	82	85	*-3.5%*	$68,500	*+0.7%*
Rock Co.	64	60	*+6.7%*	$97,750	*+16.0%*
Swift Co.	44	38	*+15.8%*	$82,075	*+3.8%*
Yellow Medicine Co	59	50	*+18.0%*	$64,000	*+27.4%*
Southwest Minnesota	**935**	**886**	***+5.5%***	**ND**	***ND***
State of Minnesota	**24,546**	**24,696**	***-0.6%***	**$169,900**	***-2.9%***

Source: Minnesota State Demographic Center

Overall, home sales rose 5.5 percent in Southwest Minnesota. According to the Minnesota State Demographic Center, there were 935 home sales reported in Southwest Minnesota through the first three quarters of 2010, compared to 886 home sales for the same time period the prior year. The largest number of home sales occurred in Nobles (147 sales) and Lyon County (145 sales), which were also the largest counties; followed by Redwood (82 sales) and Cottonwood County (80 sales).

While the number of home sales was rising, the number of foreclosures remained low and was declining in Southwest Minnesota, according to a report on county sheriff's sale data from HousingLink. With 40 foreclosures in 2011, Lyon County had the most in the region, but the 36th lowest number in the state. Most counties in the region had among the lowest numbers of foreclosures in the state, including seven counties with fewer than 15 foreclosures in the last year. The four counties that saw increases in foreclosures saw big percentage jumps, but all had fewer than 15 foreclosures. In contrast, the biggest decline occurred in Redwood County, which dropped nearly 50 percent in the last year. Thirteen of the region's 14 counties had among the 27 lowest foreclosure rates in the state. (See Table 9.)

Table 9. Foreclosures in Southwest Minnesota, 2010 to 2011

Geography	2010 Foreclosures	2011 Foreclosures	*2010-2011 Change*	Foreclosure Rate 2011	2011 Rank
Big Stone Co.	17	10	*-41.2%*	0.37	66th
Chippewa Co.	31	28	*-9.7%*	0.56	48th
Cottonwood Co.	24	20	*-16.7%*	0.38	64th
Jackson Co.	13	11	*-15.4%*	0.23	81st
Lac qui Parle Co.	7	12	*+71.4%*	0.35	68th
Lincoln Co.	5	9	*+80.0%*	0.30	76th
Lyon Co.	45	40	*-11.1%*	0.46	60th
Murray Co.	8	13	*+62.5%*	0.31	74th
Nobles Co.	31	29	*-6.5%*	0.38	63rd
Pipestone Co.	10	14	*+40.0%*	0.34	70th
Redwood Co.	33	17	*-48.5%*	0.26	80th
Rock Co.	14	13	*-7.1%*	0.32	71st
Swift Co.	24	17	*-29.2%*	0.38	65th
Yellow Medicine Co	18	16	*-11.1%*	0.35	67th
Southwest Minnesota	**280**	**249**	***-11.1%***	**ND**	**ND**
State of Minnesota	**25,673**	**21,298**	***-17.0%***	**1.18**	**ND**

Source: HousingLink Research

Much like the region's population, Southwest Minnesota also has an older housing stock than the state of Minnesota according to data from the American Community Survey. Just 5 percent of the 75,642 housing units in Southwest Minnesota were built from 2000 to 2010, as compared to 12.8 percent of housing units in the state. The most new housing units were in Lyon County, with units built since 2000 accounting for just under 10 percent of the total housing stock in that county, as compared to just 2.3 percent of housing units in Lac qui Parle County. The region also had a much lower percentage of housing units built between 1990 and 1999 (7.1%) than the state (13.6%), and between 1980 and 1989 (7.5% vs. 13.0% in the state), but a similar percentage of housing units built between 1950 and 1979 (38.9% vs. 37.1% in the state). Conversely, Southwest Minnesota had a much higher percentage of housing units built in 1949 or earlier (41.5% vs. 23.6% in the state). Because of the older housing stock, Southwest Minnesota housing units also tended to be larger, with a slightly higher percentage of units having 3 (38.0%) or 4 bedrooms (21.0%) as compared to the state (34.5% and 19.5%, respectively).

Of the 51,858 owner-occupied housing units in the 14-county region, only 51.7 percent had mortgages (or contracts to purchase or similar debt), as compared to 71.1 percent in Minnesota. The other 48.3 percent of owner-occupied housing units did not have a mortgage, which helps explain the region's lower foreclosure rates. The counties with the highest percentage of households with a mortgage were Lyon (62.6%) and Chippewa County (57.8%), while eight of the 14 counties in the region had less than half of their owner-occupied units with a mortgage. The lowest counts of housing units with mortgages were in Pipestone (54.5% of owner-occupied housing units did not have a mortgage), Big Stone (53.7%), Lincoln (53.2%), Lac qui Parle (52.8%), Murray (52.7%), Jackson (52.3%), Redwood (51.9%), and Swift (50.7%).

Because of the lower home sales prices, selected monthly owner costs for housing units with a mortgage topped 25 percent of household income for just one-third (36.3%) of the households in Southwest Minnesota, well below the percentage of households that were at that level statewide (47.9%). That included just 17.9 percent of owner-occupied housing units in the region where monthly owner costs were above 35 percent of household income, as compared to 24.4 percent in the state. Instead, nearly half (48.0%) of housing units with a mortgage in the region had owner costs below 20 percent of income, as compared to just 34.5 percent in the state. For those housing units without a mortgage, just 17.4 percent were spending more than 25 percent of income on selected monthly owner costs, in line with 18.3 percent of housing units in the state.

However, for renters, monthly costs were greater. Well over half (55.8%) of occupied units paying rent in the 14-county region were paying more than 25 percent of household income toward gross rent, including 34.8 percent that were paying 35 percent or more. Those percentages were still lower than in the state, where 61.4 percent of renters paid more than 25 percent of income toward rent and 39.4 percent paid more than 35 percent of income toward rent in 2010. Median rent was $759 in Minnesota, but ranged between $447 in Big Stone County and $576 in Pipestone County in Southwest Minnesota. Five of the 14 counties in the region had median rents below $500 in 2010, placing them among the lowest in the state.

Educational Access and Attainment

There are 45 school districts headquartered in the 14-county region, ranging in size from around 40 students at both the Milroy public school district and the Milroy Area charter school to just over 2,600 students in the Worthington public school district. Other large districts in the region include Marshall public schools (2,266 students), Montevideo (1,334 students), Luverne (1,224 students), Jackson County Central (1,162 students), Pipestone Area (1,147 students), and Redwood Area (1,133 students). In sum, there were 26,507 students enrolled in schools in Southwest Minnesota. (See Table 10.)

According to student data from the Minnesota Department of Education, enrollments have been declining in Southwest Minnesota, falling from 27,965 students in the 2005-2006 school year to 26,507 students in 2011-2012. That was a -5.2 percent decline, while the state of Minnesota's student enrollment numbers essentially held steady over that time frame (-0.1%). Ten of the 14 counties in the region saw enrollment declines, but gains in Nobles, Lincoln, Jackson, and Rock helped to even the region out. In sum, enrollments were declining fastest in the middle school and high school levels, but were seeing encouraging gains in the youngest elementary grade levels. Like most other regions in the state, Southwest Minnesota's schools had a smaller incoming kindergarten class (2,048 students) than the outgoing 12th grade class (2,196 students), though the 12th grade class was the largest of any grade level in the region. (See Table 10.)

Table 10. School Enrollment in Southwest Minnesota

	2005/ 2006	2008/ 2009	2011/ 2012	2005-2012
PreKindergarten	426	507	558	+31.0%
Kindergarten (KG)	1,890	1,956	2,048	+8.4%
1st Grade	1,879	1,879	1,963	+4.5%
2nd Grade	1,801	1,895	1,977	+9.8%
3rd Grade	1,894	1,826	1,879	-0.8%
4th Grade	1,830	1,859	1,896	+3.6%
5th Grade	1,947	1,852	1,897	-2.6%
6th Grade	1,972	1,959	1,847	-6.3%
7th Grade	2,185	1,928	1,939	-11.3%
8th Grade	2,283	2,022	1,944	-14.8%
9th Grade	2,340	2,131	2,130	-9.0%
10th Grade	2,495	2,333	2,054	-17.7%
11th Grade	2,461	2,386	2,179	-11.5%
12th Grade	2,562	2,344	2,196	-14.3%
Total Enrollment	**27,965**	**26,877**	**26,507**	**-5.2%**

Source: Minnesota Dept. of Education

Like the overall population, Lyon (4,325 students) and Nobles County (3,656 students) had the largest number of students, followed by Cottonwood (2,334 students), Redwood (2,146 students), and Chippewa County (2,144 students). Big Stone (868 students) and Lincoln County (947 students) had the smallest number of students in the region, though Lincoln gained 180 students from 2005 to 2012. That was the fastest gain of any county in the region, though Nobles County saw the largest gain in students over the time frame, gaining 215 net new students. Jackson and Rock County also saw small gains in enrollment from 2005 to 2012. (See Table 11.)

Mirroring the overall population, Southwest Minnesota school districts were also becoming more diverse, with minority students now comprising 18.5 percent of students. However, minority enrollments varied greatly within the region, ranging from less than 4 percent of the student population in Big Stone and Lincoln County to nearly 50 percent of students in Nobles County. Half of the counties in the region – typically the smallest – had less than 10 percent minority students, while Pipestone (11.8%), Chippewa (12.5%), Yellow Medicine (18.9%), Lyon (19.2%), Redwood (19.4%), and Cottonwood (22.8%) all had between 10 and 25 percent minority students. In sum, there were 4,917 minority students in the region in 2011-2012, which was up from 3,654 students in 2005-2006, meaning the minority student population in Southwest Minnesota gained 34.6 percent from 2005 to 2012, while overall enrollment declined -5.2 percent. The youngest grades had the highest number of minority students, though every grade had at least 300 minority students.

Table 11. School Enrollment in Southwest Minnesota

County	2011-2012 Total Students	*2005-2012 Change*	2011-2012 Minority Students	*2005-2012 Change*
Big Stone Co.	868	*-10.0%*	33	+65.0%
Chippewa Co.	2,144	*-9.4%*	269	+63.0%
Cottonwood Co.	2,334	*-8.1%*	533	+16.9%
Jackson Co.	1,514	*+0.7%*	138	+17.9%
Lac qui Parle Co.	1,308	*-19.0%*	119	+26.6%
Lincoln Co.	947	*+23.5%*	37	+94.7%
Lyon Co.	4,325	*-3.3%*	832	+19.7%
Murray Co.	1,110	*-8.4%*	69	+23.2%
Nobles Co.	3,656	*+6.2%*	1,780	+61.8%
Pipestone Co.	1,471	*-14.7%*	173	+76.5%
Redwood Co.	2,146	*-6.6%*	417	+4.5%
Rock Co.	1,592	*+0.4%*	102	0.0%
Swift Co.	1,483	*-9.3%*	111	+18.1%
Yellow Medicine	1,609	*-12.6%*	304	+27.2%
Southwest Minnesota	**26,507**	***-5.2%***	**4,917**	**+34.6%**

Source: Minnesota Dept. of Education

Graduation rates were high in most of the school districts in Southwest Minnesota, with all but two school districts ranking above 94 percent in 2007, according to data from the Minnesota Department of Education. In fact, 12 of the school districts in the region had 100 percent graduation rates in 2007, and another 12 school districts were above 97 percent. That was high even in Minnesota, a state well-known for its educational attainment.

From that point on, however, Southwest Minnesota has lower educational attainment than the state. About half (50.1%) of adults in the 14-county region stopped their education with a high school diploma or less, as compared to 36.5 percent of adults aged 25 years and over in the state. Conversely, just 27.5 percent of the adult population in Southwest Minnesota had associate's, bachelor's, or higher degrees, which was nearly 15 percent lower than in the state, where 41.1 percent of adults aged 25 years and over had a college degree. Just 17.5 percent of adults in the region had bachelor's degrees or higher, which was almost half as frequest as in the state (31.4%) in 2010. (See Table 12.)

Educational attainment was lowest in Region 6W, where more than half (51.1%) of adult residents had a high school diploma or less and just 26.8 percent had college degrees. However, Region 6W did have a higher percentage of adults with associate's degrees than the state, with more than one in every ten people (10.5%) having associate's degrees. Region 8 had a higher percentage of adults with bachelor's degrees (13.2%) or advanced degrees (4.8%) in the region, but was still well behind the state. And again, nearly half (49.7%) of the population had a high school diploma or less. In both regions, just over 22 percent of adults had attended some college but did not earn a degree, which was in line with the state as a whole (22.4%). In Region 8, almost 14 percent of adults aged 25 years and over did not have a high school diploma. (See Table 12.)

Table 12. Educational Attainment for Population Aged 25 Years & Over, 2006 to 2010

	Southwest Minnesota		Region 6W	Region 8	*State of Minnesota*
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	*Percent*
Total Population	**111,695**	**100.0%**	**32,051**	**79,644**	***3,450,999***
Less than 9th grade	7,862	7.0%	5.3%	7.7%	*3.6%*
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7,019	6.3%	6.6%	6.2%	*5.1%*
High school graduate, GED	41,123	36.8%	39.2%	35.9%	*27.8%*
Some college, no degree	25,027	22.4%	22.0%	22.6%	*22.4%*
Associate's degree	11,071	9.9%	10.5%	9.7%	*9.7%*
Bachelor's degree	14,377	12.9%	12.0%	13.2%	*21.3%*
Graduate or advanced degree	5,216	4.7%	4.4%	4.8%	*10.1%*

Source: American Community Survey, 2005 to 2009

Looking at the data by age groups provides additional insight into educational trends in the region and state. Southwest Minnesota still lags the state in educational attainment, but the gaps are smaller in the younger age groups. For example, about 17.5 percent of the region's 18- to 24-year-olds have college degrees, which is identical to the state, which is well-known for its educational attainment. And Southwest Minnesota has a notable advantage in the percentage of people between 18 and 44 years with associate's degrees, including 16.5 percent of 25- to 34-year-olds who have associate's degrees, compared to 12.1% in the state. (See Table 13.)

Just over 10 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds in the region had associate's degrees, and another 7.1 percent had bachelor's degrees or higher. About three in every ten of the youngest adults in the region had attended some college, but did not earn a degree, though that was 10 percent lower than in the state. However, almost 18 percent did not have a high school diploma, which was higher than the state (13.2%).

Less than 10 percent of the region's residents in both the 25- to 34- and 35- to 44-year-old age groups had less than a high school diploma, and nearly 30 percent had a high school diploma or GED. About a quarter of 25- to 34-year-olds had attended some college, but had not earned a degree yet, which was a slightly higher percentage than the rest of the state. Another quarter (23.0%) of these young adults had bachelor's degrees or higher, though that was 14.5 percent less than in the state. The region did show a 4 percent advantage in the percentage of people in this age group with associate's degrees, as noted above.

Table 13. Educational Attainment by Age Group, 2005 to 2009

	Southwest Minnesota Number	Percent	*State of Minnesota*
18 to 24 years:	**14,105**	**11.4%**	***13.3%***
Less than 12th grade, no diploma	2,478	17.6%	*13.2%*
High school graduate, GED	4,763	33.8%	*29.3%*
Some college, no degree	4,407	31.2%	*40.0%*
Associate's degree	1,456	10.3%	*6.9%*
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,001	7.1%	*10.6%*
25 to 34 years:	**14,887**	**12.0%**	***17.2%***
Less than 12th grade, no diploma	1,420	9.5%	*7.2%*
High school graduate, GED	4,003	26.9%	*20.8%*
Some college, no degree	3,593	24.1%	*22.4%*
Associate's degree	2,451	16.5%	*12.1%*
Bachelor's degree or higher	3,420	23.0%	*37.5%*
35 to 44 years:	**19,668**	**15.9%**	***18.7%***
Less than 12th grade, no diploma	1,486	7.6%	*6.0%*
High school graduate, GED	5,767	29.3%	*22.7%*
Some college, no degree	5,311	27.0%	*23.4%*
Associate's degree	2,859	14.5%	*11.7%*
Bachelor's degree or higher	4,245	21.6%	*36.2%*
45 to 64 years:	**44,045**	**35.6%**	***34.4%***
Less than 12th grade, no diploma	3,559	8.1%	*5.8%*
High school graduate, GED	16,463	37.4%	*29.7%*
Some college, no degree	11,346	25.8%	*23.8%*
Associate's degree	4,615	10.5%	*9.8%*
Bachelor's degree or higher	8,062	18.3%	*30.9%*
65 years and over:	**31,092**	**25.1%**	***16.4%***
Less than 12th grade, no diploma	8,596	27.6%	*20.2%*
High school graduate, GED	14,160	45.5%	*38.5%*
Some college, no degree	4,395	14.1%	*18.1%*
Associate's degree	840	2.7%	*3.7%*
Bachelor's degree or higher	3,101	10.0%	*19.5%*

Source: 2005 to 2009 American Community Survey

The region also had a higher percentage of 35- to 44-year-olds with associate's degrees than the state (14.5% vs. 11.7% in the state), but a lower percentage of middle-aged adults with bachelor's degrees or higher (21.6% vs. 36.2% in the state). That meant a higher percentage also had a high school diploma or less than the state (36.9% vs. 28.7% in the state). In sum, for the young adult population between the ages of 18 and 44 years, nearly 60 percent have either attended some college or earned a degree, including 13.9 percent that have an associate's degree and 17.8 percent that have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Predictably, educational attainment was much lower for Baby Boomers (aged 45 to 64 years) and senior citizens (aged 65 years and over), who did not have the same access to educational opportunities in their youth. However, these two age groups made up a much larger portion of the population in Southwest Minnesota than in the state, further skewing the region's educational attainment in comparison to the state. About 45.5 percent of Baby Boomers in Southwest Minnesota had a high school diploma or less, as compared to just 35.5 percent in the state. Just over one-fourth (28.8%) of Baby Boomers had a college degree, which was over 10 percent lower than the state attainment rate. For senior citizens in the region, nearly three-fourths (73.2%) had a high school diploma or less in the region, as compared to 58.7 percent in the state. Less than 13 percent of senior citizens had college degrees in the region, also more than 10 percent below the state. But senior citizens made up 25.1 percent of the region's total population, compared to just 16.4 percent in the state.

Not surprisingly, Lyon County had the highest educational attainment in the region, with more than one-fourth (25.7%) of adults having bachelor's degrees or higher; while the rest of the counties in the region were less than 18.5 percent, led by Yellow Medicine (18.4%) and Lincoln County (17.8%). The county with the lowest percentage of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher was Murray County (15.0%), followed by Swift (15.2%), Pipestone (15.4%), Cottonwood (15.7%), and Chippewa County (15.8%). The county with the lowest percentage of adults with a high school diploma or more was Nobles County, which was nearly 13 percent lower than the state (91.3%), at 78.5 percent in 2010. Cottonwood (84.9% with a high school diploma or more) and Pipestone County (85.7%) also had higher percentages of adults who had not completed high school. Jackson (90.5%) and Yellow Medicine County (90.1%) were the only two counties in the region where more than 90 percent of adults had at least a high school diploma, according to data from the American Community Survey.

Labor Force Size and Availability

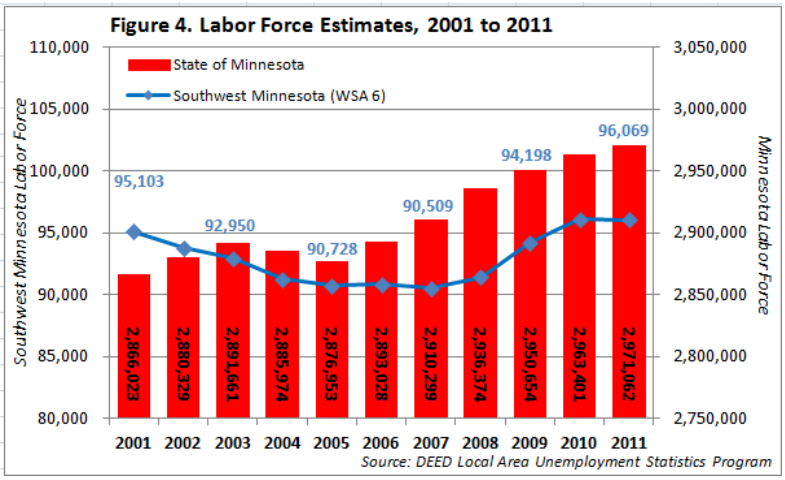
In comparison with Minnesota, which has consistently had among the highest labor force participation rates in the nation, labor force participation rates were relatively low in Southwest Minnesota. In 2010, more than two-thirds (67.2%) of adults in the region were in the labor force, as compared to 71 percent statewide. Just under three-fourths of males were in the labor force in Southwest Minnesota (72.6%) as compared to the state (75.6%). Southwest Minnesota also lags the state in female labor force participation rate (61.9%), which was nearly 5 percent lower than the state's rate (66.6%), which was also among the highest in the nation. (See Table 14.)

Table 14. Labor Force Participation Rates	Southwest Minnesota		*Minnesota*
	Number	**Percent**	***Percent***
Total	**129,971**	**100.0%**	***100.0%***
In labor force	**87,362**	**67.2%**	***71.0%***
Not in labor force	**42,609**	**32.8%**	***29.0%***
Male	64,277	49.5%	*49.2%*
In labor force	46,694	72.6%	*75.6%*
Not in labor force	17,583	27.4%	*24.4%*
Female	65,694	50.5%	*50.8%*
In labor force	40,668	61.9%	*66.6%*
Not in labor force	25,026	38.1%	*33.4%*
Source: American Community Survey, 2006 to 2010			

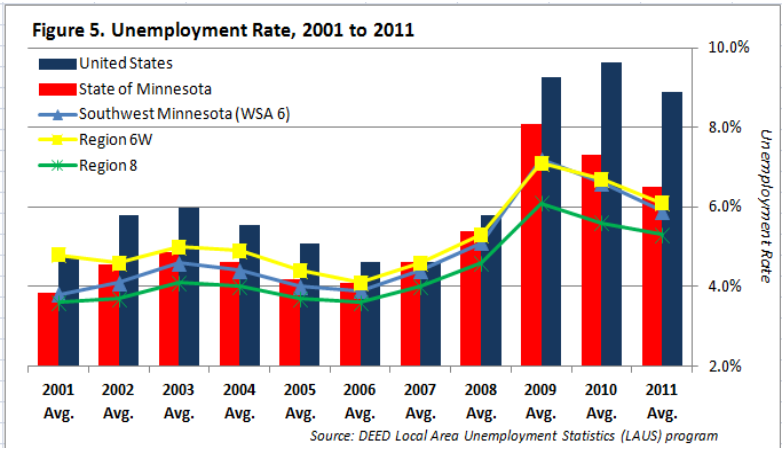
According to estimates from the American Community Survey, the highest labor force participation rates in the region were found in Lyon County (73.3%), which was actually higher than the state's rate (71.0%). The rest of the counties in the region were below 69.5 percent, including five counties where the labor force participation rate was below 65 percent. Chippewa (69.3%), Rock (68.9%), and Nobles County (68.0%) had the next highest labor force participation rates in the region.

The lowest rate in the region was in Swift County, at 59.5 percent, though that 5-year estimate may have been affected by the prison, which has since closed. Instead, the next lowest labor force participation rate in the region was in Big Stone County (61.5%), due to the county's low 54.2 percent female labor force participation rate. That was one of six counties in Southwest Minnesota with female labor force participation rates below 60 percent. In contrast, Lyon County also had the highest female labor force participation rate in the region, at 68.5 percent, which was also higher than the state rate.

According to DEED's Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, Southwest Minnesota's labor force declined along with the population during the first half of the decade, dropping from just over 95,100 available workers in 2001 to about 90,500 available workers in 2007. Then as the recession hit, Southwest Minnesota's labor force began expanding, up to 94,198 workers in 2009, then growing to 96,069 available workers in 2011. Similarly, the state's labor force grew from 2007 to 2011, despite the recession. However, the state's labor force was growing from 2001 to 2007 as well. Over the last decade, the state of Minnesota gained 105,000 available workers, a 3.7 percent increase. Southwest Minnesota added about 1,000 net new workers, a 1.0 percent increase. (See Figure 4.)



Unfortunately, the number of unemployed workers was also going up during the decade, from an average of about 8,600 workers in 2001 to an average of 13,500 workers in 2011, following a peak of 16,340 unemployed workers in 2009. In sum, the number of unemployed workers climbed by 4,900 in the region from 2001, while as noted, the total labor force grew just under 1,000 people. While the labor force increased 1.0 percent from 2001 to 2011, the number of unemployed workers jumped 57.1 percent. Consequently, Southwest Minnesota's unemployment rate jumped as high as 7.2 percent in 2009, before falling back to 5.9 percent in 2011. That was about a half a percent below the state unemployment rate (6.5%), and 3.0 percent below the national rate (8.9%). Southwest Minnesota's rate was below the state rate throughout the last decade, and the region has consistently had among the lowest unemployment rates in the state, especially during the recession. (See Figure 5.)



Within the region, the lowest rates were found in Region 8, led by Rock (4.6% in 2011), Jackson (4.8%), Lincoln (5.0%), Murray (5.1%), and Nobles County (5.1%). The highest unemployment rates in the region were in Region 6W, including Swift (7.5%), Big Stone (6.3%), and Chippewa County (6.3%), though all but Swift County had rates below the state rate in 2011. Rock, Nobles, and Jackson County have had the lowest rates in the region throughout the decade and especially during the recession; while Swift and Chippewa County have consistently had the highest rates in the region over the last 10 years.

Commute and Labor Sheds

Workers in Southwest Minnesota primarily worked in Southwest Minnesota, with more than three-fourths (76.0%) of workers in the region working in their county of residence. That was significantly higher than in the state of Minnesota, where less than two-thirds (63.9%) of workers both lived and worked in the same county. That led to relatively short commute times for workers in Southwest Minnesota, with all but one county in the region having average one-way travel times of less than 20 minutes, including four counties that had commute times of 15 minutes or less. (See Table 15.)

More than 90 percent of workers in Lyon County both lived and worked in Lyon County, which was the highest percentage in the region, leading to the region's shortest average travel times to work, at 14.5 minutes. The longest commute times were found in Rock County, where nearly 30 percent of workers drove into another state for work, and just over 60 percent of workers both lived and worked in Rock County.

Lincoln County had the lowest percentage of workers who worked in their county of residence, at 58.4 percent, while just over 10 percent were working in another state and just over 30 percent were working in surrounding counties. Yellow Medicine (60.6%) and Murray County (65.1%) also had lower percentages of people working in their county of residence. In contrast, Lyon (91.1%), Nobles (84.4%) and Cottonwood County (82.3%) had the next highest percentages of workers staying in their home counties.

Table 15. Place of Work, State and County Level				
	Percentage of Workers who:			**Avg. Travel Time, One-Way (minutes)**
Geography	**Worked in their county of residence**	**Worked outside their county of residence**	**Worked outside their state of residence**	
Big Stone Co.	71.1%	16.7%	12.2%	18.5 mins.
Chippewa Co.	71.7%	27.6%	0.7%	15.5 mins.
Cottonwood Co.	82.3%	16.7%	1.0%	15.6 mins
Jackson Co.	71.9%	21.5%	6.6%	16.4 mins.
Lac qui Parle Co.	71.4%	21.5%	6.6%	17.3 mins.
Lincoln Co.	58.4%	31.2%	10.3%	19.8 mins.
Lyon Co.	91.1%	7.5%	1.4%	14.5 mins.
Murray Co.	65.1%	33.0%	1.9%	18.3 mins.
Nobles Co.	84.4%	11.1%	4.5%	15.0 mins.
Pipestone Co.	79.3%	12.3%	8.4%	16.2 mins.
Redwood Co.	75.0%	24.4%	0.6%	16.3 mins.
Rock Co.	61.1%	11.0%	27.9%	21.0 mins.
Swift Co.	74.8%	24.6%	0.6%	16.3 mins.
Yellow Medicine Co.	60.6%	37.8%	1.7%	18.9 mins.
Southwest Minnesota	**76.0%**	**19.3%**	**4.7%**	
State of Minnesota	**63.9%**	**33.7%**	**2.4%**	**22.4 mins.**
Source: American Community Survey, 2006 to 2010				

Not surprisingly, counties along the borders had the highest percentages of people who were working across state lines, led by Rock (27.9%), Big Stone (12.2%), Lincoln (10.3%), Pipestone (8.4%), Jackson (6.6%), and Lac qui Parle County (6.6%); while counties in the middle of the region had very few workers leaving the state, including Swift (0.6%), Redwood (0.6%), Chippewa (0.7%), and Cottonwood County (1.0%). (See Table 15.)

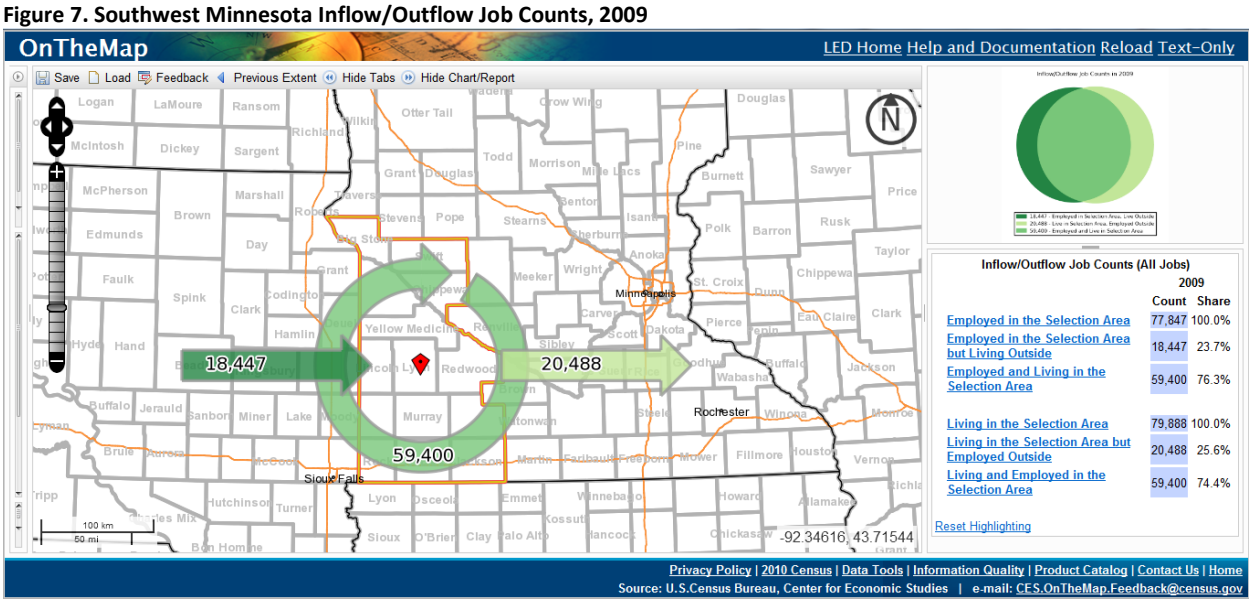
Likewise, according to the Census Bureau's OnTheMap worker origin-destination database, most workers in the region stayed in the region. Lyon County had the most total jobs, followed by Nobles, Chippewa, Pipestone, Redwood, and Jackson County. Lyon County also had the largest number of job holders in the region, again followed by Nobles, Redwood, Chippewa, Yellow Medicine, Cottonwood, Jackson, and Pipestone County. (See Table 16.)

Table 16. Southwest Minnesota Commute Shed and Labor Shed Report, 2009					
Commute Shed: Where Workers who Live in Southwest Minnesota are Employed	**2009**		**Labor Shed: Where Workers Live who are Employed in Southwest Minnesota**	**2009**	
	Count	**Share**		**Count**	**Share**
Total, All Jobs	**79,888**	**100.0%**	**Total, All Jobs**	**77,847**	**100.0%**
Lyon County, MN	12,768	16.0%	Lyon County, MN	10,650	13.7%
Nobles County, MN	8,481	10.6%	Nobles County, MN	8,468	10.9%
Chippewa County, MN	4,951	6.2%	Redwood County, MN	5,165	6.6%
Pipestone County, MN	4,453	5.6%	Chippewa County, MN	4,914	6.3%
Redwood County, MN	4,332	5.4%	Yellow Medicine Co. MN	3,981	5.1%
Jackson County, MN	4,054	5.1%	Cottonwood County, MN	3,864	5.0%
Cottonwood County, MN	3,709	4.6%	Jackson County, MN	3,849	4.9%
Yellow Medicine Co., MN	3,592	4.5%	Pipestone County, MN	3,799	4.9%
Swift County, MN	2,802	3.5%	Murray County, MN	3,134	4.0%
Rock County, MN	2,622	3.3%	Rock County, MN	2,846	3.7%
All Other Locations	28,124	35.2%	All Other Locations	27,177	34.9%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap5 Worker-Origin Destination Database					

As the region's primary employment center, Lyon County had the largest number of workers in the region, and also drew in the most workers. Nobles County was the next largest employment center in the region, but actually had a net labor export. Pipestone County was a net labor importer, drawing in workers from surrounding counties; while Jackson County was also a net labor importer, bringing in workers for jobs in the county. In contrast, Redwood, Rock, Lincoln, Murray, Cottonwood, Lac qui Parle, Chippewa, Swift, and Yellow Medicine County had the largest numbers of workers commuting into surrounding counties. In most cases, workers were commuting into counties that were directly adjacent to them. For example, Redwood County workers were driving into Lyon, Renville, and Brown County; while Rock County workers were commuting to Minnehaha County, South Dakota, Pipestone, and Nobles County; and Murray County primarily sent workers to Lyon and Nobles County.

Though most Southwest Minnesota workers both live and work in the region, overall, the 14-county region is a net labor exporter, having slightly more available workers than available jobs. In sum, about 59,400 workers both lived and worked in counties in the region. About 18,450 workers drove into the region from other counties for work, and about 20,500 residents drove outside the region for their jobs, leaving a net out-flow of just over 2,000 workers. (See Figure 7.)

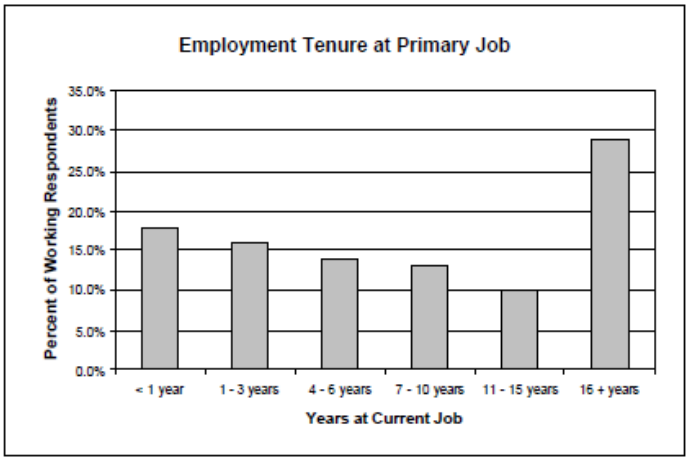
Figure 7. Southwest Minnesota Inflow/Outflow Job Counts, 2009



Employment Tenure

Workers in Southwest Minnesota were very loyal to their employers. According to responses to a Labor Force Assessment conducted in the region in 2011, the employment tenure for primary jobs in Southwest Minnesota ranged from less than a year to over 50 years. The most notable lengths of employment were those jobs held for short (three years or less) and long (sixteen years or more) periods of time. The median employment tenure for primary jobs in the region was 7 years – which was double the national median tenure – and the average employment tenure was 11 to 12 years. While just over one-third of respondents reported working at their primary job for 3 years or less, almost 30 percent of respondents reported working at their primary job for 16 years or more. (See Figure 8.)

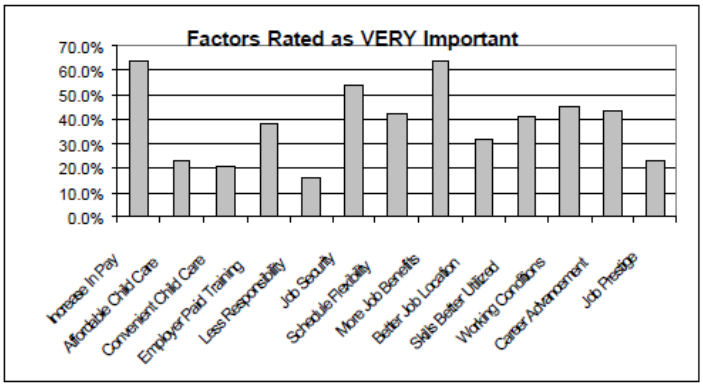
Figure 8: Region 8 Labor Force Assessment, 2001



Wages and Salaries

Though workers in Southwest Minnesota are loyal to their employers, as shown above, in a regional Labor Force Assessment conducted in 2001, residents were asked their primary factors when choosing a job. Not surprisingly, an increase in pay was the primary factor considered – meaning wages often play the single most important role in helping workers decide where to work. A wage increase was deemed important by just over 90 percent of working respondents, and considered very important by nearly two-thirds of respondents in the region. (See Figure 9.)

Figure 9: Region 8 Labor Force Assessment, 2001



^Respondents could choose Very Important, Somewhat Important, Not Very Important, and Not at all Important.

That data, when combined with the region's long-term population declines described above, detail the situation in Southwest Minnesota: many younger people leave the area to earn higher wages elsewhere. Beyond pay, workers

in the region also desire better job benefits – including health insurance, life insurance, and retirement plans – with well over 85 percent of respondents rating this as an important job change consideration.
Eighty percent had interest in having their employers "better utilize their skills." And again highlighting their loyalty, three out of every four respondents felt that more job security and better career advancement opportunities were important factors.

As described, there is more to choosing a job than money, but pay is still of utmost importance to most workers. Much like its geographic location, wages in Southwest Minnesota are at the bottom of the state. Median hourly wages for all occupations are highest in the Twin Cities, followed by Southeast Minnesota. Northeast and Central Minnesota are in the middle for wages, with the lowest wages in the state concentrated in Northwest and Southwest Minnesota. In fact, according to data from the 4th quarter of 2011 Minnesota Salary Survey, the median hourly wage for all occupations in Region 8 was $13.50, which was easily the lowest of the 13 economic development regions in the state. Wages were higher in Region 6W, at $14.02 per hour, but that was still the second lowest in the state. In comparison, the median hourly wage in the Twin Cities was $19.44, which was about 40 percent higher than wages in Southwest Minnesota. Over the course of a full-time work year, or 2,080 hours, the difference in wages between Southwest Minnesota and the Twin Cities metro works out to about $11,300 to $12,355 per year. (See Table 17.)

Table 17: Salary Survey, 4th Quarter 2011

Planning Region	Median Hourly Wage	Estimated Regional Employment
EDR 1 – Northwest	$16.08	34,890
EDR 2 – Headwaters	$14.21	27,930
EDR 3 – Arrowhead	$15.59	138,520
EDR 4 – West Central	$14.74	78,710
EDR 5 – North Central	$14.31	57,570
EDR 6E – Southwest Central	$15.04	47,730
EDR 6W – Upper MN Valley	$14.02	17,690
EDR 7E – East Central	$15.80	42,730
EDR 7W – Central	$15.65	142,780
EDR 8 – Southwest	$13.50	52,470
EDR 9 – South Central	$14.69	95,400
EDR 10 – Southeast	$17.09	216,320
EDR 11 – Twin Cities	$19.44	1,556,540

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics (OES) program

Not surprisingly, the lowest-paying jobs are concentrated in food preparation and serving related occupations, sales and related careers, personal care and service occupations, and building, grounds cleaning and maintenance jobs. For the most part, the gap in pay between Southwest Minnesota and the Twin Cities is also much lower in these jobs, from less than a dollar an hour in food preparation and serving jobs and personal care and service occupations, to less than two dollars an hour in building and grounds cleaning jobs. (See Table 18.)

In contrast, the highest paying jobs are typically management occupations, architecture and engineering occupations, computer and mathematical occupations, healthcare practitioners, legal occupations, business and financial operations jobs, and life, physical, and social science occupations, which all require higher levels of education and experience, including many that require bachelor's degrees or higher, plus work experience. The gaps in pay are much bigger in these occupations between the Twin Cities and Southwest Minnesota – ranging from over 20 dollars an hour for legal occupations and nearly 15 dollars an hour for management jobs and computer and mathematical occupations; almost 10 dollars an hour in construction and extraction occupations, health care practitioners, and

Table 18: Minnesota Salary Survey, 4th Quarter 2011

	Region 6W		Region 8		*Twin Cities MSA Median Hourly Wage*
Occupational Group	Regional Employment	Median Hourly Wage	Regional Employment	Median Hourly Wage	
Total, All Occupations	**17,690**	**$14.02**	**52,470**	**$13.50**	**$19.44**
Management Occupations	850	$36.77	1,990	$34.72	$49.43
Business & Financial Operations Occupations	730	$22.11	2,070	$22.94	$29.51
Computer & Mathematical Occupations	130	$23.24	420	$27.57	$37.37
Architecture & Engineering Occupations	210	$27.56	570	$25.69	$34.15
Life, Physical, & Social Science Occupations	130	$20.31	430	$21.96	$30.71
Community & Social Service Occupations	340	$16.19	880	$15.21	$19.71
Legal Occupations	50	$18.08	180	$14.82	$40.35
Education, Training, & Library Occupations	1,510	$17.34	3,790	$18.42	$21.73
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	110	$16.19	350	$13.08	$22.56
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occs.	1,310	$23.30	2,570	$22.87	$33.34
Healthcare Support Occupations	1,120	$12.02	3,080	$10.56	$14.04
Protective Service Occupations	280	$14.38	670	$17.80	$17.84
Food Preparation & Serving Related Occs.	1,500	$8.86	4,540	$8.88	$9.66
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	580	$10.92	1,430	$10.24	$12.33
Personal Care & Service Occupations	360	$10.24	1,130	$10.80	$11.32
Sales & Related Occupations	1,510	$9.66	4,530	$11.03	$14.30
Office & Administrative Support Occupations	2,500	$13.80	7,160	$13.29	$17.38
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry Occupations	150	$14.62	380	$13.00	$11.83
Construction & Extraction Occupations	760	$16.98	1,880	$16.80	$28.82
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair Occs.	670	$17.54	2,130	$17.32	$22.83
Production Occupations	1,530	$14.14	7,470	$13.33	$16.70
Transportation & Material Moving Occs.	1,370	$13.52	4,820	$13.21	$15.49

Source: DEED Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics (OES) program

life, physical, and social science occupations; around 7 dollars per hour in architecture and engineering careers and business and financial occupations; and over 5 dollars an hour in arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations; installation, maintenance, and repair occupations; and community and social service occupations.

Though wages are lower in many areas, one occupational group – farming, fishing, and forestry occupations – has higher wages in Southwest Minnesota than in the Twin Cities, and two other occupational groups are competitive in wages, including education, training and library occupations and protective service occupations.

Industry Employment Statistics

Through 2010, Southwest Minnesota was home to 5,572 business establishments providing 71,222 covered jobs, with a total annual payroll of $2.23 billion and average annual wages of $31,275, according to data from DEED's Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program. All establishments covered under the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program are required to report wage and employment statistics quarterly to DEED. Federal government establishments are also covered by the QCEW program.

Like much of the rest of the state and nation, Southwest Minnesota's economy suffered job declines over the last three years during the Great Recession and slow recovery. There were 181 fewer business establishments in 2010 in Southwest Minnesota than in 2007, and 1,725 fewer covered jobs. However, that -2.4 percent decrease in covered employment was much less severe than the -4.8 percent drop experienced statewide from 2007 to 2010. Just over half of the major industry sectors in Southwest Minnesota lost employment over the last three years, ranging from a -22 percent decline in administrative support and waste services to -13 percent drops in information and management of companies, to an -11 percent decline in construction. However, the region also saw growth in almost half of the major industries, including major job gains in health care and social assistance, accommodation and food services, wholesale trade, and professional and technical services. (See Table 19.)

Table 19. Southwest Minnesota Industry Employment Statistics, 2007 to 2010

	2010 Annual Data					2007 – 2010			
Industry	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Total Industry Payroll	Avg. Annual Wages	Change in Firms	Numeric Change in Jobs	Percent Change in Jobs	Change in Wages
Total, All Industries	**5,572**	**71,222**	**100.0%**	**$2,227,456,132**	**$31,275**	**-181**	**-1,725**	**-2.4%**	**+8.4%**
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	239	1,670	2.3%	$55,036,568	$32,956	+32	+82	+5.2%	+18.0%
Mining	15	99	0.1%	$4,189,688	$42,320	+1	-6	-5.7%	+20.7%
Construction	679	3,151	4.4%	$124,871,664	$39,629	+6	-384	-10.9%	-2.1%
Manufacturing	260	12,075	17.0%	$473,860,136	$39,243	-8	-618	-4.9%	+11.3%
Utilities	46	486	0.7%	$29,012,648	$59,697	-2	+62	+14.6%	+15.6%
Wholesale Trade	349	4,071	5.7%	$184,945,836	$45,430	-16	+233	+6.1%	+18.6%
Retail Trade	760	7,843	11.0%	$156,281,375	$19,926	ND	-549	-6.5%	ND
Transportation & Warehousing	406	2,182	3.1%	$89,557,011	$41,044	ND	+38	+1.8%	ND
Information	105	748	1.1%	$20,915,563	$27,962	-18	-119	-13.7%	ND
Finance & Insurance	358	2,899	4.1%	$120,959,818	$41,725	ND	ND	ND	ND
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	133	425	0.6%	$7,975,715	$18,766	ND	ND	ND	ND
Professional & Technical Services	253	1,532	2.2%	$57,714,245	$37,672	ND	+230	+17.7%	ND
Management of Companies	12	1,016	1.4%	$57,811,374	$56,901	-3	-153	-13.1%	+10.0%
Administrative & Waste Services	159	1,088	1.5%	$30,594,717	$28,120	ND	-302	-21.7%	ND
Educational Services	120	6,205	8.7%	$210,400,043	$33,908	-2	-42	-0.7%	+6.4%
Health Care & Social Assistance	413	12,663	17.8%	$345,811,680	$27,309	-7	+474	+3.9%	+7.1%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	103	928	1.3%	$14,747,983	$15,892	ND	ND	ND	ND
Accommodation & Food Services	364	5,066	7.1%	$57,477,613	$11,346	ND	+462	+10.0%	ND
Other Services	427	2,159	3.0%	$48,952,472	$22,674	ND	+39	+1.8%	ND
Public Administration	375	4,278	6.0%	$136,339,983	$31,870	ND	-106	-2.4%	ND

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program

The largest employing industry in Southwest Minnesota was health care and social assistance, with 413 firms providing 12,663 covered jobs, accounting for 17.8 percent of total employment. Southwest Minnesota gained 474 net new jobs from 2007 to 2010, a 3.9 percent increase. That was slightly lower than the industry's statewide job growth, which reported 23,139 net new jobs, a 5.8 percent increase.

After a significant decline from 2007 to 2010, manufacturing was now the second largest employing industry in Southwest Minnesota, with 260 establishments providing 12,075 covered jobs, which accounted for 17.0 percent

of total covered employment in the county. That was about 6.5 percent higher than the state's concentration, where 11.4 percent of jobs were in the manufacturing industry. Manufacturing employment declined -4.9 percent from 2007 to 2010, a loss of 618 covered jobs. However, that was much less severe than the -14.5 percent manufacturing decline experienced statewide.

The third largest industry sector in Southwest Minnesota is retail trade, with 760 establishments providing 7,843 covered jobs, or 11.0 percent of total employment, in line with 10.9 percent in the state. As consumers cut back during the recession, many stores responded by cutting back on employment, as retailers cut jobs by -7.9 percent statewide from 2007 to 2010. In Southwest Minnesota, retailers cut 549 jobs, a -6.5 percent decrease.

Unlike retail trade, accommodation and food services welcomed job gains in Southwest Minnesota despite the recession, adding 462 net new jobs from 2007 to 2010, a 10.0 percent increase. In contrast, statewide employment declined -5.1 percent during the recession. There were 364 firms providing 5,066 jobs in 2010, comprising 7.1 percent of total employment in the region.

Demand for educational services also went up during the recession as laid off workers looked for retraining, pushing enrollments at postsecondary institutions upward; though as described above, elementary and secondary school enrollments were going down. The region's student population was served at 120 establishments with 6,205 jobs, after losing 42 jobs from 2007 to 2010.

Likewise, the public administration sector saw a small decline in employment during the recession, now with 4,278 jobs at 375 government-run organizations, comprising 6.0 percent of total regional employment. This includes executive, legislative, and general government; justice, public order and safety activities; and administration of human resource and economic programs.

The next largest industry in Southwest Minnesota was wholesale trade, with 349 firms and 4,071 jobs in 2010, after gaining 233 jobs since 2007, a 6.1 percent increase. That was in direct contrast to the -7.4 percent decline in wholesale trade employment experienced statewide. Wholesale trade (5.7% of total employment) was much more strongly located in Southwest Minnesota than the rest of the state (4.8%).

From 2007 to 2010, construction firms in the state of Minnesota cut -25.4 percent of their jobs, responding to the housing slowdown and recession. In Southwest Minnesota, construction employment fell less than 11 percent from 2007 to 2010, a loss of 384 jobs. Construction comprised 3.7 percent of total employment in the state, but 4.4 percent in Southwest Minnesota. The largest sectors were specialty trade contractors – including carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and more; heavy and civil engineering construction; and construction of buildings.

Southwest Minnesota had a large and successful finance and insurance industry, with 2,899 jobs at 358 firms in 2010. Finance and insurance lost -3.1 percent of employment from 2007 to 2010 in the region, similar to the -3.3 percent decline in the state. With 4.1 percent of total employment, finance and insurance was less concentrated in Southwest Minnesota than in the state (5.3%).

Other large industries in Southwest Minnesota include transportation and warehousing with 406 firms and 2,182 jobs; other services, which had 2,159 jobs at 427 small businesses; agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting with 1,670 jobs at 239 firms; and professional, technical, and scientific services, which had 1,532 jobs at 253 small businesses. Combined, those four industries provided just over 10 percent of total employment in the region. Not surprisingly, agriculture is much more strongly located in Southwest Minnesota (2.3% of total employment) than in the state (0.7%), and the region (+5.2%) has been adding agriculture jobs faster than the state (+4.4%) over the last three years. Likewise, transportation grew in Southwest Minnesota (+1.8%) from 2007 to 2010, while it saw significant declines in the state (-7.8%).

Other important industries in Southwest Minnesota include administrative support and waste management services, which had 159 firms providing 1,088 jobs after losing 302 jobs from 2007 to 2010; management of companies and enterprises, which had 1,016 jobs at 12 firms; arts, entertainment, and recreation with 928 jobs at 103 firms; and information, which had 105 firms and 748 jobs.

Smaller employing industries include utilities, with 486 jobs at 46 establishments and real estate, rental, and leasing with 425 jobs at 133 firms. Utilities – which includes renewable energy – gained 62 net new jobs from 2007 to 2010, a 14.6 percent increase, making it the fastest growing industry in the region. The smallest industry in the region was mining, which had 99 jobs at 15 establishments in 2010, after losing 6 jobs from 2007.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's County Business Patterns data, the vast majority of businesses in Southwest Minnesota are small businesses, including 58.3 percent that have 1 to 4 employees and another 19.3 percent that have between 5 and 9 employees. About 18.7 percent of the businesses have between 10 and 49 employees, leaving only 3.6 percent having 50 or more employees. In fact, according to the U.S. Small Business Administration's definition of a small business, which sets the cutoff at 500 employees, all but 11 businesses in Southwest Minnesota would be considered "small." (See Table 20.)

Table 20. Southwest Minnesota Businesses by Size Class, 2009	Number	Percent
Total establishments	**5,215**	**100.0%**
1-4 employees	3,038	58.3%
5-9 employees	1,007	19.3%
10-19 employees	617	11.8%
20-49 employees	360	6.9%
50-99 employees	94	1.8%
100-249 employees	70	1.3%
250-499 employees	18	0.3%
500 employees or more	11	0.2%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau County Business Patterns		

Self-Employment

Before growing, the basic building block of most small businesses is a self-employed business. Southwest Minnesota was home to 11,299 self-employed businesses or "nonemployers" in 2009, which are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as "businesses without paid employees that are subject to federal income tax, originating from tax return information of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)." Average sales receipts for those 11,299 self-employed operations was $33,713 in 2009, based on total reported sales receipts of $380.9 million.

Even as the population declined during the decade, Southwest Minnesota gained nonemployers over time, rising from 11,310 nonemployers in 2002 to 11,850 in 2007, a 4.8 percent increase. Statewide, the number of nonemployers increased by 16.1 percent from 2002 to 2007. However, with the onset of the recession, the number of nonemployers in the region declined from 2007 to 2009, losing 551 self-employed businesses, a -4.6 percent decline. In comparison, nonemployers fell by -6.3 percent statewide. (See Table 21.)

Table 21. Southwest Minnesota Nonemployer Statistics, 2009	2009			2007		Change 2007-2009		2002		Change 2002-2009	
Industry Description	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)	Avg. Sales	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)			Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)		
Total for all sectors	**11,299**	**$380,920**	**$33,713**	**11,850**	**$439,752**	**-551**	**-4.6%**	**11,310**	**$362,471**	**-11**	**-0.1%**
Agriculture, forestry, fish & hunt	401	$17,351	$43,269	400	$14,979	+1	+0.2%	325	$16,755	+76	+23.4%
Mining	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Utilities	ND	ND	ND	14	$1,640	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Construction	1,509	$51,006	$33,801	1,645	$63,699	-136	-8.3%	1,537	$51,094	-28	-1.8%
Manufacturing	157	$4,142	$26,382	139	$4,990	ND	ND	141	$4,184	ND	ND
Wholesale trade	112	$13,582	$121,268	138	$8,537	ND	ND	148	$11,039	ND	ND
Retail trade	1,407	$42,680	$30,334	1,587	$55,737	-180	-11.3%	1,704	$55,753	-297	-17.4%
Transportation & warehousing	899	$83,244	$92,596	947	$103,614	-48	-5.1%	836	$62,805	+63	+7.5%
Information	34	$444	$13,059	33	$415	ND	ND	15	$323	ND	ND
Finance & insurance	472	$17,132	$36,297	484	$18,966	-12	-2.5%	416	$11,856	+56	+13.5%
Real estate, rental & leasing	660	$31,632	$47,927	731	$35,796	-71	-9.7%	850	$36,631	-190	-22.4%
Professional, sci. & tech. svcs.	940	$17,781	$18,916	915	$16,187	+25	+2.7%	894	$15,163	+46	+5.1%
Admin. supt & waste mgmt. svcs.	800	$9,348	$11,685	728	$11,789	+72	+9.9%	449	$4,917	ND	ND
Educational services	170	$1,445	$8,500	161	$1,283	ND	ND	88	$680	ND	ND
Health care & social assistance	1,012	$20,601	$20,357	1,062	$21,593	ND	ND	1,092	$19,131	ND	ND
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	385	$4,045	$10,506	388	$4,952	ND	ND	341	$4,719	ND	ND
Accommodation & food services	105	$4,123	$39,267	112	$6,599	ND	ND	53	$4,782	ND	ND
Other services	2,001	$47,850	$23,913	2,063	$53,106	-62	-3.0%	1,946	$52,874	+55	+2.8%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics program											

The industries with the largest amount of self-employment in Southwest Minnesota were other services, which includes personal care services (hair, nail, and skin care) and automotive repair and maintenance; construction, which includes specialty trade contractors (carpenters, plumbers, electricians); retail trade – including motor vehicle and parts dealers as well as nonstore retailers (like Avon or Mary Kay); and health care and social assistance, which includes doctors, dentists, chiropractors, other health practitioners, but primarily child day care services. Other important industries for self-employment were professional, scientific and technical services, which

includes accounting, consulting, and computer services; transportation and warehousing – including truck transportation, both local and long-distance trucking; administrative support and waste management services, which includes janitorial services and groundskeeping; and real estate, rental and leasing. Smaller industries include finance and insurance; agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting; and arts, entertainment, and recreation.

Major Industries by Economic Development Region in Southwest Minnesota

Though there are many similarities, the two economic development regions in Southwest Minnesota have slightly different industrial compositions. Looking at each region separately allows a deeper understanding of what is happening in each region, and a better idea of where to put workforce/economic development efforts.

Region 6W

Region 6W – which is comprised of Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, Swift, and Yellow Medicine counties – had 1,572 business establishments with 18,298 covered jobs through the second quarter of 2011. Average annual wages were $31,616, which was a 3.6 percent gain over the last year, but still significantly lower than the state of Minnesota as a whole ($46,644). While Minnesota started to see a job recovery over the last year, Region 6W was still struggling with small job declines from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011, though more than half of the major industries in the region saw employment increases. (See Table 22.)

Table 22. Region 6W Industry Employment Statistics, 2010 to 2011

	2nd Quarter 2011 Data				Q2 2010 – Q2 2011			
Industry	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Avg. Annual Wages	Change in Firms	Numeric Change in Jobs	Percent Change in Jobs	Change in Wages
Total, All Industries	**1,572**	**18,298**	**100.0%**	**$31,616**	**-6**	**-142**	**-0.8%**	**+3.6%**
Total, All Government	*215*	*5,094*	*27.8%*	*$34,944*	*0*	*-43*	*-0.8%*	*+4.3%*
Total, Private Sector	*1,357*	*13,204*	*72.2%*	*$30,316*	*-6*	*-98*	*-0.7%*	*+3.2%*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	77	486	2.7%	$37,596	+4	+50	+11.5%	-5.9%
Mining	6	37	0.2%	$56,368	+1	+1	+2.8%	+3.7%
Construction	199	1,094	6.0%	$39,572	+2	+76	+7.5%	+3.8%
Manufacturing	86	2,415	13.2%	$40,040	+1	+25	+1.0%	+5.5%
Utilities	13	133	0.7%	$68,900	+1	-3	-2.2%	+5.8%
Wholesale Trade	89	1,259	6.9%	$44,096	-5	+17	+1.4%	+2.9%
Retail Trade	199	1,727	9.4%	$17,212	-3	-53	-3.0%	0.0%
Transportation & Warehousing	103	627	3.4%	$32,708	-2	+1	+0.2%	+1.9%
Information	28	168	0.9%	$23,400	-2	+2	+1.2%	+8.2%
Finance & Insurance	107	596	3.3%	$35,880	-2	+14	+2.4%	+2.5%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	35	174	1.0%	$18,720	-5	+6	+3.6%	+8.1%
Professional & Technical Services	73	371	2.0%	$31,876	-1	-40	-9.7%	+4.1%
Management of Companies	5	56	0.3%	$40,196	0	-5	-8.2%	-2.9%
Administrative & Waste Services	44	241	1.3%	$27,456	0	+6	+2.6%	-2.6%
Educational Services	39	1,830	10.0%	$38,532	0	-28	-1.5%	+4.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance	107	3,734	20.4%	$29,432	+3	-190	-4.8%	+2.9%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	27	527	2.9%	$19,396	+1	+31	+6.3%	+2.5%
Accommodation & Food Services	100	995	5.4%	$8,684	+1	+39	+4.1%	-2.3%
Other Services	127	662	3.6%	$22,776	0	-5	-0.7%	+3.5%
Public Administration	108	1,158	6.3%	$34,320	0	-86	-6.9%	+7.5%

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program

With 3,734 covered jobs at 107 facilities, health care and social assistance is the largest employing industry in Region 6W. After growing throughout the decade in response to the aging population, health care cut 190 jobs over the last year. In comparison, health care and social assistance gained 4,836 net new jobs in the state in the last year, a 1.2 percent increase. Reflecting the region's older population, nursing and residential care facilities is the largest sector, with 1,374 jobs at 30 facilities, and it added over 30 jobs from 2010 to 2011. Hospitals were the next largest sector, with 1,229 jobs at 6 government-owned facilities, though employment declined by about 15 jobs. Ambulatory health care services – which includes offices of physicians, dentists, and home health care services – was the other major sector with 485 jobs at 53 establishments, after gaining about 40 jobs.

After declining nearly 10 percent from 2007 to 2010, the manufacturing industry started to see a recovery in 2011, gaining 25 net new jobs from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011, a 1.0 percent increase. The state's manufacturers grew 2.9 percent in the last year. With 2,415 jobs at 86 firms, manufacturing is still the

second largest industry in the region. The two largest specialties were food manufacturing (555 jobs) and machinery manufacturing (524 jobs), though both suffered job declines over the last year. In contrast, computer and electronic product manufacturing (374 jobs) and fabricated metal product manufacturing (257 jobs) both saw employment gains in the last year. Other smaller sectors include chemical manufacturing (102 jobs), plastics and rubber product manufacturing (93 jobs), nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing (64 jobs), textile product mills (43 jobs), and miscellaneous manufacturing (25 jobs).

Educational services was the third largest employing industry in Region 6W, with 1,830 jobs at 39 establishments, after losing 28 jobs from 2010 to 2011. Just under 100 jobs were at the region's community and technical college campuses, while the other 1,730 jobs were at the region's 35 elementary and secondary schools. Both saw small decreases in employment in the last year, as enrollments continued to decline and budgets remained tight.

Without a regional center, retail trade was just the fourth largest employing industry in Region 6W, with 1,727 jobs at 199 stores through the second quarter of 2011. While Minnesota saw a small 0.3 percent gain in retail jobs in the last year, Region 6W saw a -3.0 percent decline. The largest sectors in the region were food and beverage stores (466 jobs) and general merchandise stores (348 jobs), with both seeing small job increases. Gasoline stations lost 40 jobs in the last year, and now had 332 jobs at 30 stores. Other important retail specialties include health and personal care stores (165 jobs), motor vehicle and parts dealers (153 jobs), building and material supply stores (133 jobs), miscellaneous store retailers (40 jobs), clothing and accessories stores (28 jobs), electronics and appliance stores (20 jobs), and furniture and home furnishings stores (20 jobs).

In contrast, the region's accommodation and food services industry saw a job recovery in the last year, gaining 39 net new jobs from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011. The industry has 100 establishments providing 995 jobs in 2011. Likewise, the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry – which includes the region's casino – welcomed 31 net new jobs in the last year, and now has 527 jobs at 27 firms.

With 1,259 jobs at 89 firms, wholesale trade is the next largest industry in the region, comprising 6.9 percent of total employment, as compared to just 4.8 percent statewide. Wholesale trade grew 1.7 percent in the state, right in line with a 1.4 percent increase in Region 6W. The most notable sector is farm product raw material merchant wholesalers (439 jobs), linked to the region's strength in agriculture.

With 1,094 jobs at 199 firms, construction is another industry that is more concentrated in Region 6W than the state as a whole, with 6.0 percent of total employment as compared to 3.8 percent statewide. Construction gained 76 net new jobs in the region over the last year, a 7.5 percent increase, while the state grew just 3.0 percent. In contrast, following a -6.9 percent decline, there were 1,158 jobs in public administration at 108 establishments.

Other important sectors in Region 6W include other services, which had 127 firms and 662 jobs; transportation and warehousing (103 firms and 627 jobs); finance and insurance (107 firms and 596 jobs); and agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting (77 firms and 486 jobs), which is also much more concentrated in the region than in the state.

Smaller sectors in the region include professional, scientific, and technical services, with 371 jobs at 73 small businesses; administrative support and waste management services with 44 firms and 241 jobs; real estate, rental, and leasing with 35 firms and 174 jobs; information with 168 jobs and 28 firms; and utilities, which had 133 jobs at 13 firms, but the highest average annual wages ($68,900) of any industry in the region. The smallest industry in the region was mining, with 37 jobs at 6 firms, and the second highest annual wages ($56,368).

In addition, the region also has a high number of self-employed individuals. Through 2009, there were 3,275 non-employers in the region with combined sales receipts of $100.7 million. From 2002 to 2007, the region added 79 more nonemployers, but from 2007 to 2009, the region lost 118 self-employed businesses. (See Table 23.)

Table 23. Nonemployer Statistics REGION 6W	**2009**			**2007**		**Change 2007-2009**		**2002**		**Change 2002-2009**	
Industry Description	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)	Avg. Sales	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)			Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)		
Total for all sectors	**3,275**	**$100,720**	**$30,754**	**3,393**	**$116,523**	**-118**	**-3.5%**	**3,314**	**$92,657**	**-39**	**-1.2%**
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	123	$3,018	$24,537	111	$2,368	+12	+10.8%	102	$2,215	+21	+20.6%

Construction	483	$16,074	$33,280	535	$21,013	-52	-9.7%	509	$15,502	-26	-5.1%
Manufacturing	44	$1,244	$28,273	55	$2,720	ND	ND	31	$1,380	ND	ND
Wholesale trade	31	$832	$26,839	24	$402	ND	ND	38	$2,950	ND	ND
Retail trade	419	$13,734	$32,778	448	$17,520	-29	-6.5%	488	$15,378	-69	-14.1%
Transportation & warehousing	260	$21,928	$84,338	260	$24,847	0	0.0%	241	$14,195	+19	+7.9%
Information	12	$209	$17,417	18	$215	ND	ND	0	0	ND	ND
Finance & insurance	110	$5,171	$47,009	125	$5,461	-15	-12.0%	119	$3,200	-9	-7.6%
Real estate, rental & leasing	188	$7,879	$41,910	199	$9,601	-11	-5.5%	236	$9,644	-48	-20.3%
Professional, scientific & technical svcs	277	$5,195	$18,755	274	$4,850	+3	+1.1%	252	$4,085	+25	+9.9%
Admin. support & waste mgmt. svcs.	250	$3,003	$12,012	210	$2,728	ND	ND	151	$1,507	ND	ND
Educational services	22	$164	$7,455	40	$291	ND	ND	15	$91	ND	ND
Health care & social assistance	266	$5,509	$20,711	281	$5,415	ND	ND	311	$6,878	ND	ND
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	108	$1,235	$11,435	93	$723	ND	ND	89	$595	ND	ND
Accommodation & food services	32	$909	$28,406	16	$466	ND	ND	10	$1,351	ND	ND
Other services	552	$12,160	$22,029	558	$12,248	-6	-1.1%	600	$11,307	-48	-8.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics program											

Region 8

Region 8 – which is comprised of Cottonwood, Jackson, Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, and Rock counties – had 3,954 business establishments with 54,014 covered jobs through the second quarter of 2011. Average annual wages were $31,304, which was a 2.9 percent gain over the last year, but still significantly lower than the state of Minnesota as a whole ($46,644). Region 8 also saw a small job decline from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011, but just over half of the major industries in the region saw employment increases. (See Table 24.)

Table 24. Region 8 Industry Employment Statistics, 2010 to 2011

	2nd Quarter 2011 Data				Q2 2010 – Q2 2011			
Industry	Number of Firms	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Avg. Annual Wages	Change in Firms	Numeric Change in Jobs	Percent Change in Jobs	Change in Wages
Total, All Industries	**3,954**	**54,014**	**100.0%**	**$31,304**	**-14**	**-93**	**-0.2%**	**+2.9%**
Total, All Government	*464*	*10,525*	*19.5%*	*$35,360*	*+1*	*-364*	*-3.3%*	*+2.1%*
Total, Private Sector	*3,490*	*43,489*	*80.5%*	*$30,316*	*-15*	*+272*	*+0.6%*	*+3.4%*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunting	171	1,388	2.6%	$31,720	+9	+151	+12.2%	+4.1%
Mining	9	81	0.1%	$34,008	-1	+7	+9.5%	+6.9%
Construction	475	2,292	4.2%	$35,568	-9	+65	+2.9%	+5.4%
Manufacturing	173	9,825	18.2%	$38,948	-1	+3	+0.0%	+2.2%
Utilities	34	381	0.7%	$58,552	0	+30	+8.5%	+7.1%
Wholesale Trade	252	2,803	5.2%	$42,848	-3	-76	-2.6%	-0.1%
Retail Trade	543	6,206	11.5%	$20,280	-11	+53	+0.9%	-0.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	295	2,094	3.9%	$34,424	+2	-35	-1.6%	+4.1%
Information	71	544	1.0%	$29,640	-4	-46	-7.8%	+2.2%
Finance & Insurance	241	2,237	4.1%	$41,964	-5	-83	-3.6%	+3.9%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	87	245	0.5%	$19,760	-4	-11	-4.3%	+7.3%
Professional & Technical Services	179	1,171	2.2%	$38,428	+2	+45	+4.0%	+6.9%
Management of Companies	8	984	1.8%	$57,460	+1	+16	+1.7%	+13.3%
Administrative & Waste Services	117	930	1.7%	$27,820	+2	+49	+5.6%	+7.2%
Educational Services	81	4,819	8.9%	$36,868	-1	-71	-1.5%	-1.7%
Health Care & Social Assistance	327	8,876	16.4%	$26,572	+21	+128	+1.5%	+5.4%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	77	514	1.0%	$11,284	+1	-33	-6.0%	+1.9%
Accommodation & Food Services	254	4,157	7.7%	$11,856	-7	-155	-3.6%	+4.6%
Other Services	292	1,556	2.9%	$21,996	-7	+57	+3.8%	-1.2%
Public Administration	268	2,906	5.4%	$32,500	+1	-185	-6.0%	+3.8%
Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program								

With 9,825 jobs at 173 firms, manufacturing is still the largest industry in Region 8, with 18.2 percent of total employment. That was nearly 7 percent higher than the state's manufacturing employment percentage (11.5%). However, while manufacturers throughout the state grew 2.9 percent in the last year, Region 8 essentially held steady. The largest sector in the region was food manufacturing, with 37 firms and 5,023 jobs, after gaining over 125 jobs in the last year. The next largest sector was machinery manufacturing, with 1,825 jobs at 14 firms, after gaining about 25 jobs from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011. Other important manufacturing sectors include wood product manufacturing (16 firms and 519 jobs); fabricated metal product

manufacturing (22 firms and 460 jobs); furniture and related product manufacturing (12 firms and 422 jobs); miscellaneous manufacturing (which includes medical device manufacturing) with 317 jobs at 16 firms; computer and electronic product manufacturing (3 firms and 274 jobs); chemical manufacturing (9 firms and 263 jobs); printing and related support activities (11 firms and 235 jobs); plastics and rubber product manufacturing (6 firms and 141 jobs); and nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing (10 firms and 109 jobs). Chemical manufacturing, furniture and related product manufacturing, and printing suffered the biggest job declines over the last year, while nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing, miscellaneous manufacturing, and plastics and rubber product manufacturing all saw small jobs gains from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011.

With 8,876 covered jobs at 327 facilities, health care and social assistance is the second largest employing industry in Region 8. After growing throughout the decade in response to the aging population, health care added 128 jobs over the last year, a 1.5 percent increase. That was slightly faster than the state's 1.2 percent increase. Reflecting the region's older population, nursing and residential care facilities is the largest sector, with 3,651 jobs at 77 facilities, though it saw a small decline from 2010 to 2011. Ambulatory health care services – which includes offices of physicians, dentists, and home health care services – was the other major sector in the region with 2,394 jobs at 153 establishments, after losing almost 80 jobs. Hospitals were the next largest sector, with 934 jobs at 4 government-owned facilities, though private sector employment was not discloseable. Social assistance was the smallest sector, with 655 jobs at 85 establishments, after adding a small number of jobs in the last year.

With regional centers in Marshall and Worthington, retail trade was the third largest employing industry in Region 8, with 6,206 jobs at 543 stores through the second quarter of 2011. While Minnesota saw a small 0.3 percent gain in retail jobs in the last year, Region 8 enjoyed a 0.9 percent increase, a gain of 53 jobs. The largest sectors are food and beverage stores (1,607 jobs) and general merchandise stores (1,270 jobs), with the former gaining jobs and latter losing jobs. Gasoline stations added about 25 jobs in the last year, and now had 873 jobs at 78 stores. Other important retail specialties include building and material supply stores (651 jobs), motor vehicle and parts dealers (595 jobs), health and personal care stores (306 jobs), miscellaneous store retailers (258 jobs), clothing and accessories stores (194 jobs), electronics and appliance stores (197 jobs), and furniture and home furnishings stores (123 jobs).

In contrast, the region's accommodation and food services industry suffered job declines in the last year, dropping 155 jobs from the second quarter of 2010 to the second quarter of 2011. The industry has 254 establishments providing 4,157 jobs in 2011. Likewise, the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry – which includes the region's casino – lost 33 jobs in the last year, and now has 514 jobs at 77 firms.

With 81 establishments and 4,819 jobs, educational services was the next largest employing industry in Region 8. Just under 175 jobs were at the region's community and technical college campuses and about 360 jobs were at the region's four-year university, while the other 4,232 jobs were at the region's 62 elementary and secondary schools, which lost almost 80 jobs over the last year as stimulus funding ran out. Likewise, public administration lost 185 jobs from 2010 to 2011, but still provided 2,906 jobs at 268 institutions in the region.

With 2,803 jobs at 252 firms, wholesale trade is the next largest industry in the region, comprising 5.2 percent of total employment, as compared to 4.8 percent statewide. With 2,292 jobs at 475 firms, construction gained 65 net new jobs in the region over the last year, a 2.9 percent increase, which was in line with the state's 3.0 percent growth. Transportation and warehousing had 295 firms and 2,094 jobs, comprising 3.9 percent of total employment in the region.

Other important sectors in Region 8 include other services, which had 292 small businesses and 1,556 jobs; agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting– which is much more concentrated in the region than in the state – with 171 firms and 1,388 jobs, or 2.6 percent of total employment; and professional, scientific, and technical services – which is less concentrated in the region than in the state – which had 1,171 jobs at 179 small businesses.

Smaller sectors in the region include management of companies and enterprises – which had the second highest wages in the region at $57,460) with 8 firms and 984 jobs; administrative support and waste management services with 117 firms and 930 jobs; information with 544 jobs and 71 firms; utilities, which had 381 jobs at 34 firms, with the highest average annual wages ($58,552) of any industry in the region; and real estate, rental, and leasing, with 87 small businesses and 245 jobs. The smallest industry in the region was mining, with 81 jobs at 9 firms.

In addition, the region also has a high number of self-employed individuals. Through 2009, there were 8,024 non-employers in the region with combined sales receipts of $280.2 million. These nonemployers averaged just under $35,000 in average sales in 2009. From 2002 to 2007, the region added 461 more non-employers, but from 2007 to 2009, the region lost 433 self-employed businesses. (See Table 25.)

Table 25. Nonemployer Statistics REGION 8	2009			2007		Change 2007-2009		2002		Change 2002-2009	
Industry Description	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)	Avg. Sales	Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)			Number of Firms	Receipts ($1,000s)		
Total for all sectors	**8,024**	**$280,200**	**$34,920**	**8,457**	**$323,229**	**-433**	**-5.1%**	**7,996**	**$269,814**	**+28**	**+0.4%**
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting	278	$14,333	$51,558	289	$12,611	-11	-3.8%	223	$14,540	+55	+24.7%
Construction	1,026	$34,932	$34,047	1,110	$42,686	-84	-7.6%	1,028	$35,592	-2	-0.2%
Manufacturing	113	$2,898	$25,646	84	$2,270	+29	+34.5%	110	$2,804	+3	+2.7%
Wholesale trade	81	$12,750	$157,407	114	$8,135	ND	ND	110	$8,089	ND	ND
Retail trade	988	$28,946	$29,298	1,139	$38,217	-151	-13.3%	1,216	$40,375	-228	-18.8%
Transportation & warehousing	639	$61,316	$95,956	687	$78,767	-48	-7.0%	595	$48,610	+44	+7.4%
Information	22	$235	$10,682	15	$200	ND	ND	15	$323	ND	ND
Finance & insurance	362	$11,961	$33,041	359	$13,505	+3	+0.8%	297	$8,656	ND	ND
Real estate, rental & leasing	472	$23,753	$50,324	532	$26,195	ND	ND	614	$26,987	ND	ND
Professional, scientific & technical svcs	663	$12,586	$18,983	641	$11,337	+22	+3.4%	642	$11,078	+21	+3.3%
Admin. support & waste mgmt. svcs.	550	$6,345	$11,536	518	$9,061	ND	ND	298	$3,410	ND	ND
Educational services	148	$1,281	$8,655	121	$992	ND	ND	73	$589	ND	ND
Health care & social assistance	746	$15,092	$20,231	781	$16,178	-35	-4.5%	781	$12,253	-35	-4.5%
Arts, entertainment, & recreation	277	$2,810	$10,144	295	$4,229	ND	ND	252	$4,124	ND	ND
Accommodation & food services	73	$3,214	$44,027	96	$6,133	ND	ND	43	$3,431	ND	ND
Other services	1,449	$35,690	$24,631	1,505	$40,858	-56	-3.7%	1,346	$41,567	+103	+7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Nonemployer Statistics program

Agriculture Statistics

Another important industry in the region is agriculture, with 12,311 farms producing just under $3.2 billion in the market value of products sold in 2007, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Southwest Minnesota had over 15 percent of the farms in the state of Minnesota, and 18.2 percent of the farming operations in the state. Three counties in the region were ranked in the top 10 in the state for the market value of products sold, and five more counties were in the top 25 in the state for the total value of agricultural products sold. Redwood County was ranked 4th in the state of Minnesota with $364 million in the market value of products sold, with 1,215 farms. Nobles County was 5th with $344 million produced at 1,094 farms, and Lyon County ranked 9th with $306 million at 1,011 farms. Rock (13th), Jackson (14th), Cottonwood (21st), Murray (22nd), Yellow Medicine (25th), and Swift County (26th) also had large agriculture economies. Redwood County had the most farms, with 1,215 farms and 553,855 acres, and also had the highest percentage of the farms being run as farming operations as the principal occupation, at 68.5 percent. In sum, farms were much more likely to be run as farming operations in Southwest Minnesota (58.7%) than the rest of the state (48.9%). (See Table 26.)

Table 26. 2007 Census of Agriculture, Southwest Minnesota						State Rank		
	2007 Farms	Principal Operators Farming	*Farming Percent*	Land in Farms (acres)	Market Value of Products Sold	Total Value Sales	Crop Sales	Livestock Sales
Big Stone Co.	452	281	*62.2%*	252,291	$86,834,000	57th	48th	55th
Chippewa Co.	720	399	*55.4%*	367,926	$169,002,000	37th	14th	57th
Lac qui Parle Co.	932	479	*51.4%*	412,051	$157,591,000	39th	26th	47th
Swift Co.	888	460	*51.8%*	388,442	$206,088,000	26th	27th	29th
Yellow Medicine Co.	986	542	*55.0%*	409,223	$209,046,000	25th	19th	35th
Region 6W	**3,978**	**2,161**	***54.3%***	**1,829,933**	**$828,561,000**			
Cottonwood Co.	865	515	*59.5%*	381,249	$240,642,000	21st	16th	25th
Jackson Co.	969	588	*60.7%*	400,531	$267,276,000	14th	11th	22nd
Lincoln Co.	784	412	*52.6%*	286,255	$135,101,000	47th	46th	43rd
Lyon Co.	1,011	627	*62.0%*	428,693	$305,723,000	9th	15th	9th
Murray Co.	1,023	583	*57.0%*	428,869	$237,143,000	22nd	17th	34th
Nobles Co.	1,094	648	*59.2%*	422,300	$343,813,000	5th	13th	5th
Pipestone Co.	676	401	*59.3%*	244,670	$176,469,000	35th	50th	23rd
Redwood Co.	1,215	832	*68.5%*	553,855	$364,059,000	4th	3rd	10th
Rock Co.	696	455	*65.4%*	279,088	$282,902,000	13th	35th	6th

Region 8	**8,333**	**5,061**	***60.7%***	**3,425,510**	**$2,353,128,000**			
Southwest Minnesota	**12,311**	**7,222**	***58.7%***	**5,255,443**	**$3,181,689,000**			
State of Minnesota	**80,992**	**39,628**	***48.9%***	**26,917,962**	**$13,180,466,000**			
Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 2007 Census of Agriculture								

Major crop items in the region were corn, soybeans, vegetables, wheat for grain, other crops and hay, as well as smaller amounts of fruits, nursery and greenhouse materials, and dry edible beans; while the region's major livestock inventories were cattle and calves, hogs and pigs, turkeys, poultry and eggs, broilers and other meat-type chickens, and sheep and lambs, as well as smaller amounts of aquaculture, horses, bees, and pheasants.

Workforce Demographics

As described above, Southwest Minnesota is home to an aging, older population, which is reflected in the demographics of the workforce. The region had a higher percentage of workers in the older age groups, but also had a higher percentage of workers in the youngest age groups. Like the population, the region lagged the state in the middle age groups, from 25 to 54 years of age. (See Table 27.)

Overall, 16.1 percent of Southwest Minnesota's workforce is aged between 14 and 24 years, as compared to 14.2 percent statewide. In contrast, 16.7 percent of the workforce is 55- to 64-years of age, as compared to 15.0 percent in Minnesota. Another 5.4 percent of the workers in the region were 65 years and over, which was 1.6 percent higher than in the state. About two-thirds of the workforce in the state is aged 25 to 54 years (67.0%), which was more than 5 percent higher than in Southwest Minnesota (61.8%). The region has a much higher percentage of females in the labor force, with 53.6 percent of the workers in Southwest Minnesota, as compared to 51.4 percent in the state. Turnover rates (7.9%) are lower in Southwest Minnesota than the state (8.8%), including for every age group and both males and females.

In health care and social assistance, the workforce is predominantly female (83.0%), and is more reliant on younger workers than the state. In Southwest Minnesota, 19.0 percent of health care workers are 14 to 24 years of age, while about 12.6 percent are 14 to 24 years of age in the state. In contrast, 21.5 percent of the workforce in the region was 55 years and over, as compared to less than 20 percent in Minnesota, meaning retirements will likely become a big issue for the

Table 27: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2010

Total, All Industries	Southwest Minnesota (WSA 6)			State of Minnesota		
	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers	Turnover Rate	Number of Workers	Percent of Workers	Turnover Rate
Total	**77,871**	**100.0%**	**7.9%**	**2,530,341**	**100.0%**	**8.8%**
14-24 years	12,558	16.1%	16.7%	358,817	14.2%	18.6%
25-34 years	15,568	20.0%	9.0%	566,236	22.4%	9.9%
35-44 years	14,293	18.4%	6.5%	524,177	20.7%	7.4%
45-54 years	18,288	23.5%	5.1%	604,425	23.9%	6.1%
55-64 years	12,967	16.7%	5.0%	380,771	15.0%	6.0%
65 years & over	4,195	5.4%	8.6%	95,912	3.8%	8.9%
Male	36,147	46.4%	8.3%	1,228,791	48.6%	8.9%
Female	41,724	53.6%	7.6%	1,301,550	51.4%	8.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance	**Southwest Minnesota (WSA 6)**			**State of Minnesota**		
	Number of Workers	**Percent of Workers**	**Turnover Rate**	**Number of Workers**	**Percent of Workers**	**Turnover Rate**
Total workforce	**18,041**	**100.0%**	**7.4%**	**408,565**	**100.0%**	**7.5%**
14-24 years	3,428	19.0%	14.5%	51,291	12.6%	15.9%
25-34 years	3,856	21.4%	8.4%	97,591	23.9%	8.6%
35-44 years	2,896	16.1%	6.1%	82,721	20.2%	6.5%
45-54 years	3,977	22.0%	4.7%	96,583	23.6%	5.3%
55-64 years	2,962	16.4%	4.1%	65,461	16.0%	4.8%
65 years & over	919	5.1%	5.7%	14,916	3.7%	7.1%
Male	3,064	17.0%	8.1%	85,453	20.9%	7.7%
Female	14,977	83.0%	7.3%	323,111	79.1%	7.4%
Manufacturing	**Southwest Minnesota (WSA 6)**			**State of Minnesota**		
	Number of Workers	**Percent of Workers**	**Turnover Rate**	**Number of Workers**	**Percent of Workers**	**Turnover Rate**
Total workforce	**12,130**	**100.0%**	**7.0%**	**290,511**	**100.0%**	**5.5%**
14-24 years	1,253	10.3%	14.9%	19,325	6.7%	14.5%
25-34 years	3,085	25.4%	8.2%	57,627	19.8%	6.9%
35-44 years	2,742	22.6%	6.4%	69,063	23.8%	5.1%
45-54 years	3,004	24.8%	4.8%	87,564	30.1%	4.0%
55-64 years	1,744	14.4%	4.9%	49,286	17.0%	4.0%
65 years & over	299	2.5%	7.9%	7,643	2.6%	6.6%
Male	8,321	68.6%	7.0%	203,810	70.2%	5.4%
Female	3,808	31.4%	7.0%	86,700	29.8%	5.6%
Retail Trade	**Southwest Minnesota (WSA 6)**			**State of Minnesota**		
	Number of Workers	**Percent of Workers**	**Turnover Rate**	**Number of Workers**	**Percent of Workers**	**Turnover Rate**
Total workforce	**9,794**	**100.0%**	**8.6%**	**275,386**	**100.0%**	**9.9%**
14-24 years	2,385	24.4%	16.1%	79,172	28.7%	17.2%
25-34 years	1,626	16.6%	10.2%	57,944	21.0%	9.8%
35-44 years	1,656	16.9%	6.7%	40,687	14.8%	7.4%
45-54 years	2,052	21.0%	4.8%	49,384	17.9%	6.0%
55-64 years	1,405	14.3%	4.7%	34,264	12.4%	5.4%
65 years & over	666	6.8%	6.7%	13,933	5.1%	6.9%
Male	4,606	47.0%	8.7%	131,755	47.8%	9.5%
Female	5,188	53.0%	8.5%	143,631	52.2%	10.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Quarterly Workforce Indicators, Qtr. 4 2010

industry in the future. The smallest portion of the region's workforce is 35 to 44 years of age, while that is one of the larger age groups in the state. Again, turnover rates are slightly lower in the region than the state.

In manufacturing, the workforce was nearly 70 percent male (68.6%). Surprisingly, Southwest Minnesota's workforce was younger than the state's, with just over 10 percent of workers being 14 to 24 years of age, and over 25 percent aged 25 to 34 years. More than half (53.9%) of workers in the state were 35 to 54 years of age, as compared to 47.8 percent in Southwest Minnesota. Just 16.9 percent were 55 years and over in the region, as compared to 19.6 percent in the state. (See Table 27.)

In contrast, retail trade had a large component of younger workers, with nearly one-quarter (24.4%) of the workforce aged 14 to 24 years. However, Southwest Minnesota's retailers tended to rely more on older workers than the state. Not surprisingly, turnover was higher in the industry, especially for younger workers, though it was still lower in the region than in the state for turnover rates. Southwest Minnesota also had a slightly higher percentage of female workers in retail trade than the state.

Employment Outlook

Health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and retail trade are expected to remain the largest employing industries in the region in the future, according to data from DEED's 2009 to 2019 Employment Outlook tool (it is important to note that the projections data is for the 23-county Southwest Minnesota planning region, which includes Region 6W, Region 8, and Region 9), though they are expected to see very different employment changes. Manufacturing is expected to continue declining, with a projected -3.0 percent drop from 2009 to 2019. Retail trade is expected to hold steady, losing about -1.5 percent over the next decade. In contrast, health care and social assistance is projected to grow more than 21 percent from 2009 to 2019, making it the largest and third fastest growing industry in the region. (See Table 28.)

Overall, the region is expected to grow jobs by about 5.0 percent. The fastest growing industry in the region is projected to be administrative and waste services (+26.1%), followed by management of companies (+22.3%), health care and social assistance (+21.4%); arts, entertainment, and recreation (+16.0%); and utilities (+15.7%), all of which are expected to grow more than 15 percent over the next decade. Professional and technical services (+9.6%), transportation and warehousing (+9.4%), construction (+8.3%), real estate, rental and leasing (+6.7%), and other services (+5.4%) all are projected to expand between 5 and 10 percent from 2009 to 2019. Finance and insurance (+2.9%), information (+2.3%), educational services (+1.1%), and accommodation and food services (+0.8%) all were expected to grow in the next 10 years, but slower than 3.0 percent. And mining (-5.4%), manufacturing (-3.0%), retail trade (-1.4%), wholesale trade (-1.2%), and agriculture (-0.2%) are all projected to lose jobs from 2009 to 2019, with the most severe decline expected in public administration (-11.3%).

Table 28. Southwest Minnesota Employment Outlook, 2009 to 2019

NAICS Industry Title	2009 Estimated Employment	2019 Projected Employment	Percent Change 2009-2019	Numeric Change 2009-2019
Total, All Industries	**206,290**	**216,699**	**+5.0%**	**+10,409**
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish & Hunt	4,519	4,511	-0.2%	-8
Mining	312	295	-5.4%	-17
Construction	7,028	7,608	+8.3%	+580
Manufacturing	31,388	30,436	-3.0%	-952
Utilities	782	905	+15.7%	+123
Wholesale Trade	8,483	8,383	-1.2%	-100
Retail Trade	19,844	19,573	-1.4%	-271
Transportation & Warehousing	5,056	5,530	+9.4%	+474
Information	2,922	2,989	+2.3%	+67
Finance & Insurance	5,804	5,973	+2.9%	+169
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	1,191	1,271	+6.7%	+80
Professional & Technical Services	3,906	4,281	+9.6%	+375
Management of Companies	1,908	2,333	+22.3%	+425
Administrative & Waste Services	3,968	5,002	+26.1%	+1,034
Educational Services	15,957	16,134	+1.1%	+177
Health Care & Social Assistance	29,056	35,274	+21.4%	+6,218
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	2,588	3,002	+16.0%	+414
Accommodation & Food Services	11,858	11,953	+0.8%	+95
Other Services	7,879	8,306	+5.4%	+427
Public Administration	1,721	1,527	-11.3%	-194

Source: DEED 2009 to 2019 Employment Outlook tool

Within these industries, many occupations are expected to see steady growth in the future, even in industries that are expected to lose jobs. Of course, that also means that other occupations are expected to see declines, though almost every occupation will still have needs for replacement workers as the region's aging workforce begins to reach retirement age and exit the labor force. The fastest growing occupational group is expected to be personal care and service occupations (+25.9%), most notably personal and home care aides, but also child care workers,

amusement and recreation attendants, and hair stylists and cosmetologists. Likewise, the next fastest growing occupational group is expected to be healthcare support occupations (+22.4%), including home health aides, nursing aides and orderlies, dental assistants, medical assistants, and other health care support workers; followed by health care practitioners and related occupations (+16.3%), which covers registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, emergency medical technicians and paramedics, dental hygienists and dental assistants, physicians and surgeons, and other high-level medical practitioners. The fastest growing occupations are expected to be diagnostic medical sonographers, respiratory therapists, physician assistants, and pediatricians, while only two health care occupations are expected to decline. (See Table 29.)

Beyond health care, the next fastest growing occupational groups are expected to require higher levels of postsecondary education, including computer and mathematical occupations (+15.5%), life, physical, and social science occupations (+13.4%), community and social services occupations (+11.6%), and business and financial operations occupations (+9.1%). Only two occupational groups are expected to see declines over the next decade: production occupations (-0.5%) and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations (-0.4%), both of which tend to have lower educational requirements and tend to be more strongly concentrated in industries that are also expected to decline, including manufacturing. (See Table 29.)

Table 29. Southwest Minnesota Employment Outlook, 2009 to 2019

Occupational Group Title	2009 Estimated Employment	2019 Projected Employment	Percent Change 2009-2019	Numeric Change 2009-2019	Replace-ment Hires	Total Hires 2009-2019
Total, All Occupations	**206,290**	**216,699**	**+5.0%**	**+10,409**	**+44,770**	**+55,179**
Management Occupations	21,256	21,288	+0.2%	+32	+2,790	+2,822
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	7,658	8,353	+9.1%	+695	+1,540	+2,235
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1,765	2,038	+15.5%	+273	+330	+603
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,366	2,390	+1.0%	+24	+510	+534
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,718	1,948	+13.4%	+230	+510	+740
Community and Social Services Occupations	5,275	5,887	+11.6%	+612	+1,120	+1,732
Legal Occupations	994	1,055	+6.1%	+61	+170	+231
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	11,844	12,193	+2.9%	+349	+2,650	+2,999
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	2,790	2,914	+4.4%	+124	+700	+824
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical Occupations	9,661	11,238	+16.3%	+1,577	+2,110	+3,687
Healthcare Support Occupations	9,435	11,545	+22.4%	+2,110	+1,000	+3,110
Protective Service Occupations	2,842	3,010	+5.9%	+168	+960	+1,128
Food Preparation & Serving Related Occupations	15,140	15,515	+2.5%	+375	+4,910	+5,285
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maint. Occups.	6,208	6,184	-0.4%	-24	+103	+103
Personal Care & Service Occupations	7,905	9,950	+25.9%	+2,045	+1,810	+3,855
Sales & Related Occupations	17,452	17,716	+1.5%	+264	+5,260	+5,524
Office & Administrative Support Occupations	26,417	26,947	+2.0%	+530	+5,570	+6,100
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry Occupations	2,661	2,677	+0.6%	+16	+710	+726
Construction & Extraction Occupations	8,796	9,329	+6.1%	+533	+1,590	+2,123
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair Occupations	8,709	8,985	+3.2%	+276	+1,750	+2,026
Production Occupations	21,740	21,632	-0.5%	-108	+476	+476
Transportation & Material Moving Occupations	13,658	13,905	+1.8%	+247	+3,000	+3,247

Source: DEED 2009 to 2019 Employment Outlook tool

Occupations in Demand

For jobseekers and students that are more interested in current conditions than future projections, DEED's Occupations in Demand (OID) dataset provides a listing of job opportunities in high demand now while also displaying the typical wage, long-term employment outlook, typical training (or degree) required to work in a field, and information on related training programs offered around the state. Based on the number of current job vacancies, unemployment insurance claims, and future employment projections, DEED produces regionally-specific OID lists that contain a large number of occupations in demand in Southwest Minnesota, providing useful information to jobseekers that are looking for available employment in the region.

There were 122 occupations in demand that earned either 4 or 5 stars in Region 6W, based on the OID tool's representation of how favorable current demand conditions are for an occupation relative to other occupations in the same region. Occupations are rated using a combination of local labor market data, and then assigned an

indicator from 'Five Stars' (more favorable current demand conditions) to 'One Star' (less favorable current demand conditions).

These occupations are spread across different sectors but well represented by the region's major industries, ranging from home health aides and nursing aides to truck drivers and transportation managers to business operations specialists and sales representatives to office clerks and accounting clerks to cashiers and salespeople to combined food preparation and serving workers and cooks to welders and CNC machine tool operators. In the list of occupations in demand in the region, there are job opportunities for workers at any level of education, from short-term on-the-job training to master's and professional degrees. (See Table 30.)

Table 30. Region 6W Occupations in Demand, 2nd Quarter 2011

Job Title	Current Demand Indicator	Median Wage	Planning Area Growth Rate	Education Requirements	Training Requirements
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Five Stars	$31,586	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Home Health Aides	Five Stars	$23,697	Well Above Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	Five Stars	$24,902	Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Combined Food Prep & Svc. Workers	Five Stars	$18,138	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Registered Nurse	Five Stars	$63,216	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	Five Stars	$35,226	Well Below Average	High school diploma	Moderate on-the-job training
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	Five Stars	$18,990	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Transportation, Storage, & Distribution Managers	Five Stars	$81,450	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Office Clerks, General	Five Stars	$25,727	Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Business Operations Specialists	Five Stars	$37,164	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Cashiers	Five Stars	$18,169	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Cooks, Restaurant	Five Stars	$18,411	Average	Less than high school	Moderate on-the-job training
Licensed Practical & Voc. Nurses LPNs	Five Stars	$37,049	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Bookkeeping, Accting. & Audit Clerks	Five Stars	$28,597	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Sales Representatives, Wholesale Mfg.	Five Stars	$48,326	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Janitors & Cleaners	Five Stars	$22,084	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	Five Stars	$40,737	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
General & Operations Managers	Five Stars	$68,424	Well Below Average	Associate's degree	None
Computer-Controlled (CNC) Machine Tool Operators, Metal	Five Stars	$26,014	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Financial Managers	Five Stars	$99,527	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Marketing Managers	Five Stars	$97,705	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	Five Stars	$20,713	Well Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	Five Stars	$52,000	Average	Bachelor's degree	Internship/residency
Cooks, Institution & Cafeteria	Five Stars	$24,742	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Farm Equipment Mechanics & Service Technicians	Five Stars	$39,147	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Social & Human Service Assistants	Five Stars	$23,904	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Wholesale & Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products	Five Stars	$57,224	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	Five Stars	$40,181	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Medical & Health Services Managers	Five Stars	$61,011	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Accountants & Auditors	Five Stars	$51,440	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Cooks, Short Order	Five Stars	$19,384	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Architectural & Engineering Managers	Five Stars	$117,635	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Tellers	Five Stars	$28,029	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks	Five Stars	$31,187	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Physical Therapists	Five Stars	$68,084	Well Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Maintenance & Repair Workers	Five Stars	NA	Above Average	Unavailable	Moderate on-the-job training
Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselors	Five Stars	$44,742	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Bartenders	Five Stars	$17,062	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Radiologic Technologists	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	Unavailable
Loan Officers	Five Stars	$59,518	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training

Family & General Practitioners	Five Stars	$165,373	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Cost Estimators	Five Stars	$49,538	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Industrial Engineers	Five Stars	$52,486	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Driver/Sales Workers	Five Stars	$28,492	Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Appraisers & Assessors of Real Estate	Five Stars	$37,069	Average	High school diploma or GED	Apprenticeship
Child, Family, & School Social Workers	Five Stars	$46,530	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Human Resources, Training, & Labor Relations Specialists	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Heating, Air Conditioning, & Refrigeration Mechanics	Five Stars	$51,683	Above Average	Postsecondary award	Long-term on-the-job training
Butchers & Meat Cutters	Five Stars	$37,978	Below Average	Less than high school	Long-term on-the-job training
Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics	Five Stars	$28,629	Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Secretaries & Admin. Assistants	Five Stars	$31,755	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Medical Records & Health Info. Techs.	Five Stars	$31,033	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Construction Managers	Five Stars	$76,875	Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Community & Social Svc. Specialists	Five Stars	NA	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Personal Care Aides	Five Stars	$21,905	Well Above Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Network & Computer Systems Admins	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Production, Planning, & Expdtg Clerks	Five Stars	$41,119	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale	Five Stars	$43,758	Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Physicians & Surgeons, All Other	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Mechanical Engineers	Five Stars	$66,738	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Retail Salespersons	Five Stars	$18,220	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer Support Specialists	Four Stars	$38,470	NA	Some college, no degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Dental Assistants	Four Stars	$41,842	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Workers	Four Stars	$25,493	Well Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Human Resources Managers	Four Stars	$106,707	NA	Bachelor's degree	None
Sales & Related Workers, All Other	Four Stars	NA	Above Average	Unavailable	Moderate on-the-job training
Voc. Education Teachers, Postsec.	Four Stars	$56,373	Well Above Average	Master's degree	Unavailable
Teacher Assistants	Four Stars	$22,510	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Chemical Engineers	Four Stars	$77,383	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Comp, Benefits, Job Analysis Specs.	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Physician Assistants	Four Stars	$90,857	Well Above Average	Master's degree	None
Info. Security Analysts, Web Devel., & Comp Network Architects	Four Stars	$82,246	NA	Bachelor's degree	None
Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	Four Stars	NA	Above Average	Unavailable	Short-term on-the-job training
Occup. Health & Safety Specialists	Four Stars	$64,830	Well Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Personal Financial Advisors	Four Stars	$51,045	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Opticians, Dispensing	Four Stars	$35,558	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Occupational Therapy Assistants	Four Stars	$39,483	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Pharmacists	Four Stars	$104,109	Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Cleaners of Vehicles & Equipment	Four Stars	$21,506	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	Four Stars	$38,621	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Dental Hygienists	Four Stars	$73,226	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Secondary School Teachers	Four Stars	$51,672	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Internship/residency
Medical & Clinical Laboratory Techs.	Four Stars	$43,171	Average	Associate's degree	None
Advertising Sales Agents	Four Stars	$44,144	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Customer Service Representatives	Four Stars	$26,162	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Civil Engineering Technicians	Four Stars	$40,127	Average	Associate's degree	None
Dentists, General	Four Stars	NA	Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	Internship/residency
Compliance Officers	Four Stars	$54,729	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Computer Software Engineers, Apps.	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Securities, Commodities, & Financial Services Salespeople	Four Stars	$65,934	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Physical Therapist Assistants	Four Stars	$43,905	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Pharmacy Technicians	Four Stars	$25,849	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Rehabilitation Counselors	Four Stars	$41,149	Well Above Average	Master's degree	None
Water & Wastewater Treatment Plant & System Operators	Four Stars	$39,193	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Mixing & Blending Machine Operators	Four Stars	$35,777	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training

Dispatchers, exc. Police, Fire, & Amb.	Four Stars	$41,437	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Clinical, Counsel & School Psychologist	Four Stars	$56,964	Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	Internship/residency
Preschool Teachers, exc. Special Ed.	Four Stars	$25,551	Average	Associate's degree	None
Dietitians & Nutritionists	Four Stars	$57,633	Average	Bachelor's degree	Internship/residency
Assemblers & Fabricators, All Other	Four Stars	$22,727	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
File Clerks	Four Stars	$24,748	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer Systems Analysts	Four Stars	NA	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Market Research Analysts	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Payroll & Timekeeping Clerks	Four Stars	$34,814	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Buyers & Purchasing Agents, Farm	Four Stars	$63,393	Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Mental Health Counselors	Four Stars	$41,056	Well Above Average	Master's degree	Internship/residency
Interviewers, Except Eligibility & Loan	Four Stars	$30,775	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Massage Therapists	Four Stars	$38,299	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Occupational Therapists	Four Stars	$61,323	Above Average	Master's degree	None
Chemical Technicians	Four Stars	$42,080	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Sales Managers	Four Stars	$92,432	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	Four Stars	$74,932	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Four Stars	$70,287	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Training & Development Specialists	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Sales Representatives, Wholesale/Mfg	Four Stars	$84,017	Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
First-Line Mgrs of Retail Sales Workers	Four Stars	$27,458	Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	Four Stars	$29,772	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Healthcare Social Workers	Four Stars	$45,947	Above Average	Master's degree	None
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers & Repairers	Four Stars	$55,042	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Surgical Technologists	Four Stars	$40,064	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Claims Adjusters, Exam & Investigators	Four Stars	$54,314	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Technical Writers	Four Stars	$63,274	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Short-term on-the-job training
Source: DEED Occupations in Demand (OiD) tool, 2nd Quarter 2011					

There were 151 occupations in demand that earned either 4 or 5 stars in Region 8, based on the OID tool's representation of how favorable current demand conditions are for an occupation relative to other occupations in the same region. Occupations are rated using a combination of local labor market data, and then assigned an indicator from 'Five Stars' (more favorable current demand conditions) to 'One Star' (less favorable current demand conditions).

Like Region 6W, these occupations are spread across different sectors but well represented by the region's major industries, also including health care support occupations like nursing aides and home health aides; production occupations like slaughterers and meat packers, welders, cleaners of vehicles and equipment, and team assemblers; office and sales occupations like cashiers and retail salespersons, business operations specialists, office clerks, shipping clerks, and accounting clerks; health care practitioners like registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, surgeons, and emergency medical technicians; and transportation occupations like truck drivers, automotive mechanics, industrial truck and tractor operators. As the region's manufacturing employers recover, the region also has high demand for occupations like industrial engineers, industrial machinery mechanics, sales managers, cost estimators, and financial managers. In the list of occupations in demand in the region, there are job opportunities for workers at any level of education, from short-term on-the-job training to master's and professional degrees. (See Table 31.)

Table 31. Region 8 Occupations in Demand, 2nd Quarter 2011

Job Title	Current Demand Indicator	Median Wage	Planning Area Growth Rate	Education Requirements	Training Requirements
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, & Attendants	Five Stars	$24,272	Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Home Health Aides	Five Stars	$20,544	Well Above Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Five Stars	$29,504	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Cashiers	Five Stars	$17,650	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Automotive Service Tech & Mechanics	Five Stars	$29,783	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Slaughterers & Meat Packers	Five Stars	$27,149	Average	Less than high school	Moderate on-the-job training

Combined Food Prep & Svc. Workers	Five Stars	$17,499	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Registered Nurses	Five Stars	$61,619	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Business Operations Specialists	Five Stars	$42,147	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Office Clerks, General	Five Stars	$24,285	Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Licensed Practical & Voc. Nurses LPNs	Five Stars	$36,652	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Shipping, Receiving, & Traffic Clerks	Five Stars	$25,601	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	Five Stars	$36,656	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Cleaners of Vehicles & Equipment	Five Stars	$20,924	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Laborers & Freight & Material Movers	Five Stars	$26,715	Well Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	Five Stars	$18,885	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Bookkeeping, Acctng., & Audit Clerks	Five Stars	$29,878	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Social & Human Service Assistants	Five Stars	$24,605	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Retail Salespersons	Five Stars	$20,065	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	Five Stars	$25,338	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Team Assemblers	Five Stars	$31,996	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Maintenance & Repair Workers	Five Stars	NA	Average	Unavailable	Moderate on-the-job training
Industrial Engineers	Five Stars	$67,839	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	Five Stars	$37,656	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Personal Care Aides	Five Stars	$22,934	Well Above Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Sales Managers	Five Stars	$88,996	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Surgeons	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Cost Estimators	Five Stars	$39,508	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Customer Service Representatives	Five Stars	$26,489	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Accountants & Auditors	Five Stars	$50,979	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics	Five Stars	$28,196	Average	Postsecondary award	None
Clinical, Counsel & School Psychologist	Five Stars	$59,373	Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	Internship/residency
Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	Five Stars	$45,023	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Loan Officers	Five Stars	$50,074	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Financial Managers	Five Stars	$88,488	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Waiters & Waitresses	Five Stars	$17,254	Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Tellers	Five Stars	$23,788	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Natural Sciences Managers	Five Stars	$108,627	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Cooks, Restaurant	Five Stars	$20,792	Average	Less than high school	Moderate on-the-job training
Driver/Sales Workers	Five Stars	$25,091	Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Mechanical Engineers	Five Stars	$62,748	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Loan Interviewers & Clerks	Five Stars	$32,871	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Occup. Health & Safety Specialists	Five Stars	$60,878	Well Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	Five Stars	$36,169	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Food Scientists & Technologists	Five Stars	$75,891	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, & Farm	Five Stars	$49,610	Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Janitors & Cleaners	Five Stars	$21,431	Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Laundry & Dry-Cleaning Workers	Five Stars	$21,533	Well Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	Five Stars	$20,050	Well Below Average	Less than high school	Short-term on-the-job training
Bill & Account Collectors	Five Stars	$28,349	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Production & Operating Workers	Five Stars	$48,248	Below Average	Postsecondary award	None
Preschool Teachers, exc. Special Ed.	Five Stars	$30,089	Average	Associate's degree	None
Child, Family, & School Social Workers	Five Stars	$47,847	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Dispatchers, exc. Police, Fire, & Amb.	Five Stars	$34,692	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Human Resources, Training, & Labor Relations Specialists	Five Stars	NA	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Physicians & Surgeons, All Other	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Computer Support Specialists	Five Stars	$37,139	NA	Some college, no degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Lawyers	Five Stars	$63,677	Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Network & Computer Systems Admins	Five Stars	NA	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Management Analysts	Five Stars	$99,956	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Radiologic Technologists	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	Unavailable
Community & Social Svc. Specialists	Five Stars	NA	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable

Computer Systems Analysts	Five Stars	NA	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Assemblers & Fabricators, All Other	Five Stars	$23,356	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Mental Health & Substance Abuse Social Workers	Five Stars	$49,874	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Dental Assistants	Five Stars	$35,894	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Pediatricians, General	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Family & General Practitioners	Five Stars	$162,691	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Agricultural Engineers	Five Stars	$73,410	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Sales Representatives, Wholesale/Mfg	Five Stars	$50,051	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Internists, General	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Civil Engineering Technicians	Five Stars	$53,553	Average	Associate's degree	None
Computer Software Engineers, Systems Software	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Obstetricians & Gynecologists	Five Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Marriage & Family Therapists	Five Stars	$52,687	Below Average	Master's degree	Internship/residency
Farm Equipment Mechanics & Service Technicians	Four Stars	$41,203	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Gaming Dealers	Four Stars	$32,150	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Veterinarians	Four Stars	$83,802	Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Info Security Analysts, Web Devel., & Comp Network Architects	Four Stars	$72,621	NA	Bachelor's degree	None
Production, Planning, & Exped. Clerks	Four Stars	$36,832	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Dentists, General	Four Stars	NA	Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	Internship/residency
Securities, Commodities, & Financial Services Salespeople	Four Stars	$65,934	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Psychiatrists	Four Stars	NA	Below Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Computer-Controlled (CNC) Machine Tool Operators, Metal	Four Stars	$35,209	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Compensation, Benefits, Job Analysis Specialists	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Physician Assistants	Four Stars	$90,956	Well Above Average	Master's degree	None
Dental Hygienists	Four Stars	$59,824	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Appraisers & Assessors of Real Estate	Four Stars	$49,086	Average	High school diploma or GED	Apprenticeship
Compensation & Benefits Managers	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Sales Representatives, Services	Four Stars	$49,240	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Installation, Maint., & Repair Workers	Four Stars	NA	Average	Unavailable	Moderate on-the-job training
Correctional Officers & Jailers	Four Stars	$33,629	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Machinists	Four Stars	$33,124	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Audiologists	Four Stars	NA	Average	Unavailable	Unavailable
Microbiologists	Four Stars	$61,513	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Optometrists	Four Stars	$95,761	Well Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Database Administrators	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Human Resources Managers	Four Stars	$81,144	NA	Bachelor's degree	None
Emergency Management Directors	Four Stars	$57,663	NA	Bachelor's degree	Long-term on-the-job training
Buyers & Purchasing Agents, Farm	Four Stars	$61,122	Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers & Repairers	Four Stars	$55,451	Below Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Pharmacy Technicians	Four Stars	$26,816	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Agricultural Equipment Operators	Four Stars	$28,300	Above Average	Unavailable	Moderate on-the-job training
Medical & Clinical Laboratory Techs.	Four Stars	$43,899	Average	Associate's degree	None
Water & Wastewater Treatment Plant & System Operators	Four Stars	$43,389	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Voc. Education Teachers, Postsec.	Four Stars	$56,373	Well Above Average	Master's degree	Unavailable
Market Research Analysts	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Bakers	Four Stars	$20,451	Below Average	Less than high school	Long-term on-the-job training
Physical Therapists	Four Stars	$73,035	Well Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Opticians, Dispensing	Four Stars	$30,809	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Psychiatric Technicians	Four Stars	$27,368	Below Average	Postsecondary award	Short-term on-the-job training
Biochemists & Biophysicists	Four Stars	$53,384	Well Above Average	Doctoral or prof. degree	None
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Four Stars	$57,420	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Dietitians & Nutritionists	Four Stars	$51,774	Average	Bachelor's degree	Internship/residency
Financial Analysts	Four Stars	$38,526	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None

Chemical Engineers	Four Stars	$77,383	Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity	Four Stars	$18,258	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Agricultural & Food Science Techs.	Four Stars	$28,054	Average	Associate's degree	None
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	Four Stars	$38,147	Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Training & Development Specialists	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Medical Assistants	Four Stars	$27,997	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, & Animals	Four Stars	$20,401	Below Average	Unavailable	Moderate on-the-job training
Logisticians	Four Stars	$71,032	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Computer Software Engineers, Apps.	Four Stars	NA	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Unavailable
Sales Representatives, Wholesale/Mfg	Four Stars	$56,242	Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Surveyors	Four Stars	$62,783	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Manufactured Building & Mobile Home Installers	Four Stars	$30,715	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Mixing & Blending Machine Operators	Four Stars	$28,374	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Tax Examiners & Collectors, & Revenue Agents	Four Stars	$62,257	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Mental Health Counselors	Four Stars	$34,654	Well Above Average	Master's degree	Internship/residency
Insurance Underwriters	Four Stars	$52,414	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Financial Examiners	Four Stars	$68,898	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Electrical & Electronic Equip. Assmbrs.	Four Stars	$30,852	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Farmworkers & Laborers, Crop/Nurser	Four Stars	$18,474	Below Average	Unavailable	Long-term on-the-job training
Operating Engineers & Other Construction Equip. Operators	Four Stars	$35,506	Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Moderate on-the-job training
Occupational Therapy Assistants	Four Stars	$39,483	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Medical Records & Health Info. Techs.	Four Stars	$32,979	Well Above Average	Postsecondary award	None
Secondary School Teachers	Four Stars	$50,212	Below Average	Bachelor's degree	Internship/residency
Paralegals & Legal Assistants	Four Stars	$33,390	Above Average	Associate's degree	None
First-Line Mgrs of Retail Sales Workers	Four Stars	$28,427	Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Industrial Production Managers	Four Stars	$78,707	Well Below Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Environ. Science & Protection Techs.	Four Stars	$23,379	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Personal Financial Advisors	Four Stars	$41,206	Well Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Electrical & Electronics Drafters	Four Stars	$53,435	Above Average	Associate's degree	None
Secretaries & Admin. Assistants	Four Stars	$33,079	Well Below Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Social & Community Service Managers	Four Stars	$51,999	Above Average	Bachelor's degree	None
Claims Adjusters, Exam & Investigators	Four Stars	$49,757	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Long-term on-the-job training
Interviewers, Except Eligibility & Loan	Four Stars	$30,382	Well Above Average	High school diploma or GED	Short-term on-the-job training
Food Service Managers	Four Stars	$32,845	Average	High school diploma or GED	None
Chemical Technicians	Four Stars	$42,080	Well Above Average	Associate's degree	Moderate on-the-job training
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, & Attendants	Five Stars	$24,272	Above Average	Postsecondary award	None

Source: DEED Occupations in Demand (OiD) tool, 2nd Quarter 2011

This report provides a comprehensive look at the most up-to-date information in the region, setting a context for future efforts in Southwest Minnesota.

Prepared on:
March 1, 2012

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