

Rural Reality: manufacturing

What's a skilled worker?

In manufacturing, a skilled worker is someone trained for the sophisticated technology of today's plants. Computers, precision machining, and advanced software mean a high school diploma is no longer enough.

The skilled worker shortage.

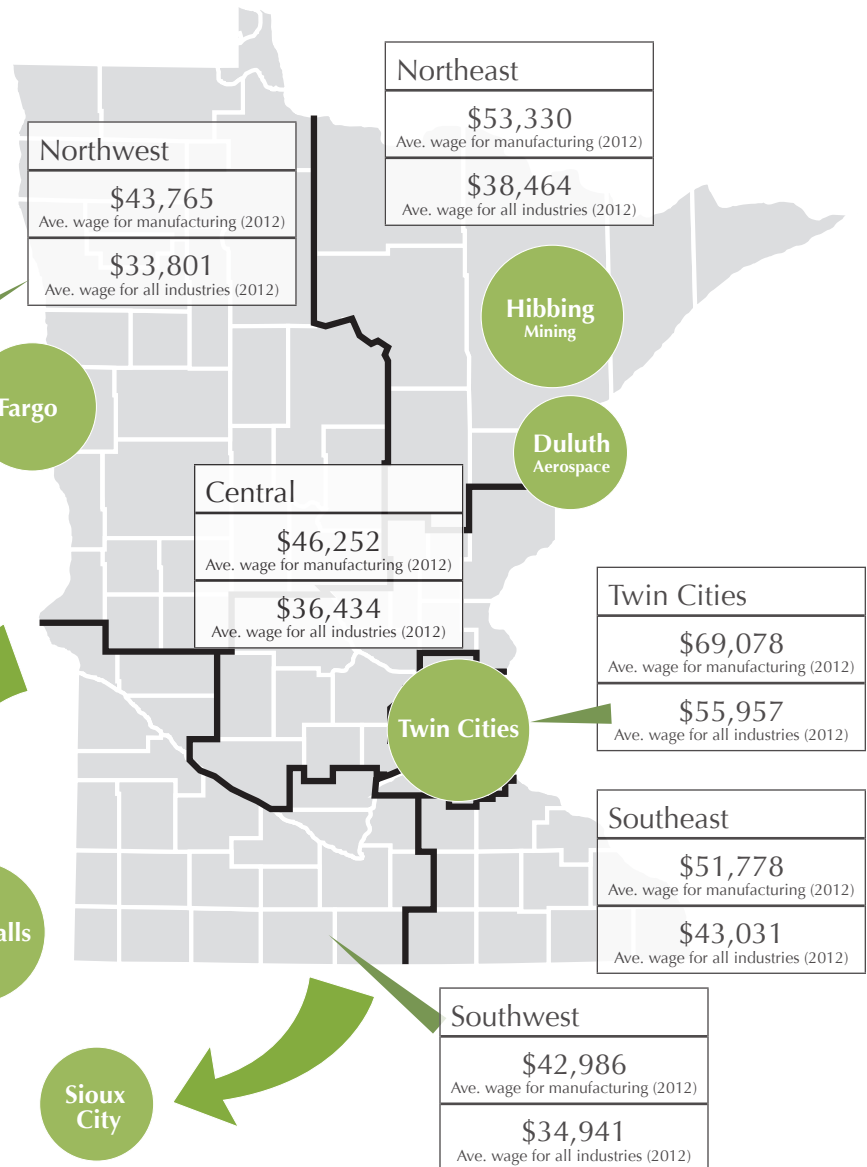
The federal government estimates that the nation is already short 600,000 skilled workers in all industries. The tidal wave of retiring Baby Boomers will only exacerbate the problem, especially in rural areas. In Minnesota, the Department of Employment and Economic Development estimated in 2010 that Greater Minnesota manufacturers would need more than 12,000 additional workers by 2020. The need may be higher by now, especially considering—



In Greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities, average wages in manufacturing in 2012 paid about **25% better** than the average for all industries.

Competition for skilled workers is stiff.

The wages for manufacturing jobs in Greater Minnesota compare well on average with other industries in their regions, but manufacturers seeking skilled workers face strong competition from regional centers like Sioux Falls, Fargo, the Twin Cities and especially the oil fields of western North Dakota.



Data: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. Regions based on DEED's state planning areas.

The Rural Reality manufacturing

makes a comeback in Greater Minnesota

Why manufacturing?

DEED and the Bureau of Labor Statistics are projecting **strong growth** for manufacturing jobs. Between 2010 and 2020, manufacturing jobs were projected to rise by more than 9% in Greater Minnesota but only 1% in the Twin Cities.



In Greater Minnesota, manufacturing is showing a **better recovery** than in the Twin Cities, especially in northwest and southwest Minnesota.

Manufacturing has a **large multiplier effect**. According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, every \$1 spent in manufacturing creates an additional \$1.35 in the local economy, more than any other major industry. Manufacturing also “induces” more jobs locally than any other industry sector.

\$1 = \$1.35

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and other organizations are working with manufacturers to create **training programs in specialized fields**. Alexandria Technical College, Northwest Technical College, and South Central College are some of the campuses specializing in fields such as welding technology, industrial model making, and mechatronics.