

# Settlements Report

Total Package Increases for  
Union Craft Workers in Construction

JUNE 2023



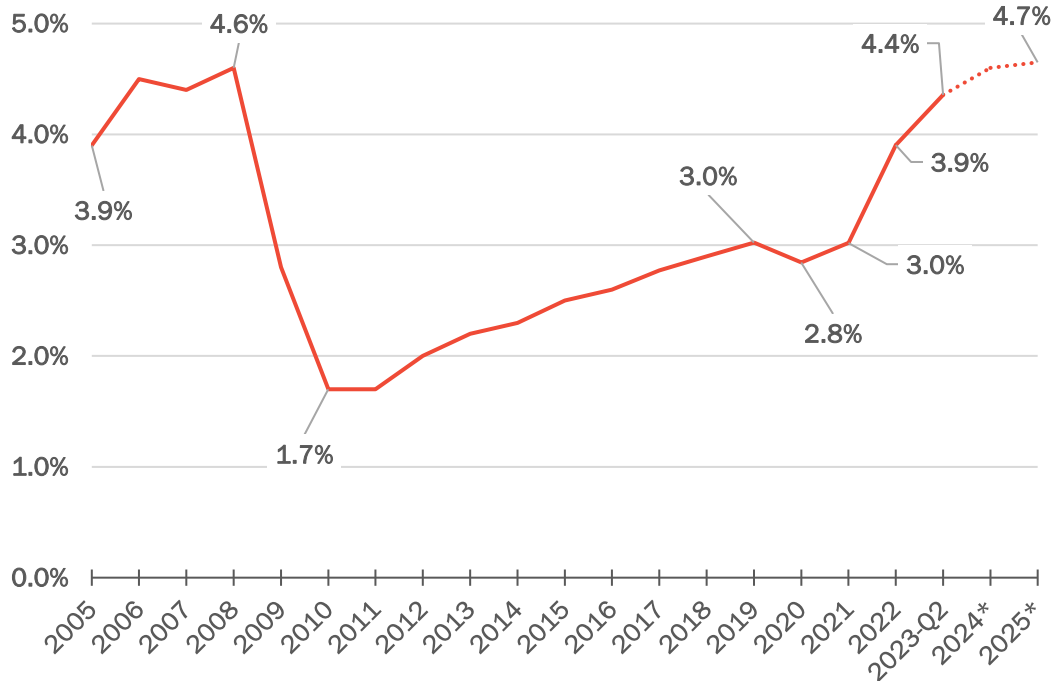
Construction  
Labor  
Research  
Council

## SECTION I. FIRST-YEAR TOTAL PACKAGE INCREASES JANUARY – JUNE 2023

The Construction Labor Research Council (CLRC) reports that *the first year of new settlements reached from January through June of 2023 (2023-Q2) for union craft workers in the construction industry had an average increase of 4.4 percent.* All data in this report are based on the total package (wages, fringe benefits and other employer payments). As shown in **Exhibit 1.1**, settlements grew by 0.5 percent from 2022 to 2023-Q2 and by 1.6

percent from 2020 to 2023-Q2, a steep rate of growth. Increases have risen more in the past year and a half than during the nine-year span from 2010 – 2019. High inflation has impacted union craft pay rates more than two other recent factors—the craft labor shortage and COVID-19. CLRC projects future new settlements to average approximately 4.7 percent by 2025.

**Exhibit 1.1**  
First-year increases, shown as percentages



NOTE: Settlements Reports published later in the year may have slightly different results as additional data are added.

**Section I – First Year**

This section contains results for the first year of newly bargained settlements and is useful for understanding current trends.

**Section II – All Years**

Section II (page 9) of this report covers all years of negotiated settlements and is better for summarizing the total amount actually paid/earned by contractors/employees. It also contains data on already negotiated future increases, which is useful for making projections.

The average monetary value for first-year increases during the first two quarters of 2023 was \$2.80, as shown in **Exhibit 1.2**, a substantial \$1.17 jump from the recent low of

\$1.63 in 2020. There was little change in the increases in 2020 and 2021, likely due to COVID-19. CLRC projects first-year increases to average approximately \$3.25 in 2025.

**Exhibit 1.2**  
*First-year increases, shown as dollar amounts*



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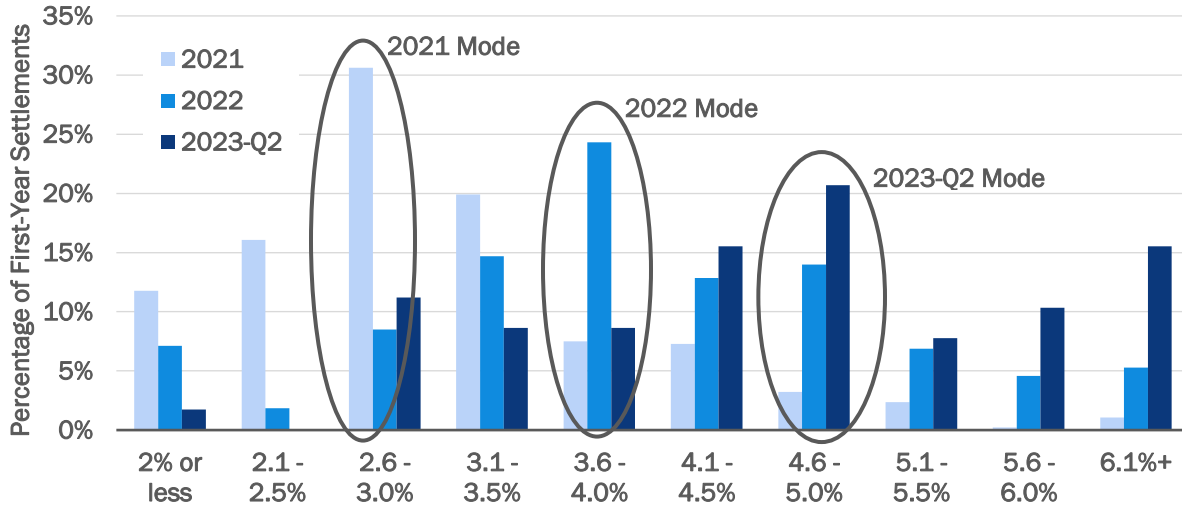
- Associated General Contractors of America (AGC)
- Central States Insulation Association (CSIA)
- FCA International (FCA)
- International Council of Employers of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (ICE)
- Mechanical Contractors Association of America (MCAA)
- National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)
- National Fire Sprinkler Association (NFSA)
- North American Contractors Association (NACA)
- Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' National Association (SMACNA)
- Signatory Wall and Ceiling Contractors Alliance (SWACCA)
- The Association of Union Constructors (TAUC)

**Exhibit 1.3** displays the percentage distribution for the first-year increases of new settlements reached in 2021, 2022 and 2023-Q2. Many settlements migrated to the higher increases on the right side of the chart. The mode continues to shift higher; in 2021 it

was 2.6-3.0%, in 2022 it was 3.6-4.0%, and in 2023-Q2 the mode was 4.6-5.0%. In 2023-Q2, 70 percent of new settlements were above 4.0 percent; in 2022, 44 percent were in that range, and a mere 14 percent in 2021.

**Exhibit 1.3**

*Distribution of first-year increases in new settlements, shown as percentages*

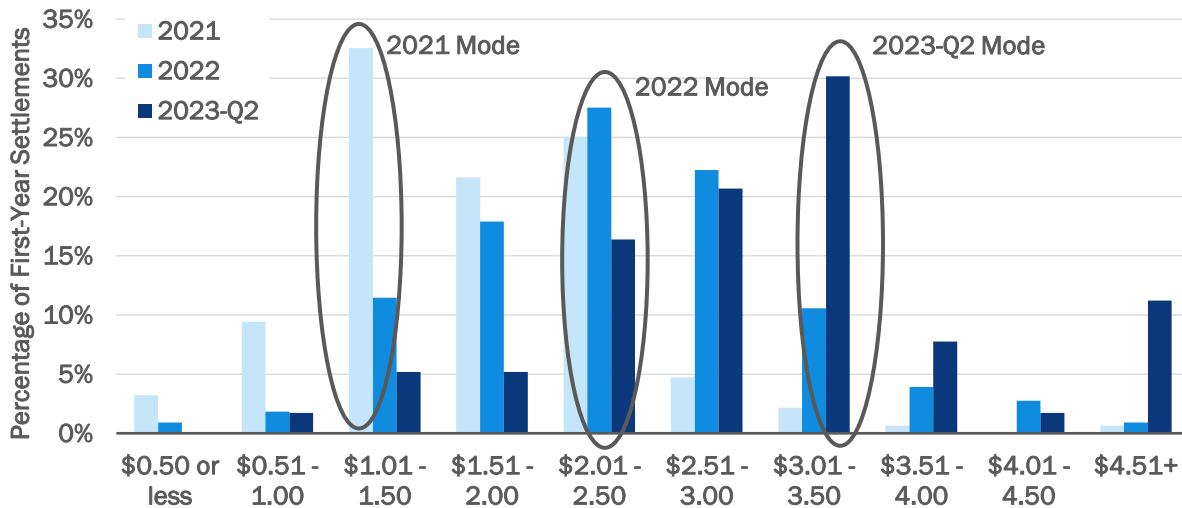


The distribution of first-year increases as dollar amounts for 2021, 2022 and 2023-Q2 are shown in **Exhibit 1.4**. Like **Exhibit 1.3**, the most common increase amounts have moved

to the higher values on the x-axis in 2023-Q2. Fifty-one percent settled at \$3.01 or higher in 2023-Q2 compared to 18 percent in 2022, and three percent in 2021.

**Exhibit 1.4**

*Distribution of first-year increases in new settlements, shown as dollar amounts*

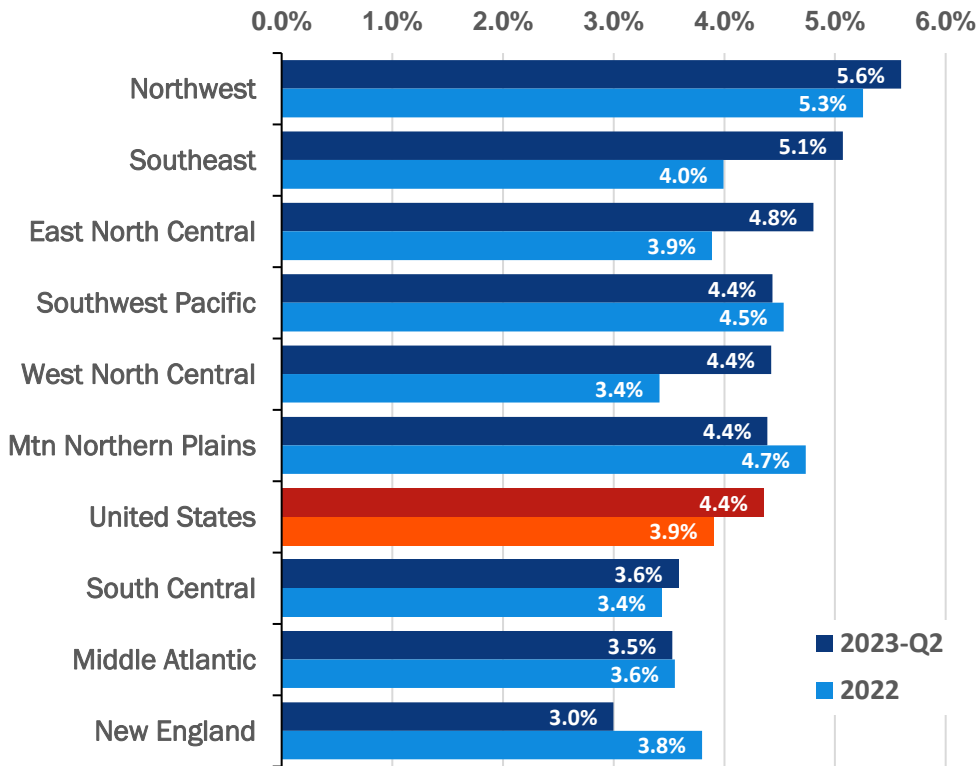


**Exhibits 1.5 and 1.6** display the results (percentages and dollar amounts, respectively) for first-year increases for 2022 and 2023-Q2 by region in descending order based on 2023-Q2 data. **Exhibit 1.5** shows that five of the nine regions saw growth in percentage increase. The Northwest—per usual—had the largest increases in 2023-Q2.

Interestingly, the Southeast had the second largest increases through the first six months of 2023, while New England had the smallest increases. However, these atypical results for the Southeast and New England regions could change as more first-year settlements are added through the remainder of the year.

**Exhibit 1.5**

*First-year increases in new settlements as percentages, by region in descending order*



**Regions**

**New England:** CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT  
**Middle Atlantic:** DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA  
**Southeast:** AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA  
**East North Central:** IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI, WV  
**West North Central:** IA, KS, MO, NE

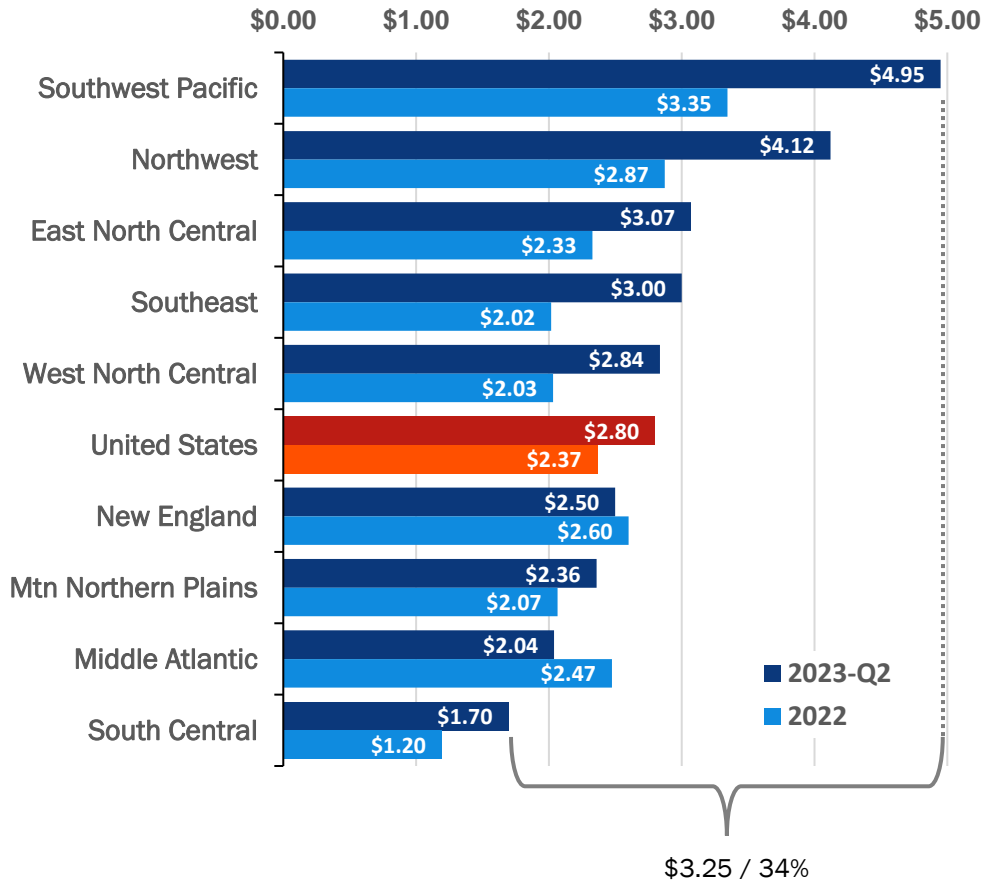
**South Central:** AR, LA, NM, OK, TX  
**Mountain Northern Plains:** CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY  
**Southwest Pacific:** AZ, CA, HI, NV  
**Northwest:** AK, ID, OR, WA

Exhibit 1.6 shows the nine CLRC regions with the average dollar amount of their first-year increases. The largest average increases by a wide margin were in the Southwest Pacific region (\$4.95) while the South Central region had the lowest average (\$1.70). There was a

\$3.25 gap between the lowest and highest regions—the South Central increase is about one third (34 percent) the size of the Southwest Pacific increase. The monetary increases were larger in 2023-Q2 than in 2022 for seven of nine regions.

**Exhibit 1.6**

*First-year increases in new settlements as dollar amounts, by region in descending order*

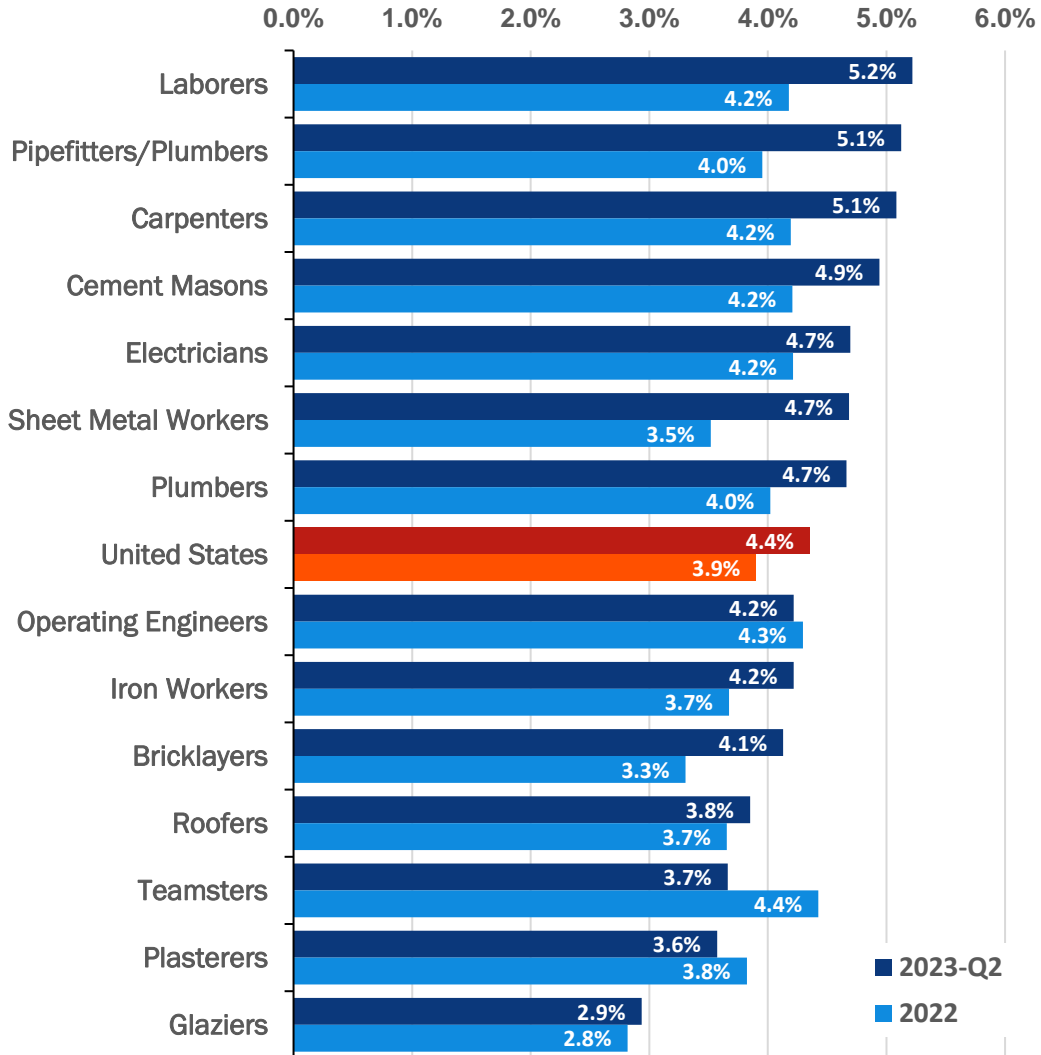


Exhibits 1.7 and 1.8 display the results (percentages and dollar amounts, respectively) for first-year increases for 2022 and 2023-Q2 by craft in descending order based on 2023-Q2 data. As displayed in Exhibit 1.7, Laborers had a notable jump to

lead the way with the largest increase and Glaziers had the lowest average percentage increase. Seven crafts averaged at least 4.5 percent in 2023-Q2. Last year there were no crafts that averaged above 4.5 percent.

**Exhibit 1.7**

*First-year increases in new settlements as percentages, by craft in descending order*

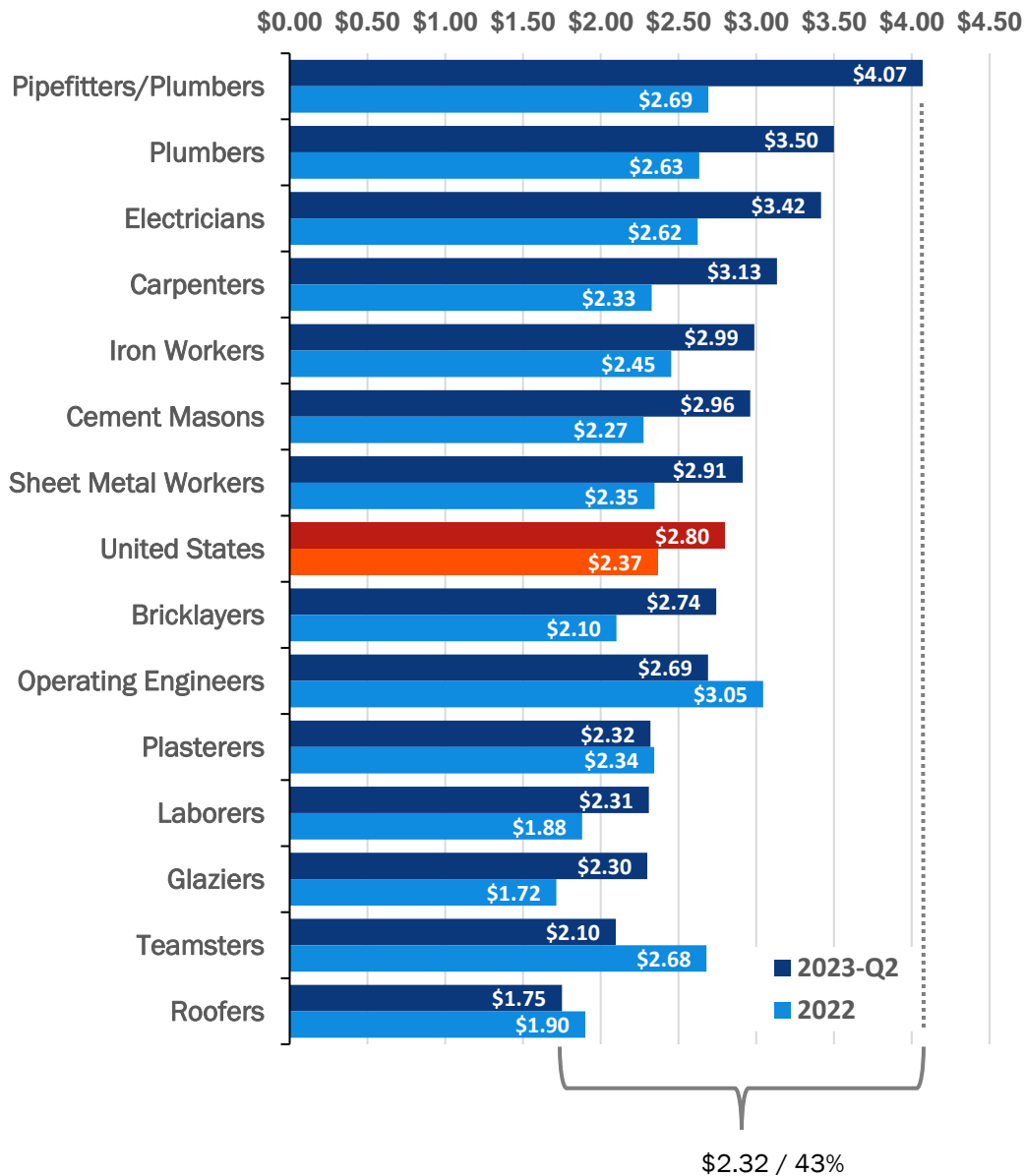


**Exhibit 1.8** shows the various crafts with the average dollar amount of their first-year increases. Led by Pipefitters/Plumbers, four crafts eclipsed \$3.00; last year only one craft was above this threshold. As usual, the range

was tighter for crafts than regions, with a \$2.32 range for the crafts—the smallest increase was about 43 percent as much as the largest.

### Exhibit 1.8

*First-year increases in new settlements as dollar amounts, by craft in descending order*





## Technical Notes

### **Continually Updated Results**

CLRC continually updates its database. Consequently, results may change slightly in ensuing issues as new settlements data are added.

### **Methodology for U.S. Average**

The overall/U.S. average is calculated by first averaging each craft, and then averaging those craft averages so that each craft is weighted equally. Interestingly, the settlement weighted average (straight average of all settlements) is remarkably close to the craft weighted average shown here.

### **Data Savvy**

In addition to actual differences, variation in rates from craft to craft, region to region and year to year throughout this report can be influenced by the composition of the data sample. For example, a craft with a large/small average increase may be partially affected by having more data from regions with higher/lower increases. Similarly, high/low increases in a particular region may be partially due to that region having more/less data from crafts with higher/lower increases.

### **Section II Explanation**

Section II of this report includes not only the first year of new settlements, but also the ensuing years (all years after the first year). For example, it includes data from newly negotiated settlements in 2023 (this is what is analyzed in Section I), the 2nd year of settlements reached in 2022 and the 3rd year of settlements from 2021, and so on. This data is useful for understanding the total amount paid/earned by contractors/employees. Data from all years of a contract is also useful for making projections based on already negotiated future increases (CLRC already has hundreds of data points for the years after 2023).

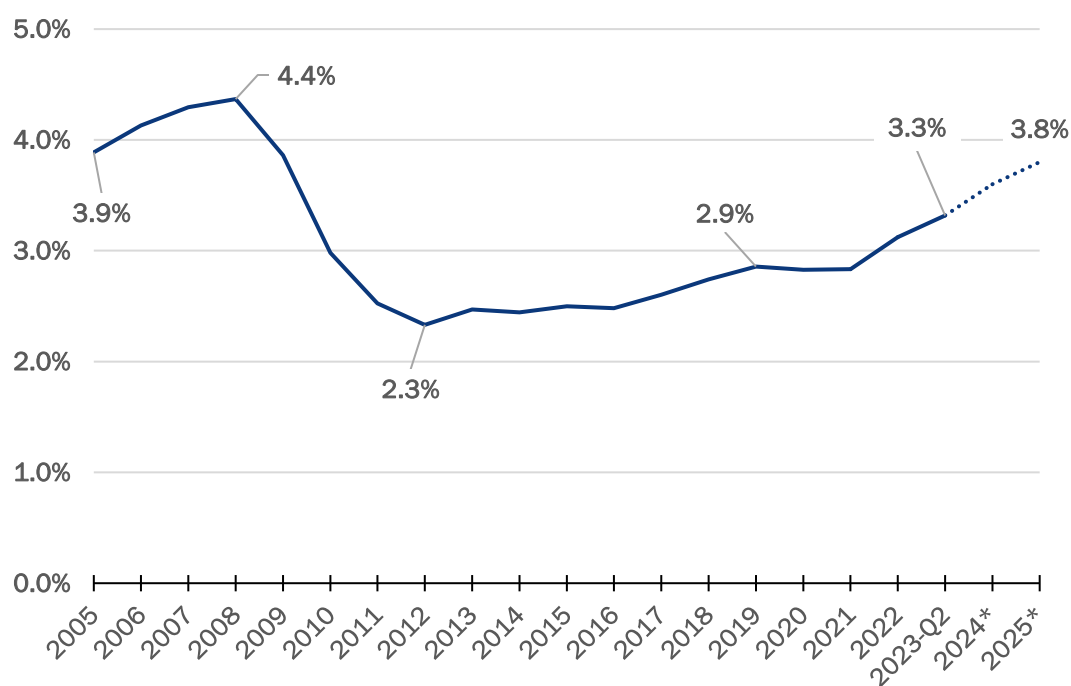
## SECTION II. TOTAL PACKAGE INCREASES FOR ALL CONTRACT YEARS

The average total package increase in 2023-Q2 for all contract years for union crafts in construction was 3.3 percent. CLRC projects increases to reach approximately 3.8 percent by 2025. These results are lower than those shown

in **Exhibit 1.1** (first year only settlements) since they reflect many more settlements and include data from 2022, 2021 and even earlier (prior to the recent uptick in increases).

### Exhibit 2.1

All increases, shown as percentages



**Exhibit 2.2** shows an increase of \$0.18 in 2023-Q2 from 2022. CLRC projects that the average monetary increase will be approximately \$2.40 by 2025. New, first-year settlements negotiated in 2023-Q2 averaged \$2.80 (see **Exhibit 1.2**); the \$2.10 value here

reflects the average of what contractors are paying across *all* years of settlements, which includes the out years of multiyear settlements negotiated two or more years ago, before the large increases in new settlements.

**Exhibit 2.2**

*All increases, shown as dollar amounts*

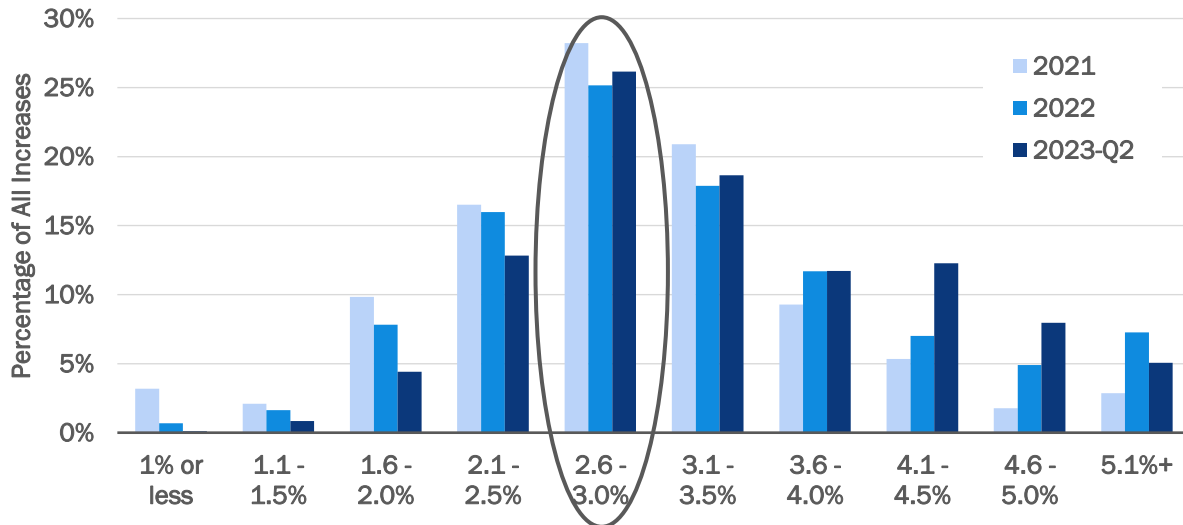


**Exhibit 2.3** illustrates how increases as a percentage are distributed across a range. Even with the recent larger increases (**Section I**), the most common range for all increases has been unchanged for three years (2.6–3.0%). That is because exhibits in **Section II**

contain data for all years of settlements. The growth in settlements in 2023-Q2 that are greater than 4.0 percent is due to the influence of new larger settlements covered in **Section I**.

**Exhibit 2.3**

*Distribution of all increases, shown as percentages*

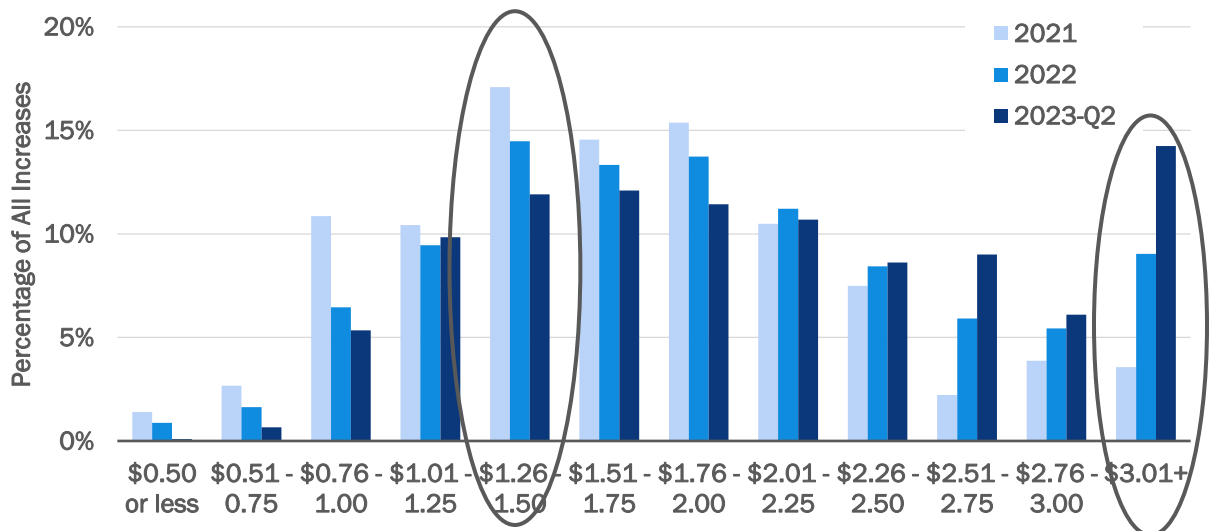


**Exhibit 2.4** shows that the most common range, conveyed in monetary values, for 2023-Q2 was \$3.01+. The mode for the prior two

years was \$1.26–1.50. This growth is also reflected in each of the ranges \$2.26 and up.

**Exhibit 2.4**

*Distribution of all increases, shown as dollar amounts*

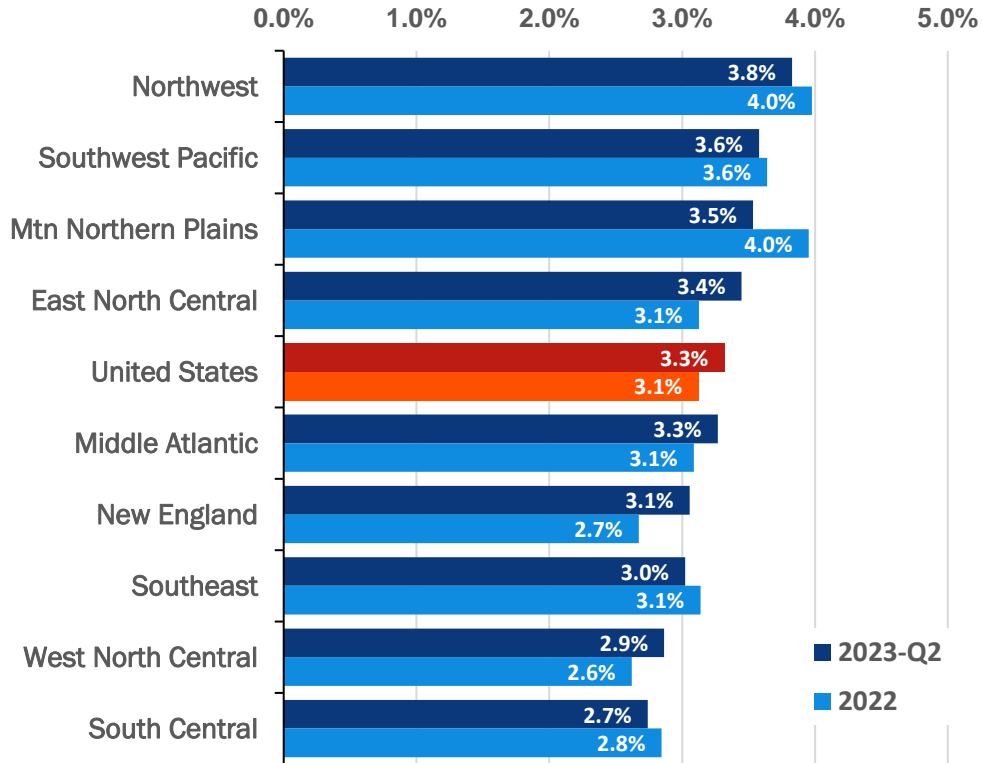


Exhibits 2.5 and 2.6 display the results for all increases for 2022 and 2023-Q2 (percentages and dollar amounts, respectively) by region in descending order based on 2023-Q2 data. The largest average increases in 2023-Q2, as shown in Exhibit 2.5, were the western part of the U.S. plus the

Mountain Northern Plains, which has been the case for several years. The smallest increases were in the South Central and West North Central regions. Even though the Northwest region's average dropped slightly, they continued to hold the top spot through the first half of 2023.

**Exhibit 2.5**

*All increases as percentages, by region in descending order*



**Regions**

**New England:** CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT

**Middle Atlantic:** DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA

**Southeast:** AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA

**East North Central:** IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI, WV

**West North Central:** IA, KS, MO, NE

**South Central:** AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

**Mountain Northern Plains:** CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY

**Southwest Pacific:** AZ, CA, HI, NV

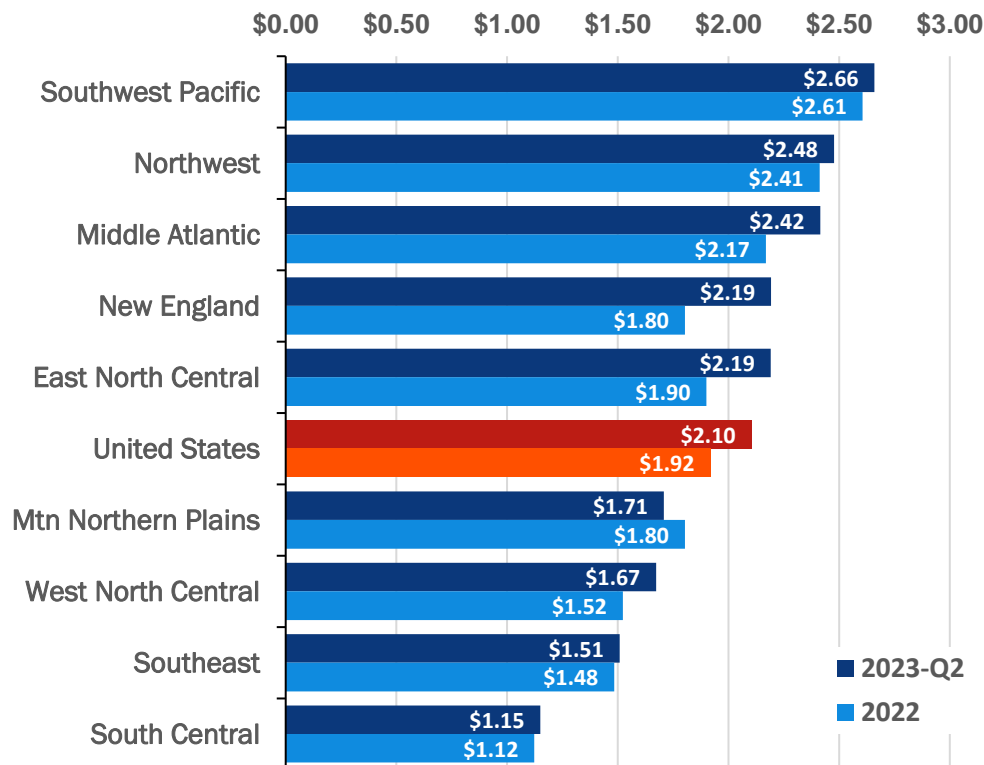
**Northwest:** AK, ID, OR, WA

**Exhibit 2.6** shows the regions with the dollar amount of their increases. Similar to **Exhibit 2.5**, the largest increases were on the West Coast (Southwest Pacific and Northwest regions). Since many of the bigger total package rates\* and larger percentage increases are on the West Coast, it is a natural consequence that the monetary values for increases—a product of those two

variables—are larger there as well. The smallest increases were in the Southeast and South Central regions, which also have the lowest total package rates. Over time, the distance in total package rates between the West Coast and the southern regions will grow as the higher rates also receive the larger increases and the lower rates the smaller increases.

### Exhibit 2.6

*All increases as dollar amounts, by region in descending order*



\* See CLRC's annual publication, *Union Craft Labor Costs in Construction*, for total package rates by craft and region.

Exhibits 2.7 and 2.8 display the results for all increases for 2022 and 2023-Q2 by craft (percentages and dollar amounts, respectively) in descending order based on the 2023-Q2 data. Exhibit 2.7 shows that the largest average increases in 2023-Q2

belonged to Carpenters at 3.7 percent. Only one craft had an average less than 3.0 percent. Every craft was tightly clustered less than half a percentage point from the U.S. mean.

**Exhibit 2.7**

*All increases as percentages, by craft in descending order*

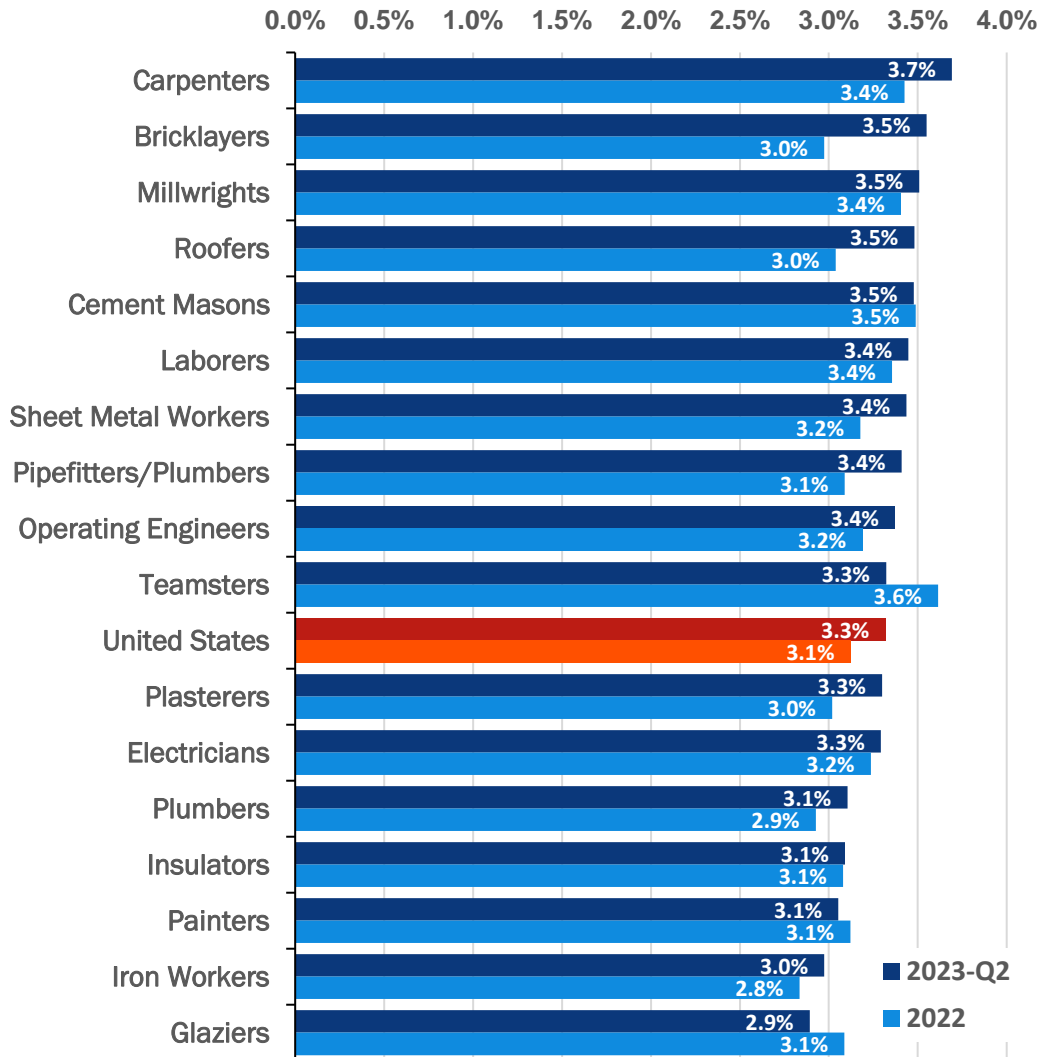
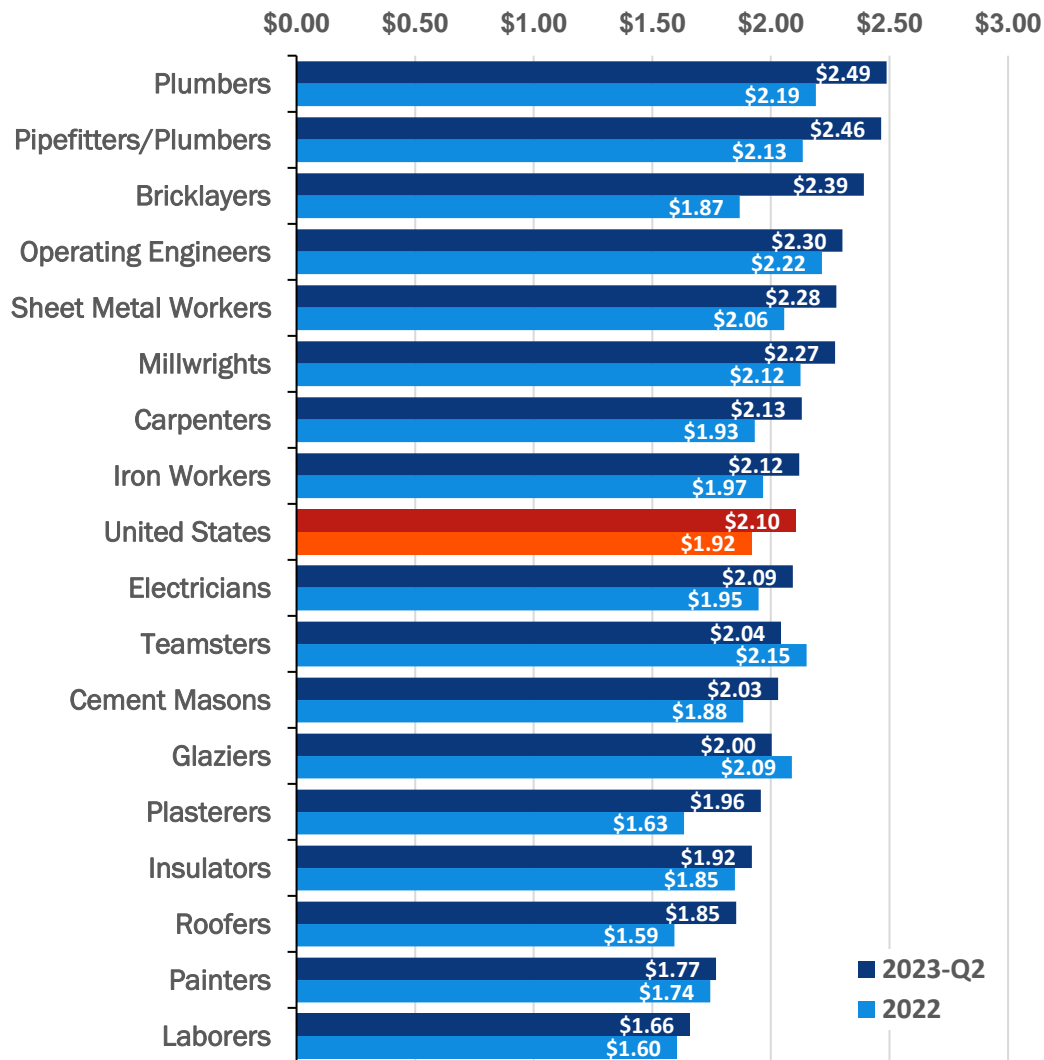


Exhibit 2.8 presents the crafts with the dollar amount of their increases. Twelve crafts averaged at least \$2.00 in 2023-Q2. The vast

majority of the crafts—13 of 17—were clustered within \$0.30 of the U.S. average.

### Exhibit 2.8

*All increases as dollar amounts, by craft in descending order*





**Exhibit 2.9** provides even more specific data cuts. These results reflect all settlements, not just first-year settlements. This matrix contains the total package increase rates (dollar and percentage) for each craft within each region (craft x region). This information

will help users of this report more precisely understand the rates for each craft and each region. This matrix should be used to gain insights about how regional data influence craft averages, and conversely, how craft data influence regional averages.

### Exhibit 2.9

*All increases, craft by region matrix*

United States	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$2.19	\$2.42	\$1.51	\$2.19	\$1.67	\$1.15	\$1.71	\$2.66	\$2.48
Increase %	3.1%	3.3%	3.0%	3.4%	2.9%	2.7%	3.5%	3.6%	3.8%
Bricklayers	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$1.91	\$3.05	-	\$2.41	\$1.31	-	-	\$2.35	-
Increase %	2.6%	4.0%	-	3.8%	2.3%	-	-	3.2%	-
Carpenters	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	-	\$2.15	\$1.05	\$2.46	\$2.45	\$1.14	\$1.81	\$3.00	\$2.20
Increase %	-	2.9%	2.2%	4.0%	4.0%	3.0%	4.1%	4.2%	3.7%
Cement Masons	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	-	\$3.38	-	\$2.08	\$1.16	\$0.79	\$1.25	\$2.62	\$2.13
Increase %	-	4.4%	-	3.6%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%	3.8%	3.8%
Electricians	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	-	\$2.50	\$1.40	\$2.16	\$2.24	\$1.40	\$1.65	\$2.78	\$3.51
Increase %	-	3.2%	3.1%	3.1%	3.5%	3.0%	2.9%	4.1%	4.9%
Glaziers	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$1.89	\$2.21	-	\$2.27	\$0.70	-	-	-	-
Increase %	3.0%	3.0%	-	3.2%	1.2%	-	-	-	-
Insulators	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$2.31	\$2.40	\$1.31	\$1.79	-	\$1.25	\$2.00	\$3.58	\$2.37
Increase %	4.0%	4.0%	2.4%	2.9%	-	2.8%	4.4%	4.7%	3.2%
Iron Workers	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$3.08	\$1.69	\$1.07	\$2.30	\$2.25	\$0.76	\$3.00	\$2.01	-
Increase %	3.2%	2.2%	2.3%	3.4%	3.3%	1.7%	4.3%	2.5%	-
Laborers	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$1.75	\$1.54	\$0.94	\$2.05	\$1.16	\$0.91	\$1.28	\$2.66	\$1.56
Increase %	2.6%	3.5%	2.3%	4.0%	2.5%	3.5%	3.8%	4.2%	3.1%
Millwrights	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$1.18	-	\$1.70	\$2.86	-	-	\$3.05	-	-
Increase %	1.9%	-	3.1%	4.4%	-	-	4.3%	-	-
Operating Engineers	NE	MA	SE	ENC	WNC	SC	MNP	SWP	NW
Increase \$	\$2.82	\$1.63	\$1.30	\$2.14	\$2.53	\$0.89	\$1.70	\$3.26	\$2.86
Increase %	3.6%	3.0%	2.5%	3.1%	4.3%	2.1%	3.0%	3.9%	4.3%

There is one color scale for dollar increase and one for percentage increase. The lighter cells contain the lowest values, while the darker the blue shaded cell, the higher the value.

**Exhibit 2.9 (continued)***All increases, craft by region matrix*

<b>Painters</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	\$1.86	\$1.70	-	\$1.83	\$1.25	-	-	\$1.86	\$2.00
Increase %	3.0%	2.8%	-	3.1%	2.4%	-	-	3.1%	4.1%
<b>Pipefitters/Plumbers</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	\$3.19	\$2.55	\$2.07	\$2.27	\$1.88	\$1.59	\$1.57	\$2.93	\$4.34
Increase %	3.7%	3.1%	3.6%	3.3%	2.9%	3.5%	2.8%	3.6%	5.1%
<b>Plumbers</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	\$3.45	\$2.60	-	\$2.30	\$3.50	\$1.05	-	-	-
Increase %	3.4%	3.1%	-	2.6%	4.7%	2.1%	-	-	-
<b>Plasterers</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	-	\$3.85	-	\$1.90	\$0.98	-	\$1.25	\$2.76	-
Increase %	-	4.8%	-	3.2%	2.1%	-	2.8%	4.3%	-
<b>Roofers</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	\$2.50	-	-	\$1.65	\$1.76	-	-	-	-
Increase %	4.4%	-	-	3.1%	3.4%	-	-	-	-
<b>Sheet Metal Workers</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	\$2.80	\$2.23	\$1.92	\$2.47	\$1.81	\$1.22	\$1.95	\$3.22	\$3.38
Increase %	3.1%	2.9%	3.7%	3.5%	2.8%	2.6%	3.6%	3.6%	5.4%
<b>Teamsters</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>MA</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>ENC</b>	<b>WNC</b>	<b>SC</b>	<b>MNP</b>	<b>SWP</b>	<b>NW</b>
Increase \$	\$2.73	\$3.11	-	\$1.67	\$1.20	-	-	-	\$1.65
Increase %	4.5%	4.3%	-	2.8%	2.4%	-	-	-	2.9%

**Regions****NE—New England:** CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT**MA—Middle Atlantic:** DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA**SE—Southeast:** AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA**ENC—East North Central:** IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI, WV**WNC—West North Central:** IA, KS, MO, NE**SC—South Central:** AR, LA, NM, OK, TX**MNP—Mountain Northern Plains:** CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY**SWP—Southwest Pacific:** AZ, CA, HI, NV**NW—Northwest:** AK, ID, OR, WA

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