

Worker Unions

Mean Better Wages



A workplace becomes unionized through a democratic process: a majority of the non-management employees must vote in favor of joining a union. In a majority of states, once a workplace becomes unionized, all employees must join the union and pay dues because they enjoy the benefits and wages negotiated by the union.

In so-called "right-to-work" states like Wyoming, employees in a unionized workplace are not required to join the union. The intention and effect of "right-to-work" laws is to weaken unions, as they must represent non-dues-paying workers in negotiations and grievances.

And there clearly is a wage advantage to unionization. Although only about 8% of Wyoming's workers are union members (an additional percent is represented by unions but are not union members under right-to-work), the median union wage is about six dollars an hour more than the median non-union wage.

Wyoming Median Wage: Union and Non-Union

(In 2007 dollars)**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Union	\$19.18	\$19.75	\$19.83	\$20.73	\$20.06	\$20.99	\$20.43	\$21.41
Non-Union	\$12.33	\$13.15	\$13.46	\$13.45	\$13.08	\$13.43	\$14.15	\$14.20

Source:

Economic Policy Institute analysis of Current Population Survey data

*** Using CPI-U-RS.*



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