

One city may report list prices, while another city may include discounts in its reported price for the same material.

■ Are the cost indexes seasonally adjusted?

No. This is an important point for index users to keep in mind. Wages, the most important component, usually affect the indexes once or twice a year. Cement prices tend to be more active in the spring, while pricing for fabricated structural-steel tends to have monthly adjustments.

Lumber prices, which are more dependent upon local pricing and production conditions, are the most volatile and can change appreciably from month to month. Declines in the indexes are most often the result of falling lumber and steel prices.

The study of an index movement for a period of less than 12 months can sometimes miss these important developments. Users of an index for individual cities should watch the timing of wage settlements, too. Stalled labor negotiations may keep the old wage rate in effect longer than a 12-month period, giving the appearance of a low inflation rate.

■ Is it more accurate to use an index that is closest to my home city?

No. The 20-city average index is generally more appropriate; because that

index has more elements, it has a smoother trend. Indexes for individual cities are more susceptible to price spikes.

■ Are annual averages weighted?

No. They are straight mathematical averages.

■ Are the indexes verifiable?

Yes. In the Construction Economics section, ENR's national indexes are updated in the first week of each month, while the indexes for individual cities appear in the second issue of each month.

Prices for the indexes' materials components can be found in the preceding month's Construction Economics pages: Cement prices appear in the first issue, lumber prices in the third issue and steel in the fourth issue. Wage rates for all 20 cities are published in the Third Quarterly Cost Report. Readers can compute ENR's indexes by multiplying the published prices and wages by the appropriate weights (shown in the tables below) and summing the results.

■ Does ENR forecast its indexes?

Yes. Once a year, ENR projects its BCI and CCI for the next 12 months in the Fourth Quarterly Cost Report. To reach its forecast, ENR incorporates the new wage rates called for in multiyear, collective-bargaining agreements and estimates for the cities in which

new contract terms will be negotiated. Further, ENR estimates the materials component by studying consumption forecasts as well as price trends.

■ Does ENR change the weighting of the index components?

No. The components are always multiplied by the same factors. However, a component's share of an index's total will shift with its relative escalation rate.

■ Has ENR ever changed the makeup of the indexes' components?

Only once, in 1996. ENR was forced to switch from the mill price for structural steel to the 20-city average fabricated price for channel beams, I-beams and wide flanges when ENR's two sources for mill prices left the structural market.

■ Does ENR revise the indexes?

On some occasions, ENR must revise the indexes. For example, ENR revised its March 2004 indexes shortly after their initial publication to reflect the huge surcharges being placed on structural steel. Any revisions to the national indexes are published below. Any revisions to indexes for individual cities are published in the cost report at ENR.com.

■ Is ENR's cost data on the web?

Yes. All ENR's cost indexes, wage rates, material prices and cost-issue articles can be found at ENR.com. ■

CONSTRUCTION COST INDEX HISTORY (1928-2015)

HOW ENR BUILDS THE INDEX: Two hundred hours of common labor at the 20-city average common-labor wage rates, plus 25 cwt of standard structural-steel shapes at the mill price prior to 1996 and the fabricated 20-city price from 1996, plus 1.128 tons of portland cement at the 20-city price, plus 1,088 board-ft of 2x4 lumber at the 20-city price.

ANNUAL AVERAGE, 1993=100			JAN.	FEB.	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.	ANNUAL AVERAGE	
1929: 207	1952: 569	1975: 2212	1998	5852	5874	5875	5883	5881	5895	5921	5929	5963	5986	5995	5991	5920
1930: 203	1953: 600	1976: 2401	1999	6000	5992	5986	6008	6006	6039	6076	6091	6128	6134	6127	6127	6059
1931: 181	1954: 628	1977: 2576	2000	6130	6160	6202	6201	6233	6238	6225	6233	6224	6259	6266	6283	6221
1932: 157	1955: 660	1978: 2776	2001	6281	6272	6279	6286	6288	6318	6404	6389	6391	6397	6410	6390	6334
1933: 170	1956: 692	1979: 3003	2002	6462	6462	6502	6480	6512	6532	6605	6592	6589	6579	6578	6563	6538
1934: 198	1957: 724	1980: 3237	2003	6581	6640	6627	6635	6642	6694	6696	6733	6741	6771	6794	6782	6695
1935: 196	1958: 759	1981: 3535	2004	6825	6861	6957	7017	7064	7109	7126	7188	7298	7314	7312	7308	7115
1936: 206	1959: 797	1982: 3825	2005	7297	7298	7309	7355	7398	7415	7422	7479	7540	7563	7630	7647	7446
1937: 235	1960: 824	1983: 4066	2006	7660	7689	7692	7695	7691	7700	7721	7723	7763	7883	7911	7888	7751
1938: 236	1961: 847	1984: 4148	2007	7880	7880	7856	7865	7942	7939	7959	8007	8050	8045	8092	8089	7967
1939: 236	1962: 872	1985: 4182	2008	8090	8094	8109	8112	8141	8185	8293	8362	8557	8623	8602	8551	8310
1940: 242	1963: 901	1986: 4295	2009	8549	8533	8534	8528	8574	8578	8566	8564	8586	8596	8592	8641	8570
1941: 258	1964: 936	1987: 4406	2010	8660	8672	8671	8677	8761	8805	8844	8837	8836	8921	8951	8952	8799
1942: 276	1965: 971	1988: 4519	2011	8938	8998	9011	9027	9035	9053	9080	9088	9116	9147	9173	9172	9070
1943: 290	1966: 1019	1989: 4615	2012	9176	9198	9268	9273	9290	9291	9324	9351	9341	9376	9398	9412	9308
1944: 299	1967: 1074	1990: 4732	2013	9437	9453	9456	9484	9516	9542	9552	9545	9552	9689	9666	9668	9547
1945: 308	1968: 1155	1991: 4835	2014	9664	9681	9702	9750	9796	9800	9835	9846	9870	9886	9912	9936	9806
1946: 346	1969: 1269	1992: 4985	2015	9972	9962	9972	9992	9975	10039	10037	10039	10065	10128	10092	10135	10034
1947: 413	1970: 1381	1993: 5210	2016	10133	10182	10242	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1948: 461	1971: 1581	1994: 5408														
1949: 477	1972: 1753	1995: 5471														
1950: 510	1973: 1895	1996: 5620														
1951: 543	1974: 2020	1997: 5826														