

Real Earnings – April 2009

Every month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases data on real earnings for production or nonsupervisory workers in the private sector. Real earnings reflect the value of workers' paychecks adjusted for inflation. They indicate whether or not wage increases have actually translated into an improved standard of living.

Real Earnings Stats at a Glance - April

Year	Private Sector		Manufacturing	
	Average Hourly Earnings	Earnings Adjusted for Inflation <i>(April 2009 dollars)</i>	Average Hourly Earnings	Earnings Adjusted for Inflation <i>(April 2009 dollars)</i>
2004	15.60	17.70	16.07	18.23
2005	16.02	17.55	16.47	18.04
2006	16.64	17.59	16.75	17.70
2007	17.29	17.82	17.20	17.73
2008	17.94	17.75	17.64	17.46
2009	18.51		18.13	

- Average hourly earnings edged up over the month; the seasonally-adjusted change in manufacturing earnings was about the same as the private sector overall. Thanks to falling prices, the purchasing power of the average worker was higher in April than in the same month last year.
- Weekly hours worked, which have been declining, stabilized in April, allowing earnings to rise on a weekly as well as hourly basis.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics report can be found at:
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/realer.pdf>

Next release: June 17, 2009

UAW Research Department
May 18, 2009