

Los Angeles Times SUPER SUNDAY

Job-hunting season's biggest day.

Section 1

Jobs generated by trading and transporting inventory

Workforce of truck drivers, warehouse workers and laborers keeps Southern California business going

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The Port of Los Angeles is the No. 1 container port in the country and a crucial gateway to world trade, making it one of the major drivers of economic and job growth in Southern California and beyond.

According to John Husing, an economist and author of a 2006 report titled Economic Impact of Goods Movement on Southern California, about 44% of all U.S. containers coming into the country and 25% of all of those going out move through the ports of Los Angeles. "This sheer volume of goods coming through our ports has led to the creation of a huge

"The jobs in goods movement are replacing the loss of jobs in manufacturing," said Mike Keenan, a harbor planner and economic analyst at the Port of Los Angeles. "Even with a flat 2007 due to an economic slowdown and a burst in the housing market bubble... long-term jobs are going to increase and become a larger part of both the local and national economy," he said.

MORE BUSINESS, MORE JOBS

This trend is fueled, in part, by growth in the wholesale trade sector, said Brad Kemp, a research analyst and labor market consultant with the California Employment Development Department (EDD).

An increase in jobs projected for the wholesale trade sector — about a 10%

for the Port Police and also a workforce development specialist for the Port of Los Angeles. "And once the goods are at the warehouse they get resorted and transferred to trucks going to stores in Southern California or those that go cross country," Santos added.

The result: Lots of jobs for drivers, as well as for people who know how to service trucks and especially for those who know how to work on hybrid, bio-diesel and other new vehicle technologies.

According to Husing's report, about 80% of the jobs in the wholesale industry and 93% in transportation and warehousing require no advanced schooling. Some jobs require on-the-job training. For example, laborers and movers often train for about 30 days

Many employers use temporary agencies to hire workers for warehouse and other jobs so they can try them out before hiring. And most large warehouses promote from within for forklift drivers and other desirable jobs, so getting a foot in the door is key.

warehousing and distribution network and many jobs...," he said.

This booming business in the movement of goods — everything from furniture and shoes to bamboo flooring and stuffed animals — has become crucial in the creation of entry-level jobs. In the past, it was manufacturing that provided the bulk of entry-level opportunities with solid pay and the prospect of mobility.

But according to Husing's report, entry-level career manufacturing positions declined 28% between 1990 and 2005. Goods movement, which comprises wholesale trade, trucking supply chain management, warehousing, courier service and air, sea and rail transportation, is filling the void.

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jump between now and 2014 — will in turn create demand for workers at the port and in related goods-movement jobs.

Many new union and nonunion jobs are projected in transportation and warehousing, which includes truck, air and rail transportation, couriers and messengers, and warehousing and storage.

"The entire warehousing and distribution system is held together by trucks that move nearly all goods the 'last mile' to consumers. Trucks also transfer cargo from the ports and airports, led by LAX, to the intermodal rail yards, hundreds of cross-docks and thousands of warehouses," said Husing.

About 16,000 trucks move annually between the Port of Los Angeles and local warehouses, according to Perry Santos, a resource development manager

and most truck drivers train on the job for 12 months. "Starting salaries in warehousing for people with no background are \$12 to \$15 an hour, and they can easily move into jobs paying \$20 an hour or more," Husing said.

Many jobs, however, require computer skills, especially for delivery routing. But a desire to work hard is, in many cases, the best qualification. "Employers have told me that they can train people to use technology but what's harder to find is workers, especially the younger generation, who have a serious work ethic," said Husing.

Many employers in the field use temporary agencies to hire workers for warehouse and other jobs so they can try them out before hiring. And most large warehouses promote from within for forklift drivers and other desirable jobs.

"Workers must have a basic understanding of English and math and read and compute at an eighth grade level so they can read safety information, determine how many pallets fit in a storeroom and how many boxes fit on a pallet," said Santos.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Wishire-Metro WorkSource Center

www.communitycareer.org
(213) 365-9829

Operated by Community Career Development, the center offers training programs to job seekers. Partnered with Los Angeles City College, the center offers a Metro Bus Operator Training Program and the Logistics/Goods Movement Training Academy.

"The Logistics/Goods Movement Training Academy helped me sharpen my skills overall and better prepared me for the interviewing process," said Tony Ramos, 45, who graduated from the five-week program in June. "I don't think I would have my current job without the training."

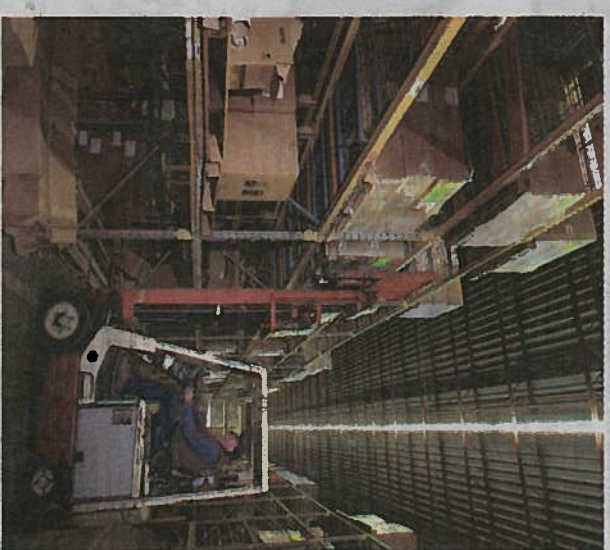
Romos is a refinery operator at Tesoro — formerly Shell Oil — in Wilmington, where he was one of 10 people out of 1,600 applicants to be hired. "There are so many opportunities here for me to make more money and to have more responsibilities," he said.

California Transportation and Logistics Institute

www.aedc.org/cal/

Training and education for transportation-related jobs are offered at the community college and high school levels.

"The goal in the pilot program developed with L.A. Valley College is to develop lists of employers who will assist



Forklift driver.

us in creating advisories for each college and help develop the curriculum to meet the industry's needs," said Kemp.

Another aspect of the program, he said, is the International Trade Academy, part of the nonprofit International Trade Education Program. According to the program's website (www.portoflosangeles.org/community_int.htm), more than 200 Banning High School students have participated in the academy, which introduces students to the job opportunities and helps them learn how to pursue various career paths.

The Port of Los Angeles, too, is working with the city of Los Angeles to create training programs and may even sponsor a truck driver training program.

"We are committed to workforce development because we know the jobs will be here and we want to help ensure that our local work pool is trained and eligible for placement," Santos said.

TOP TRANSPORTATION JOBS IN CALIFORNIA

- Truck drivers
- Bus drivers (school and transit)
- Industrial truck and tractor operators
- Bus and truck mechanics
- Diesel engine specialists
- Laborers and freight/stock handlers
- Customer service representatives
- Operations managers

Source: Labor Market and Economic Analysis