

Northwestern Pennsylvania

Introduction

Northwestern Pennsylvania (NWPA) has historically been known as an area of manufacturing and oil production. The manufacturing was typically on a smaller scale than SWPA. As manufacturing jobs have been moved to non-union states or offshore, the service sector has come to predominate. This geographic area has one predominant city, Erie. The largest nongovernmental employers are Erie Insurance, Gannon and Pennsylvania State Universities. Within the last two years, AMSCO (formerly American Sterilizer Co.) moved its headquarters to Pittsburgh. Quaker State Oil has moved to Dallas, Texas to be closer to its suppliers and customers.

Due to the rural nature of the region, and the smaller nature of business enterprises, the demographic shifts have not been as great as the Pittsburgh region. In many of the counties of the NWPA area there is an anchor in the local college or university. This provides for a more stable region. There has not been a nucleus of spin-off companies in the medical or biomedical technology sectors. This area was until recently adding positions in the hospital sector. As this trend reverses due to managed care, there may be more start-up activity. Except in Erie itself, there is usually only one hospital per county. These tend to be small in terms of bed capacity.

Demographics

By far, the most populous county is Erie, with 275,572 people, which includes the city of Erie. Erie County has only experienced a 0.1% decrease in population from 1980 - 1990. The NWPA region being discussed includes the following counties and their populations (1990 Census data):

<u>County</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% +/-</u>	<u>% >65 years</u>
Cameron	5,913	-12.4	18.5
Clarion	41,699	- 3.4	13.9
Clearfield	78,097	- 6.2	16.6
Crawford	86,169	- 2.4	15.4
Elk	34,878	- 8.4	16.0
Erie	275,572	- 0.1	13.8
Forest	4,802	- 4.1	20.2
Jefferson	46,083	- 4.4	17.3
McKean	47,131	- 6.5	16.7
Mercer	121,003	- 4.8	17.2
Potter	16,717	- 4.9	16.5
Venango	<u>59,381</u>	- 7.6	15.0
	817,445		

The state average of persons over 65 years is 15.4%.