



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
of Colorado

## 2017 ACEC Colorado Salary, Benefits and Business Practices Survey Highlights

### Participating Firms

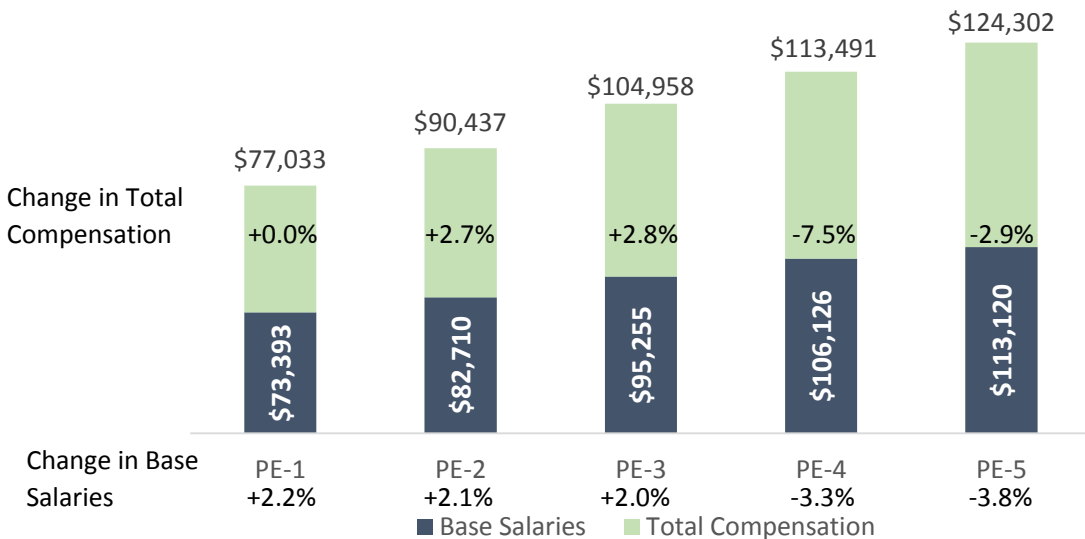
This year’s survey includes compensation and business practices information from 58 Colorado member firms employing 2,884 employees. Most, 81 percent, are located in the Denver Metropolitan area. Just over half, 52 percent, report this is their only office. The top three fields of practice firms are engaged in include civil, structural and water resources engineering. Seventy-six percent of participating firms also participated in last year’s salary survey. Regional compensation information is reported, combining results of ACEC Colorado’s survey with that of ACEC Arizona and ACEC Utah.

### Overall Salaries Rise an Average +2.2 Percent

Based on 65 comparable positions included in last year’s survey and again this year, base salaries increased an average of 2.2 percent. Salaried professional positions’ base salaries increased an average of 2.4 percent over last year. Non-exempt, office and technical positions’ base wages saw a minimal increase of 0.4 percent over 2016 rates. Three comparable positions in the senior executive group report a base salary increase of 8.3 percent.

### Professional Engineers Base Salaries and Total Compensation

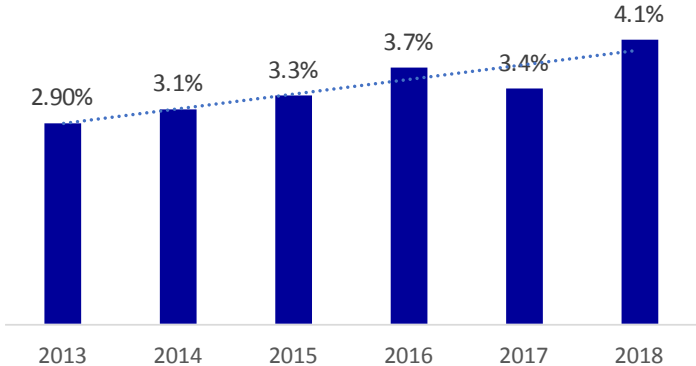
Employers reported current base salaries and bonus information for a total of 659 professional engineers. Salary information is reported by geographic region, firm employment size, revenue category, years in the profession and engineering disciplines. Base salaries increased an average of +2.1 percent for PE-1, PE-2 and PE-3 in comparison with last year’s results. PE-4 and PE-5 base salaries dipped -3.3 and -3.8 percent respectively.



**Projected Average Salary Increases for 2018 is 4.1 Percent**

Each year firms are asked to project base salary increases for the next year. For the past five years projections have stayed in the three percent range. The overall average base salary increase projected for 2018 is 4.1 percent for those employees meeting expectations. The median increase reported for all employees is 3.5 percent.

**Historical Look at Projected Average Base Salary increases for the Following Year**



**Average Annual Core Insurance Costs Firms Pay Per Employee Tops \$7,000**

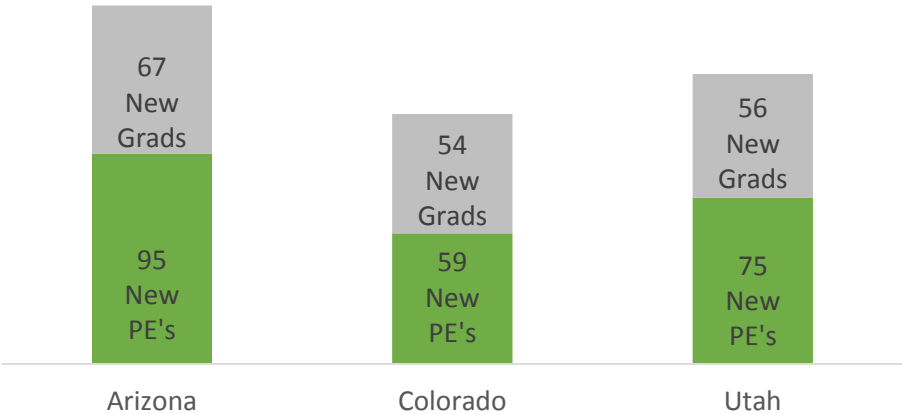
Annual core insurance costs per employee, defined as the total cost paid by firms for employees’ medical, dental, vision, life, and short- / long-term disability plan coverage is \$7,049. This does not include costs associated with additional contributions toward family coverage.

Less than half of responding firms, 42 percent, continue to pay the full cost of medical insurance premiums associated with employees’ single coverage. On average, firms pay 87 percent of the cost of employee’s single medical plan coverage and 52 percent of employee plus family coverage. Six in ten firms now offer two or more medical plan options, the top two include Preferred Provider Plans (PPO’s) offered by 67 percent and High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP’s) offered by 63 percent.

**Finding and Hiring Qualified Staff Top Business Challenge**

With Colorado’s historically low unemployment rate at 2.4% in August, employers are finding increased difficulty in hiring new employees. Thirty percent of firms report putting more emphasis on social media to recruit staff. Finding and hiring staff and losing key engineering talent through retirement and turnover are listed as two of five top business challenges. Regionally, firms anticipate hiring 229 professional engineers and 177 new engineering graduates in 2018 as illustrated below.

**2018 Regional New Hire Projections**



## What is Included in the ACEC Colorado Salary, Benefit and Business Practices Survey

### Surveyed Positions

This year's ACEC Colorado survey report includes base salaries and bonus information for 84 positions commonly staffed by engineering companies. All data was collected as of August 1, 2017. Surveyed employee groups include:

- Entry-Level Engineers
- Engineering Professionals
- Executive / Engineering Principals
- Planners
- Drafters and BIM /Designers
- Construction Management, Inspection, Surveyors and Technicians
- Environmental Science and Laboratory Staff
- Geology / Geoscience
- Professional/ Administrative Staff

### Employee Benefit Plans, Human Resources and Management Programs and Practices and Key Performance Benchmarks Available in This Year's Expanded Survey

Every three years ACEC Colorado surveys its members to collect in-depth information on a variety of employee benefits, human resources and business practices. This year's expanded survey features information regarding medical plans, group insurance including dental, vision, life and disability coverage, retirement / savings, paid time off plans and other human resources policies and programs. Management practices, including key performance benchmarks and revenue projections are also detailed in this year's survey.

**To purchase the 2017 Salary, Benefits and Business Practices Report  
contact ACEC Colorado**  
Telephone: 303-832-2200  
E-Mail: [email@acec-co.org](mailto:email@acec-co.org)  
Website: [acec-co.org](http://acec-co.org)

Member Participant Price: \$150  
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