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INTRODUCTION

Northeastern Pennsylvania (NEPA), consisting of Northern I-81 Corridor communities such as Scranton, Pittston, Wilkes-Barre, and Hazleton, has long been a magnet for food and beverage manufacturing and distribution operations.

Several factors have combined to grow the food industry in NEPA. These include quick access to raw materials and the Northeast's consumption zones, an available, quality, and affordable labor supply, abundant and reliable utilities, and a wide variety of available ReadyToGo!™ Sites and Buildings with room for expansion.

Food and beverage companies with manufacturing plants in the region include Aryzta, Ateeco (Mrs. T's Pierogies), Bakkavor, Bimbo Bakeries, BC Bundt, Cargill Cocoa & Chocolates, Cargill Meat Solutions, Citterio USA, Big Heart Pet Brands, D.G. Yuengling & Son, Gertrude Hawk Chocolates, Gonnella Frozen Products, Hershey Chocolate USA, J&J Snack Foods, Kraft Foods, Lion Brewery, Maid-Rite Specialty Foods, MIA Products, Michael Foods Egg Products, Mission Foods, Nardone Brothers Baking, National Bakery, USHydrations, Otis Spunkmeyer, Preferred Meal Systems, Quaker Oats (Gatorade), Stroehman Bakeries, and Wise Foods.

Companies with food or beverage distribution operations in NEPA include Americold, Bell-Carter Foods, Bimbo Bakeries, Core-Mark, Gress Refrigerated Services & Logistics, Henningsen Cold Storage, Hilshire Brands, Herr's Food Products, igourmet.com, Kane is Able, MaineSource, McLane Co., Nature's Bounty (NBTY), PepsiCo, Pero Family Farms, Romark Logistics, Sun-Maid, Tootsie Roll Industries, U.S. Cold Storage, US Foods, Walmart, Wegmans Food Markets, and WellPet.

Continue reading for more information about NEPA's assets that food and beverage companies find appealing.





LOCATION & TRANSPORTATION

NEPA is in the center of the Boston/Washington Corridor and is at the confluence of six major highways. Interstates 81, 80, 84, 380, 476, and 78 meet here and provide excellent access to firms wishing to serve Maine to Virginia and west to Ohio.

Interstates 81, 80, 84, 380, and 78 are toll-free in NEPA. There are no major bridges or tunnels in the region to delay truck departures or arrivals.

The region's main highway, I-81, runs from the US/Canadian border in the North to Knoxville, Tennessee in the South. I-81 intersects several major East-West highways, which include I-80 (access to New York City), I-78 (access to the Lehigh Valley and New Jersey), I-84/I-90 (access to Boston), I-76 (access to Pittsburgh and Philadelphia), I-70/I-270 (access to Washington DC), and I-83 (access to Baltimore).

The Northern I-81 Corridor is quickly accessible to most major seaports along the East Coast, which has seen an increase in volume since the Panama Canal expansion was completed in June 2016. In fact, some ports on the East Coast have had to undertake channel deepening and expansion projects of their own in order to accommodate the growing size of the vessels that are coming through the canal.

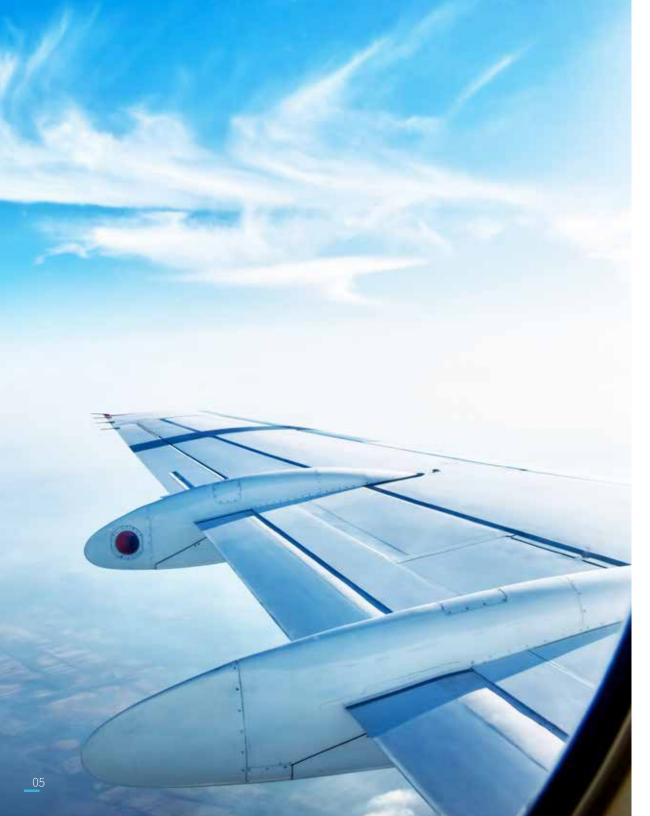
More than 99 million people, about one third of the nation's population, live within a 500 mile radius of NEPA, and more

than 51 million people live within 200 miles. New York City, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Syracuse can all be reached in about two hours.

Dozens of truckload and less than truckload trucking firms serve the region. Some companies active here include ABF Freight, A. Duie Pyle, Bolus Freight Systems, Calex Logistics, Con-Way Freight, Evans Distribution Systems, Estes Express Lines, Kane is Able, Karchner Logistics, M.S. Carriers, NFI Logistics, New Penn Motor Express, Pitt Ohio Express, PRIME, Inc., R.C. Moore, R & L Carriers, RLS Logistics, Ward Trucking, and YRC National.

UPS, FedEx Ground, and FedEx Express have major facilities in NEPA. In fact, FedEx SmartPost and UPS have operations near the main entrances of CenterPoint Commerce & Trade Park East, near Pittston, PA, while FedEx Express is located in an adjacent business park. In 2016, FedEx Ground opened a 310,000 square foot distribution center in Pittston Township.

Several rail freight carriers serve the region, including Class One railroads (Canadian Pacific Railway and Norfolk Southern Railway) and short line railroads (Luzerne and Susquehanna Railroad, Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad, and Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority). Several local business parks are rail served.



NEPA is served by two main airports, the Wilkes-Barre/ Scranton International Airport (AVP) and the Lehigh Valley Airport (ABE).

The Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport (airport code AVP) offers service to eight major hubs with one-stop service to more than 450 destinations worldwide. AVP provides direct daily flights to Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Detroit, Newark, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington DC. Carriers include Delta, United, Regional Sky, and American Airlines. AVP is also served by Aviation Technologies, one of the finest fixed base operators in the Northeastern United States. Learn more at flyavp.com.

The Lehigh Valley International Airport (ABE) (Ivia.org) provides direct daily flights to Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Newark, Detroit, Orlando, Philadelphia, and St. Petersburg.

ACCESS TO CONSUMPTION ZONES FROM CENTER OF NEPA

RADIUS	POPULATION
100 MILES	17,049,097
200 MILES	51,067,989
300 MILES	65,595,311
400 MILES	83,103,487
500 MILES	99,002,235
'	Source: NEPA Alliance





REAL ESTATE

MERICLE COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE SERVICES

In the late 1980s, Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services became the first private developer to construct industrial shell buildings on speculation in NEPA. Mericle purchased land that had been developed by area chambers of commerce and constructed speculative buildings ranging from 40,000 square feet to 100,000 square feet. Since that time, Mericle has developed more than 22 million square feet of industrial, office, and flex space in NEPA, including numerous bulk industrial buildings. More than 14,500 people work in Mericle-developed properties.

Today, Mericle owns and maintains approximately 15 million square feet in NEPA. Mericle is a vertically integrated "master builder" that self-performs its development projects. The company's approximately 250 employees design, construct, and maintain all of its facilities.

Among its in-house team are three Leadership Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Accredited Professionals who obtained Silver LEED status for Mericle buildings occupied by Amazon.com, Kimberly Clark, and Benco Dental.

Several years ago, Mericle started a Green Building Program and made a commitment to provide lower operating costs to tenants through the implementation of eco-friendly, energy saving measures. By constructing tight building envelopes, installing energy-efficient LED lighting and HVAC systems, improving ventilation and indoor air quality, and by using native and adaptive landscaping and recycled/regional materials, Mericle is making a concerted effort to "go green."

In addition to regularly constructing buildings on speculation, Mericle also prepares sites in advance for new construction.

In fact, through its ReadyToGo!™ Program, Mericle is developing more than 90 such sites in 11 NEPA business parks.

Mericle's Design Department obtains all necessary permits and approvals, and its in-house Excavation Division, considered to be one of the largest of its kind in the US, clears, grades, and compacts the ReadyToGo!™ Sites and makes them ready for the immediate construction of building foundations. These sites also have all permits and approvals in hand, all utilities in place, and can accommodate buildings ranging from as small as 10,000 square feet to as large as 1 million square feet.



Mericle's vertically integrated "one-stop-shop" structure and its aggressive development of speculative industrial buildings and ReadyToGo!™ Sites are very helpful to food manufacturers and distributors operating under compressed timeframes wishing to deal with a single source.

Mericle has provided commercial real estate solutions to a variety of food and beverage manufacturing, distribution, and packaging companies. These include Aramark, Bakkavor (Two Chefs on a Roll), Bimbo Bakeries, Greiner Packaging, Mission Foods, Nature's Bounty, Nature's Way Purewater, PepsiCo (Gatorade), Tech Packaging, and Wegmans.

All of Mericle's available buildings and sites can be reviewed at **mericlereadytogo.com**.

Food and beverage companies that move to NEPA often enjoy lower business costs. According to market reports done in 2018 by Cushman & Wakefield, on average, industrial lease rates in NEPA are 40% of those in Long Island, NY, 50% of those in Northern NJ and 80% of those found in the Lehigh Valley.

A food and beverage processing study done for Penn's Northeast by national site consulting firm The Boyd Company found that total annual operating cots for a hypothetical 225,000 square foot production facility with 350 employees in NEPA are significantly lower than competing metro areas.

UTILITIES

The region is utility strong with natural gas, public water and sewer, abundant power, and fiber service readily available to business parks.

High pressure gas mains owned and maintained by UGI Penn Natural Gas provide service to area business parks.

The discovery of an estimated 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the rock located under a 22.4 million acre area that covers much of NEPA, the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, and Upstate New York, has had an enormous impact on the regional economy. The Marcellus Shale region has been recognized as the "largest unconventional natural gas reserve in the world."

Thousands of acres in NEPA and the Northern Tier have been leased by natural gas companies. Billions of dollars are being invested here by Southwest US energy companies. Because of this investment in Marcellus Shale, NEPA is expected to have access to abundant and affordable natural gas for decades to come.

Water quality is good and pressures are very strong. In fact, in some business parks, companies choose to install pressure reducers to control water pressure to their buildings.

The primary water supplier in NEPA is Pennsylvania American Water Company (PAWC). Because PAWC is part of American Water, it benefits from the company's central laboratory in Belleville, Illinois, one of the most advanced water quality laboratories in the US.



LOCATION

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, PA Lehigh Valley, PA

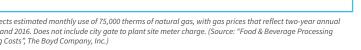
North Jersey

Long Island, NY

Poughkeepsie/Hudson Valley, NY

ANNUAL NATURAL GAS COST (1)

⁹Annual cost reflects estimated monthly use of 75,000 therms of natural gas, with gas prices that reflect two-year annual averages for 2015 and 2016. Does not include city gate to plant site meter charge. (Source: "Food & Beverage Processing Industry Operating Costs", The Boyd Company, Inc.)



input to the US Environmental Protection Agency as new testing regulations are developed. Since 1993, the American Water research team has won nearly

There, the company performs tests to monitor for about 100 regulated contaminants and other "emerging contaminants"

that are not currently regulated. Additionally, PAWC provides

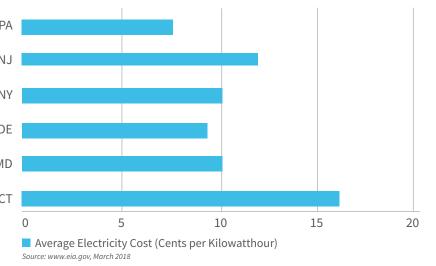
two dozen awards for best research, received more than \$31 million in research grants, and been granted four patents for water and wastewater research.

Several local sewage treatment facilities can accept large amounts of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) and suspended solids without requiring businesses to pretreat their effluent.

Redundant power is supplied to several local industrial and office parks via PPL Electric Utilities and UGI Utilities. In most parks, 4000 amp service is offered.

Multiple telecom vendors, including Verizon, Frontier Communications, Level 3, and Comcast serve the area and provide fiber, copper, and cable service to local business parks.

AVERAGE ELECTRICITY COST FOR PA & SURROUNDING STATES









There are more than 2,000 acres of **Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ)** land located in six NEPA business
parks. These lands are part of FTZ #24 under the
auspices of the Eastern Distribution Center. Much
of Mericle's CenterPoint Commerce & Trade Park
near Pittston, PA is in an FTZ. Mericle also owns
properties in the Jessup Small Business Center
and Valley View Business Park near Scranton,
which have FTZ status.

FTZs encourage and expedite import/export cargo movements. These specially designated zones are considered outside the Customs territory of the US, which means that merchandise can be stored, exhibited, assembled, manufactured, and processed without being subject to formal Customs entry procedures and payment of duties - unless and until the merchandise enters the Customs territory for domestic consumption. FTZs offer a variety of benefits including duty deferral, relief from inverted tariffs, duty elimination on waste and scrap, duty exemption on re-exports, and no duties on domestic content, added value, and rejected or defective parts.

THIRD PARTY LOGISTICS

In addition to the dozens of truckload and less than truckload companies with operations in NEPA, there are also numerous national and local **third party logistics (3PL)** companies here. Some of the most active 3PLs in NEPA include Kane is Able, Romark Logistics, FedEx Supply Chain, XPO Logistics, Calex Logistics, Karchner Warehousing and Logistics, Penske Logistics, J.B. Hunt, and LeSaint Logistics. Mericle has provided space to most of these companies.

COLD CHAIN SPACE

Some of the nation's largest **cold storage** companies have major industrial facilities in NEPA. For example, Henningsen Cold Storage Company, United States Cold Storage, Inc., Americold, and RLS Logistics, together operate about 1 million square feet of cold chain space here. In addition, PRIME Inc., one of North America's largest refrigerated trucking companies, has a large terminal in NEPA.



WORKFORCE

LABOR AVAILABILITY

Local employers report that most non-skilled workers will commute up to 20 miles to work, while skilled workers will commute more than 30 miles. Local commutes are enhanced by an excellent interstate and local road network. For example, a 20 mile commute can typically be made in less than 30 minutes. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, average daily commutes to work range from 20 to 25 minutes throughout NEPA.

Recent unemployment information for 20, 30, and 40 miles from the center of NEPA:

NTER OF NEPA TION = 460,021			
UNEMPLOYED 12,157 (5.35%)	EMPLOYED 214,735	CIV. LABOR FORCE 227,042	YEAR 2017
NTER OF NEPA TION = 697,436			
UNEMPLOYED 19,588 (5.68%)	EMPLOYED 325,209	CIV. LABOR FORCE 345,038	YEAR 2017
40 MILES FROM CENTER OF NEPA TOTAL POPULATION = 958,329			
UNEMPLOYED	EMPLOYED	CIV. LABOR FORCE	YEAR
27,595 (5.62%)	462,948	490,827	2017

Despite its strong industrial growth since 2000, NEPA's unemployment rate continues to run higher than state and national averages.

The following statistics, released by PA L&I, demonstrate how the region has compared to the state and nation in recent years. These are seasonally adjusted rates that have been rounded:

YEAR	NEPA REGION CIV. LABOR FORCE	EMP.	UNEMP.	NEPA RATE %	PA RATE %	U.S. RATE %
2018	278,900	263,600	15,300	5.5%	4.8%	4.1%
2017	277,700	262,000	15,600	5.6%	5.1 %	4.7%
2016	281,400	264,700	16,700	5.9%	5.3%	4.9%
2015	278,900	261,200	17,700	6.3%	5.4 %	5.5 %

Labor availability for companies needing seasonal help is enhanced by the fact that there are close to 51,000 college students in the immediate NEPA area, many of whom often seek part-time employment.

LABOR MANAGEMENT

The rate of unionization of private employers in NEPA has been steadily declining since the 1980s. In 1986, 18.4% of the private workforce in NEPA was unionized. By 2017, the perfectage had dropped to 3.2%. Source: unionstats.com

Source: PA Department of Labor and Industry

Source: Applied Geographic Solutions



LABOR COST

In addition to being readily available, NEPA's labor force is also cost competitive compared to the rest of Pennsylvania and the major metro areas in the Northeast US.

Within Pennsylvania, NEPA often competes for new corporate locations against the Lehigh Valley (Allentown/Bethlehem/Easton/Reading), South Central, PA (Harrisburg/Carlisle/York/Lancaster), and Southeast PA (Philadelphia and its suburbs).

According to data compiled recently by the PA Department of Labor & Industry (PAL&I), the average, annual wage for Scranton-Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton, PA transportation and warehousing sector workers is \$43,940. Comparable averages include Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA - \$45,812, Harrisburg-Carlisle, PA - \$49,296, Orange-Rockland-Westchester, NY - \$49,964 (New York State Department of Labor) and Northern New Jersey - \$54,038 (NJ Department of Labor & Workforce Development).

According to 2017 data supplied by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, wage rates in NEPA compare favorably to those in competing areas, as seen on the next page.



MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT

PA COUNTY		AVERAGE MFG. WEEKLY WAGE	AVERAGE MFG. ANNUAL WAGE	STATE REGION
	LACKAWANNA LUZERNE	\$954 \$996	\$49,608 \$51,792	NORTHEAST NORTHEAST
	CUMBERLAND	\$1,008		SOUTH CENTRAL
	DAUPHIN			SOUTH CENTRAL
	LEBANON		\$53,456	SOUTH CENTRAL
	LANCASTER			SOUTH CENTRAL
	YORK			SOUTH CENTRAL
	BERKS			
	PHILADEPHIA			
	PA AVERAGE			
	BUCKS			
	NORTHAMPTON			
	LEHIGH		\$70,356	
	CHESTER	\$1,481		
	MONTGOMERY			
	DELAWARE			

Source: PA Department of Labor and Industry

TRANSPORTATION & WAREHOUSING EMPLOYMENT

PA COUNTY	AVERAGE T&W WEEKLY WAGE	AVERAGE T&W ANNUAL WAGE	STATE REGION
LUZERNE	\$803	\$41,756	NORTHEAST
NORTHAMPTON	\$856		
YORK			SOUTH CENTRAL
LEBANON			SOUTH CENTRAL
	\$904	\$47,008	
LACKAWANNA	\$906	\$47,112	NORTHEAST
DELAWARE	\$908		
LANCASTER		\$48,048	SOUTH CENTRAL
BERKS		\$48,256	
CUMBERLAND		\$48,724	SOUTH CENTRAL
PA AVERAGE			
MONTGOMERY			
BUCKS			
DAUPHIN			SOUTH CENTRAL
PHILADEPHIA			

Source: PA Department of Labor and Industry

LABOR QUALITY

NEPA is nationally known for its highly productive and dependable workforce. Here are testimonials from a few employers:

"Even though we own and operate 73 retail stores from Pennsylvania to New Jersey and upstate New York...I can tell you that the very best people we have working for us can be found right here in Northeast PA."

DAVID HAWK, CHAIRMAN, GERTRUDE HAWK CHOCOLATES

"We have a tremendous group of dedicated, hardworking people who helped us pull together a triumphant year. We have a very, very productive team. We moved to Northeastern Pennsylvania from Yorktown Heights, which is about 45 minutes north of Manhattan, and we've found this to be a very cost effective area to find intelligent, skilled people."

JESSICA CHESMAN, PRESIDENT, IGOURMET.COM

"The workforce here is very strong. The work ethic is fantastic. We feel a lot of our success as a company is due to the fact that our associates have a genuine concern about doing a great job for our customers. That's what makes us successful in Northeastern Pennsylvania."

DICK KANE, PRESIDENT, KANE IS ABLE

"We've been really happy with the talent pool we've found here (Northeast PA) and the individuals we've hired to join our team. We've received hundreds of applications for most of our positions. We still have a very healthy candidate pipeline of individuals trying to find positions with American Eagle Outfitters."

SANDY SOLA, SENIOR HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER, AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS



"Since relocating our US based call center to Wilkes-Barre in November of 2007, C3i has had the opportunity to recruit and train more than 175 technical people to support our pharmaceutical clients. The workforce in NEPA is very strong, and we are continually able to obtain excellent people who are qualified, professional and dedicated to quality. Our customer satisfaction scores, which are a direct evaluation of our call center personnel, average 96%."

"We searched the entire eastern seaboard for the best location for our regional distribution center and in the end, the fact that I-81, I-80, and I-84 converge in Northeastern Pennsylvania and the region's exceptional and dedicated workforce were major factors in our decision."

MIKE KOMENSKY, GENERAL MANAGER, BIMBO BAKERIES

ROBERT JONES, CFO, C31

"We have a great workforce. We have capable people who are passionate about achieving their goals. We are in a low-cost area yet we have people with the skills you might think you would find only in a high-cost area. Everything in Northeast PA is just right. It's the Goldilocks theory of doing business"

SCOTT MEUSER, CHAIRMAN & CEO, PRIDE MOBILITY PRODUCTS CORPORATION

"We had absolutely no problem finding candidiates who possess the skill sets we were seeking. I've been very impressed with the people our company has hired in Hazleton and with the number of applicants who applied for positions."

KEN GONNELLA, PRESIDENT, GONNELLA FROZEN PRODUCTS, HAZLETON

"The labor market here (Northeast PA) is phenomenal. We've been really happy with the market here. That's how we figure out where we are going to put a building."

GREG WALSH, VP OF HUMAN RESOURCES, CHEWY.COM

"In 1930, our grandfather Benjamin Cohen opened a small dental depot in downtown Wilkes-Barre. Since then, Benco Dental has become the nation's largest independent dental distributor, with operations in 35 states. Key to our growth has been the excellent and dedicated team of Benco associates who deliver success, smile after smile, to thousands of dental customers every day. When we outgrew our previous facility, the quality and loyalty of our people made it an easy decision to stay and invest right here in Northeastern PA."

CHARLES COHEN & RICHARD COHEN, PRESIDENT & SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT BENCO DENTAL SUPPLY CO., INC

"I can honestly say that coming back to Pennsylvania and managing a facility where the employees care about their job, have a strong feeling of ownership of their company, and the motivation level to exceed is exciting and beneficial to our facility and company. I have not encountered this work ethic in many of the locations I have managed and lived in. Northeast PA is a company's best found option for exceeding their expectations."

BILL WELLIVER, FACILITY MANAGER, TELERX

EDUCATION & TRAINING

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

NEPA is home to 17 college campuses with a combined 51,000 students. Several of these local colleges offer degree and certificate programs that may be of interest to companies that manufacture or distribute food and beverage products. These schools and some of their key programs include:

Luzerne County Community College (luzerne.edu):

- Culinary Arts
- Hospitality Business Management
- Pastry Arts Management
- Building Maintenance Technology
- Industrial Maintenance

Keystone College (keystone.edu):

Culinary Arts

Lackawanna College (lackawanna.edu):

- Baking & Pastry
- Culinary Arts
- Hospitality Management
- Restaurant & Foodservice Management

Johnson College (johnson.edu):

- Logistics & Supply Chain Management
- Diesel Truck Technology
- Diesel Preventative Maintenance Technology
- Advanced Manufacturing Technology

The Pennsylvania State University (psu.edu):

- Agribusiness Management
- Food Science
- Nutritional Sciences
- Project and Supply Chain Management







E**S**U





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LUZERNI



















TRAINING PROGRAMS

GUARANTEED FREE TRAINING PROGRAM (WEDnetPA)

This program provides grants through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for essential skills and advanced technology training. The maximum amounts that can be provided are up to \$450 per trainee and \$75,000 per company for essential skills training and up to \$850 per trainee and \$50,000 per company for advanced technology training. To be eligible, employees must be full-time and earn at least \$10.88 per hour.

Training costs must be "reasonable" as defined by market rates and/or other criteria. Regardless of how it is conducted (classroom, online, etc.), each training session must be a minimum of 30 minutes in length.

Training can be provided by a WEDnetPA partner institution, the company's in-house staff or any third-party provider.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY ACT

This federal program, which is administered by local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), provides grants to train individuals who meet certain eligibility requirements such as those who recently lost their job or are underemployed. The program typically covers 50% of wages during training but WDBs have the authority to increase the funding to 75% in certain circumstances.

Eligibility requirements include those who:

- were recently laid-off or terminated from employment
- are unemployed
- are collecting Food Stamps or TANF
- are employed and their income is below the self-sufficiency guideline
- are a displaced homemaker
- are homeless

The grant funds can be used for job search and placement, skills assessment and evaluation, counseling, training service, for individuals and companies, supportive services, and labor marketing information.

Please visit dced.pa.gov for more information.



LOCAL ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION TAX ASSISTANCE (LERTA)

Mericle's CenterPoint Commerce & Trade Park offers industrial sites and buildings located in Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) Zones. In CenterPoint, all of the local taxing bodies – the county, the municipality, and the school district – have approved the zone status.

Real estate taxes on improvements are abated 100% for 10 years for buildings constructed in CenterPoint. The table below gives estimates of total savings that will be realized for various building sizes via LERTA. Actual savings may vary depending upon the cost of construction required to meet a tenant's specifications.

SQUARE FEET	EST. SAVINGS
150,000	\$1,068,000
250,000	\$1,779,000
500,000	\$3,559,000

JOB CREATION TAX CREDIT PROGRAM (JCTC)

The Job Creation Tax Credit Program (JCTC) offers a \$1,000 state tax credit per new full-time job per year to employers who demonstrate effective development or deployment of leading technologies in business operations. Businesses must create at least 25 new full-time jobs or expand their existing workforce by at least 20% within three years of approval. Tax credits will not be applied until the workforce increase requirement has been met.

In order to count as a full-time employee under the JCTC program, new employees must earn an average of 150% of the federal minimum wage, excluding benefits. The credit may be utilized to pay a number of state business taxes. At least 25% of all available tax credits will be awarded every year to businesses that employ 100 or fewer employees.

An eligible business must agree to maintain its operation in Pennsylvania for a minimum period of five years from the start date of approval.

OTHER INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

PENNSYLVANIA FIRST PROGRAM

This Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) program provides funding to companies that create/retain a substantial number of jobs. Businesses can receive support in the form of grants, loans and loan guarantees for job training, property acquisition, site preparation, land and building improvements, purchasing and/or upgrading machinery and equipment, infrastructure, environmental assessments and remediation, and working capital. The company must pay at least \$10.88/hour. A \$10 to \$1 private investment match is required. The max assistance is \$5,000 per job (discretionary).

The program requires participants to commit to operating at the approved project site for a minimum of seven years.

Businesses must achieve one of the following standards within three years of receiving Pennsylvania First Program funding: (1) create or retain a minimum of 100 full time jobs at the project site; (2) increase their full time employment within the commonwealth by at least 20%; (3) provide a substantial-number of new, full time employment opportunities within a high growth industry; or (4) create or retain fewer than 100 full time jobs at project sites that are located in counties or communities suffering from high unemployment.

PENNSYLVANIA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (PIDA)

This state program provides low interest, fixed rate loans for real estate (max 15 years) and machinery and equipment (max 10 years), for manufacturing, industrial, office, and R&D firms and others. Companies must apply through a certified economic development organization. A typical interest rate in Pennsylvania in mid 2018 was 3.5%, but the rate is subject to change quarterly. Companies must retain/create jobs (up to \$35,000 per job can be made available for retained jobs and up to \$50,000 per job for created jobs). The max loan for real estate is \$2.25 million and the max loan for M&E is \$1.5 million.

Please visit dced.pa.gov for more specific details and guidelines for all of Pennsylvania's incentive programs.

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AVERAGE SALES PRICES & ANNUAL REAL ESTATE TAXES OF 4 BEDROOM HOMES - 2017

COUNTY	AVG. SALES PRICE	AVG. ANNUAL R.E. TAXES
Luzerne (PA)	\$241,545.00	\$3,673.55
Lackawanna (PA)	\$242,096.00	\$3,510.00
York (PA)	\$284,201.45	\$5,058.55
Lancaster (PA)	\$308,618.75	\$4,907.15
Gloucester (NJ)	\$309,576.60	\$8,668.10
Orange (NY)	\$325,685.95	\$7,751.10
Northampton (PA)	\$328,922.50	\$6,337.85
Dauphin (PA)	\$334,942.50	\$5,250.30
Lehigh (PA)	\$337,082.50	\$6,502.85
Cumberland (PA)	\$338,345.00	\$4,296.40
Dutchess (NY)	\$343,734.15	\$7,046.00
Burlington (NJ)	\$370,740.00	\$9,304.95
New Castle (DE)	\$378,670.00	\$2,536.80
Montgomery (PA)	\$387,795.50	\$5,739.25
Camden (NJ)	\$404,219.50	\$12,530.65
Prince Georges (MD)	\$409,315.75	\$5,648.25
Hartford (CT)	\$410,210.00	\$8,368.05
Passaic (NJ)	\$443,310.95	\$11,526.05

\$456,820.00

\$10,186.80

[Continued] COUNTY	AVG. SALES PRICE	AVG. ANNUAL R.E. TAXES
Bucks (PA)	\$458,121.30	\$6,779.95
Delaware (PA)	\$471,860.00	\$9,153.85
Chester (PA)	\$480,999.25	\$6,929.80
Morris (NJ)	\$487,500.00	\$11,300.00
Anne Arundel (MD)	\$507,011.80	\$2,586.50
Rockland (NY)	\$514,576.15	\$12,040.70
Suffolk (NY)	\$537,000.00	\$12,500.00
Middlesex (NJ)	\$550,000.00	\$12,100.00
Somerset (NJ)	\$552,747.45	\$11,828.40
Howard (MD)	\$556,906.65	\$6,706.05
Fairfield (CT)	\$608,445.00	\$9,917.30
Nassau (NY)	\$625,000.00	\$16,250.00
Bergen (NJ)	\$627,500.00	\$13,900.00
Fairfax (VA)	\$670,590.00	\$6,571.60
Montgomery (MD)	\$710,697.45	\$6,609.30
Union (NJ)	\$751,200.00	\$18,779.95
Westchester (NY)	\$760,441.00	\$14,904.55
Essex (NJ)	\$798,815.50	\$21,008.55
Arlington (VA)	\$981,924.20	\$8,542.20

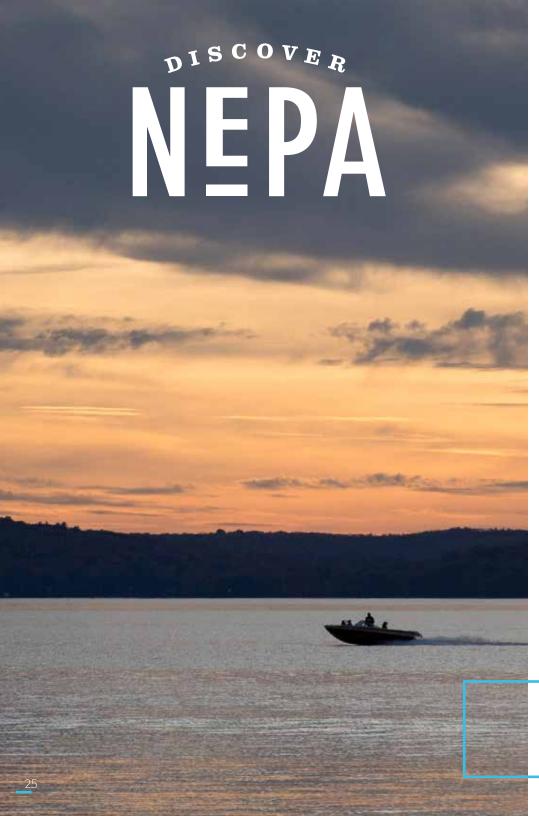
COST ADVANTAGES & HOUSING COSTS

A little buys you a lot here.

Average sales prices of single family homes in Northeastern Pennsylvania are much lower than prices in most major metro areas in the Northeast US. Real estate taxes on your NEPA home are lower by comparison too.



Hudson (NJ)



Ten counties. One region. DiscoverNEPA™.

Why is Mericle, a real estate developer, promoting Northeastern Pennsylvania's (NEPA's) quality of life? Mericle has been very fortunate to provide commercial space to several hundred companies since 1985 and we are especially proud that more than 14,500 people work in the buildings we've developed in NEPA. However, when companies are going through the site selection process, more factors come into play than just the availability of a certain type of building or site.









Arts, Culture & Entertainment

Leisure, Shopping, **Sports & Adventure**

Skilled Workers & Low Costs of Living

Many skilled workers, especially millennials, are drawn to those communities known as great places to live. Northeastern Pennsylvania offers quick access to big city amenities, but is light years away when it comes to affordable living, safe neighborhoods, access to recreation, and the opportunity to be heard and make a difference. NEPA is the Northeast's best bet if you are seeking a stress-free, healthy lifestyle complete with thousands of worldclass amenities.

We created DiscoverNEPA[™] to show this region's best and brightest. We hope our tenants and other area businesses will use DiscoverNEPA™ as a tool to recruit talented people and their families to this region.

We invite you to visit DiscoverNEPA.com and to follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Mericle is Northeastern Pennsylvania proud.

