

ERI Economic Research Institute Geographic Assessor® Software Tutorial

The following tutorial walks you through how to use ERI's [Geographic Assessor](#) software to calculate:

- US branch-office salary structures
- International branch-office salary structures
- Prevailing wages for H-1B immigration visa applications

Lesson 1: Setting US Branch-Office Salary Structures

This exercise will teach you how to establish a branch-office wage structure using ERI's [Geographic Assessor](#) desktop software. This labor cost calculator compares geographic salary and cost-of-living differentials between over 7,000 US and Canadian cities. A [European edition](#) is also available.

Problem Statement

Sarah Desmond is Human Resource Manager for Electro-Mechanical Products (located in Hingham, Massachusetts). The company produces electronic assemblies for the aerospace industry. The business is growing, thanks to some advanced products that the company has patented. There was even a discussion about expansion plans during a recent executive meeting, but Sarah is concerned.

The meeting discussion began with how to expand the plant in Hingham, but ended with support for building a new plant in the Southeastern United States. The suggestion is to try Tuscaloosa, Alabama. An executive even went so far as to point out that the cost of living is almost 25% lower in Tuscaloosa, so the company's payroll costs would be at least 20% lower.

Sarah suggested that she be allowed to check this out. The rest of the executives grudgingly went along, giving her a few days to gather some information.

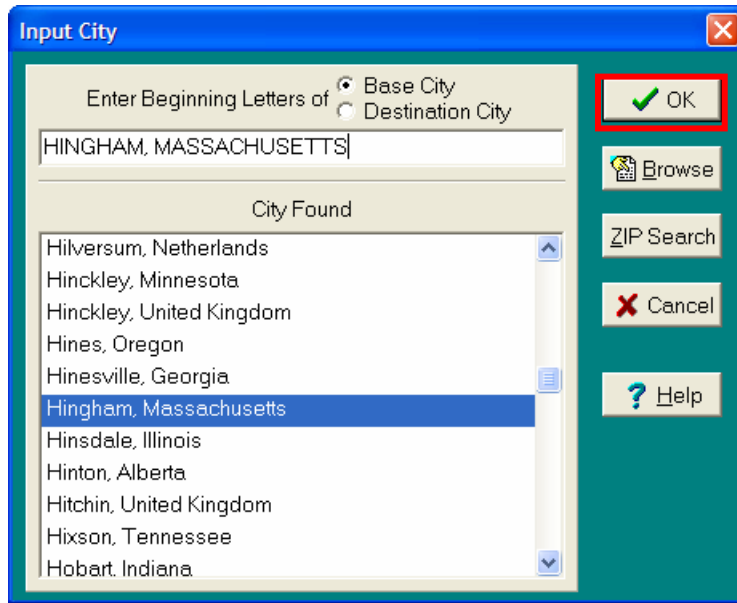
She begins by using the **Geographic Assessor** software to research salary and cost-of-living levels in Tuscaloosa.

The **Geographic Assessor** opens to a *Two-City Comparison* screen. Sarah clicks on the **Base City** column header to input the organization's headquarters location.

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars	Base City: Kansas City, Kansas United States Dollars	Destination City: Bend, Oregon United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage Base City
36,000	36,000	34,474	95.8 %
Salary			
% of United States Avg.	98.1 %	94.0 %	
Cost of Living	36,000	36,879	102.4 %
% of United States Avg.	93.0 %	95.3 %	
Area Included	Kansas City, Kansas	Bend, Oregon	

Data as of: July 01, 2005

The *Input City* dialogue box opens. She types in “Hingham, Massachusetts” and then clicks on the **OK** button to return to the *Two-City Comparison* screen.



Now she clicks on the **Destination City** column header.

Geographic Assessor Consultant [North America Edition; UK/EU Edition]

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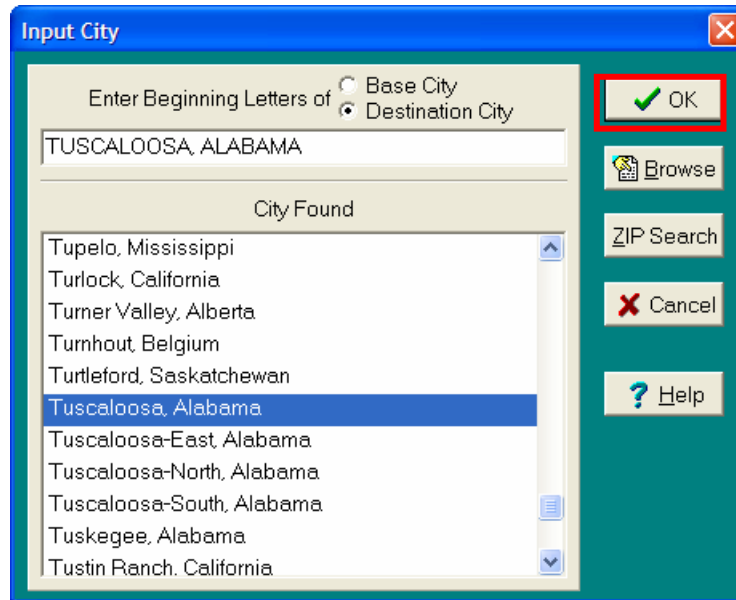
Two City Comparison | Graphs | Comparison List | Immigration Analysis

Calculations for Low Salary Structure

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars <input type="text" value="36,000"/>	Base City: Hingham, Massachusetts United States Dollars	Destination City: Bend, Oregon United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage Base City
Salary	36,000	33,454	92.9 %
% of United States Avg.	101.0 %	93.9 %	
Cost of Living	36,000	27,840	77.3 %
% of United States Avg.	122.9 %	95.0 %	
Area Included	Hingham, Massachusetts	Bend, Oregon	

Data as of: July 01, 2005 File:

Again, the *Input City* dialogue box appears. Sarah types “Tuscaloosa, Alabama,” and then clicks on the **OK** button to return to the *Two-City Comparison* screen.



Next, Sarah goes to the input box called *Base City's Base Salary Level* and types in “\$23,000.”

Why this figure? Because her company’s main group of employees is electronic assemblers and a check of payroll records indicates that in Hingham, Massachusetts, this is about the average salary for these employees at present.

Geographic Assessor Consultant [North America Edition; UK/EU Edition]

File Edit View Options Library Internet Help

Two City Comparison | Graphs | Comparison List | Immigration Analysis

Calculations for Wage Earner Structure

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars	Base City: Hingham, Massachusetts United States Dollars	Destination City: Tuscaloosa, Alabama United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage Base City
23,000			
Salary	23,000	19,742	85.8 %
% of United States Avg.	102.5 %	88.0 %	
Cost of Living	23,000	17,844	77.6 %
% of United States Avg.	126.1 %	97.9 %	
Area Included	Hingham, Massachusetts	Tuscaloosa, Alabama	

Data as of: July 01, 2005 File:

The *Two-City Comparison* screen now shows that both the average salary and the cost of living in Tuscaloosa are lower than in Hingham, but not as much as the executives were expecting:

- The cost of living is just over 20% lower in Tuscaloosa.
- The average salary is just over 14% lower there.

Since the average salary represents actual labor costs, the best savings the company can expect is 14%—not what the executives want to hear.

Wanting to develop a more complete picture of the costs involved in this move, Sarah clicks on the **Comparison List** tab.

Geographic Assessor Consultant [North America Edition; UK/EU Edition]

File Edit View Options Library Internet Help

Two City Comparison Graph **Comparison List** Immigration Analysis

Calculations for Wage Earner Structure

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars 23,000	Base City: Hingham, Massachusetts United States Dollars	Destination City: Tuscaloosa, Alabama United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage of Base City
Salary	23,000	19,742	85.8 %
% of United States Avg.	102.5 %	88.0 %	
Cost of Living	23,000	17,844	77.6 %
% of United States Avg.	126.1 %	97.9 %	
Area Included	Hingham, Massachusetts	Tuscaloosa, Alabama	

Data as of: July 01, 2005 File:

This shows a comparison of the cities by income level. Sarah can adjust how this data is presented by clicking on the blue **Salary Structure Percentages** link at the top of the table. A drop-down menu appears that allows her to use percentages or actual salary figures. She selects **Percent Difference**.

Geographic Assessor - Consultant [North America; UK/EU]

File Edit View Options Library Internet Help

Two City Comparison Graphs **Comparison List** Immigration Analysis

Salary Comparison Table by Income Level
Salary Structure Percentages

Base City: Hingham, Massachusetts

#	Comparison Cities	Base City Annual Salary Levels in United States Dollars				
		20,000	40,000	60,000	80,000	100,000
1	Tuscaloosa, Alabama	83.4	89.6	93.2	95.0	95.4
2						

Data as of: January 01, 2006 File:

This table shows that as income rises, the percentage difference in annual income between Hingham and Tuscaloosa declines. However, this table defaults to salary ranges that are not specific to Sarah's company. So she adapts the figures to her company's salary structure.

The company has a series of pay grades in the plant. The midpoints look like this:

- Grade 1: \$25,000 per year
- Grade 2: \$31,250 per year
- Grade 3: \$37,500 per year
- Grade 4: \$43,750 per year
- Grade 5: \$50,000 per year

To adjust the grades, Sarah clicks on the link called **Base City Annual Salary Levels in United States Dollars** just above the column headers.

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Geographic Assessor - Consultant [North America; UK/EU]". The menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Options, Library, Internet, and Help. Below the menu bar are tabs for "Two City Comparison", "Graphs", "Comparison List", and "Immigration Analysis". The main content area is titled "Salary Comparison Table by Income Level" and "Salary Structure Percentages". It shows a "Base City: Hingham, Massachusetts" and a table with columns for income levels (20,000, 40,000, 60,000, 80,000, 100,000) and a row for "Tuscaloosa, Alabama" with percentages (83.4, 89.6, 93.2, 95.0, 95.4). A red box highlights the header "Base City Annual Salary Levels in United States Dollars".

#	Comparison Cities	Base City Annual Salary Levels in United States Dollars				
		20,000	40,000	60,000	80,000	100,000
1	Tuscaloosa, Alabama	83.4	89.6	93.2	95.0	95.4
2						

She then inputs the following figures in each range: \$25,000, \$31,250, \$37,500, \$43,750, \$50,000. Then she clicks on the **OK** button.

The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Modify Income Levels". It contains a section titled "Base City Annual Income Levels in United States Dollars" with five input fields containing the values: 25,000, 31,250, 37,500, 43,750, and 50,000. A red box highlights these input fields. Below the input fields are four buttons: "Default", "OK" (with a green checkmark), "Cancel" (with a red X), and "Help" (with a question mark).

This modified table validates the original figures. As income rises, the differential between Hingham and Tuscaloosa declines.

If the salary structure for this branch office were graphed:

- low-level jobs would have a midpoint about 12% below Hingham
- higher-level jobs would be 8.5% lower than Hingham

Lesson 2: Multinational Salary Structures

When moving a facility to another country, the average wage-cost difference may depend on the:

- mix of jobs
- AND
- average salary rates in an area

Problem Statement

For this exercise we'll look at the case of Eastern Fish Company (EFC), a fast-growing fast-food company headquartered in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The company has expanded throughout the United States and is now looking to grow internationally. However, EFC wants to start with countries that aren't too "psychologically distant." EFC has chosen Canada and the United Kingdom.

The company is tentatively looking at these locations:

- Burnaby, British Columbia
- Boucherville, Quebec
- Birmingham, United Kingdom
- Brighton, United Kingdom

Staffing: EFC uses the following standard staffing pattern in each location:

- Level 1: servers, cashiers and cleaning personnel (25 of these)
- Level 2: cooks and first-line supervision (10 of these)
- Level 3: branch managers (2 of these)

Salaries: Here is the average salary for each of these levels in Atlantic City:

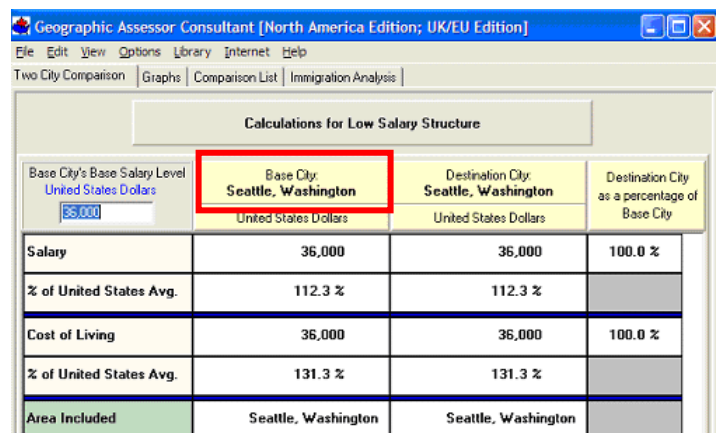
- Level 1: \$22,500 per year
- Level 2: \$46,500 per year
- Level 3: \$77,775 per year

You have been assigned the task of researching these questions:

- Do the foreign locations have a lower average salary for these positions?
- Which has the lowest average salary?

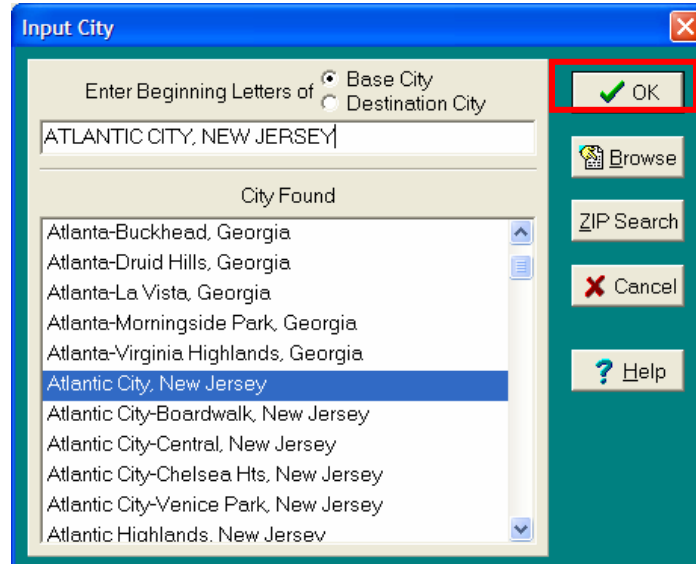
Start by opening the **Geographic Assessor** software. First you need to adjust the *Base City* to that of the Eastern Fish Company headquarters.

Click on the table column header titled **Base City**.



Calculations for Low Salary Structure			
Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars \$5,000	Base City: Seattle, Washington United States Dollars	Destination City: Seattle, Washington United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage of Base City
Salary	36,000	36,000	100.0 %
% of United States Avg.	112.3 %	112.3 %	
Cost of Living	36,000	36,000	100.0 %
% of United States Avg.	131.3 %	131.3 %	
Area Included	Seattle, Washington	Seattle, Washington	

When the *Input City* dialogue box opens, scroll through the list of cities or begin typing “Atlantic City, New Jersey” until it is highlighted in the list. Then click on the **OK** button to return to the *Two-City Comparison* screen.



Now click on the 'Destination City' column header.

Geographic Assessor Consultant [North America Edition; UK/EU Edition]

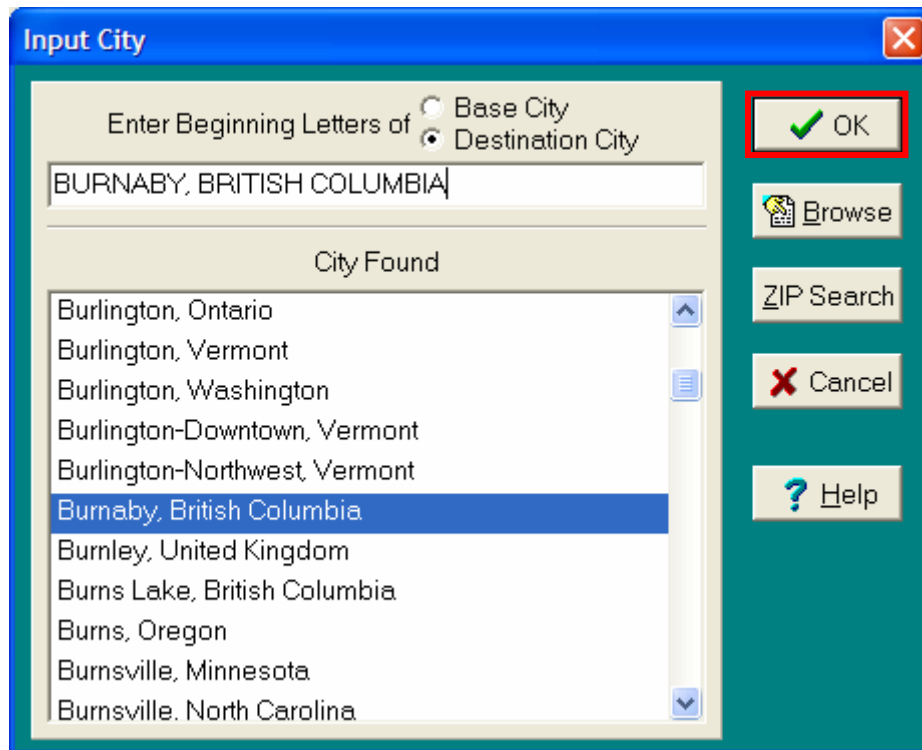
File Edit View Options Library Internet Help

Two City Comparison | Graphs | Comparison List | Immigration Analysis

Calculations for Low Salary Structure

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars \$6,000	Base City: Atlantic City, New Jersey United States Dollars	Destination City: Seattle, Washington United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage of Base City
Salary	36,000	36,691	101.9 %
% of United States Avg.	110.2 %	112.3 %	
Cost of Living	36,000	37,283	103.6 %
% of United States Avg.	126.3 %	130.8 %	
Area Included	Atlantic City, New Jersey	Seattle, Washington	

Again, the *Input City* dialogue box appears. Begin typing in the first potential site for the new store: “Burnaby, British Columbia.” Once it appears highlighted in the list of cities, click on the **OK** button to return to the *Two-City Comparison* screen.



Next, go to the input field for *Base City's Base Salary Level* and type in \$22,500, the average salary for Level 1 employees in Atlantic City.

The 'Geographic Assessor Consultant' software shows the 'Comparison List' tab. The 'Calculations for Wage Earner Structure' table is displayed, comparing Atlantic City, New Jersey and Burnaby, British Columbia. The 'Base City's Base Salary Level' is set to 22,500.

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars	Base City: Atlantic City, New Jersey United States Dollars	Destination City: Burnaby, British Columbia United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage of Base City
22,500	22,500	21,762	96.7 %
Salary	108.0 %	104.4 %	
% of United States Avg.	22,500	24,455	108.7 %
Cost of Living	130.8 %	142.2 %	
% of United States Avg.	Atlantic City, New Jersey	Burnaby, British Columbia	
Area Included			

The *Two-City Comparison* screen now shows that at this earnings level, Burnaby salaries are about 3% lower than they are in Atlantic City.

Notice, however, that the cost of living is significantly higher in Burnaby (108.7% of the cost of living in Atlantic City).

You could compare the salaries for the other income levels (and other cities) by following these same steps, but there is an easier way.

Click on the **Comparison List** tab at the top of the screen. A screen titled *Salary Comparison Table by Income Level* appears. The table already shows Atlantic City as the base city and Burnaby as the first comparison city. Now you'll input the other cities. Click on Row 2 beneath "Burnaby, British Columbia."

The screenshot shows the 'Geographic Assessor - Consultant [North America; UK/EU]' window. The 'Comparison List' tab is selected. The title is 'Salary Comparison Table by Income Level Salary Structure Percentages'. The base city is 'Atlantic City, New Jersey'. The table has columns for comparison cities and base city annual salary levels in US dollars (20,000, 40,000, 60,000, 80,000, 100,000). Row 2 is highlighted in cyan and has a red border around it.

#	Comparison Cities	Base City Annual Salary Levels in United States [
		20,000	40,000	60,000	80,000	100,000
1	Burnaby, British Columbia	99.0	85.8	79.5	76.0	74.8
2						

Data as of: January 01, 2006

The *Input City* dialogue box appears. Begin typing in "Boucherville, Quebec." When it appears highlighted in the list, click on the **OK** button. Follow this same step by clicking on Rows 3 and 4 to input "Birmingham, United Kingdom" and "Brighton, United Kingdom."

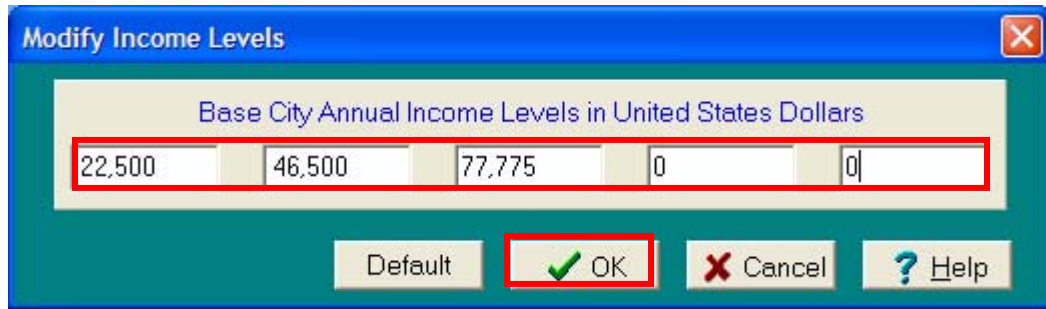
The screenshot shows the same software window, but now with four rows of data. The title is 'Salary Comparison Table by Income Level Salary Structure Percentages'. The base city is 'Atlantic City, New Jersey'. The table has columns for comparison cities and base city annual salary levels in US dollars (20,000, 40,000, 60,000, 80,000, 100,000). The header for the salary levels is highlighted with a red box.

#	Comparison Cities	Base City Annual Salary Levels in United States Dollars				
		20,000	40,000	60,000	80,000	100,000
1	Burnaby, British Columbia	99.0	85.8	79.5	76.0	74.8
2	Boucherville, Quebec	92.3	79.9	74.3	71.4	70.4
3	Birmingham, United Kingdom	127.4	90.4	76.1	68.7	64.7
4	Brighton, United Kingdom	127.4	89.7	75.9	68.8	65.0

Data as of: January 01, 2006

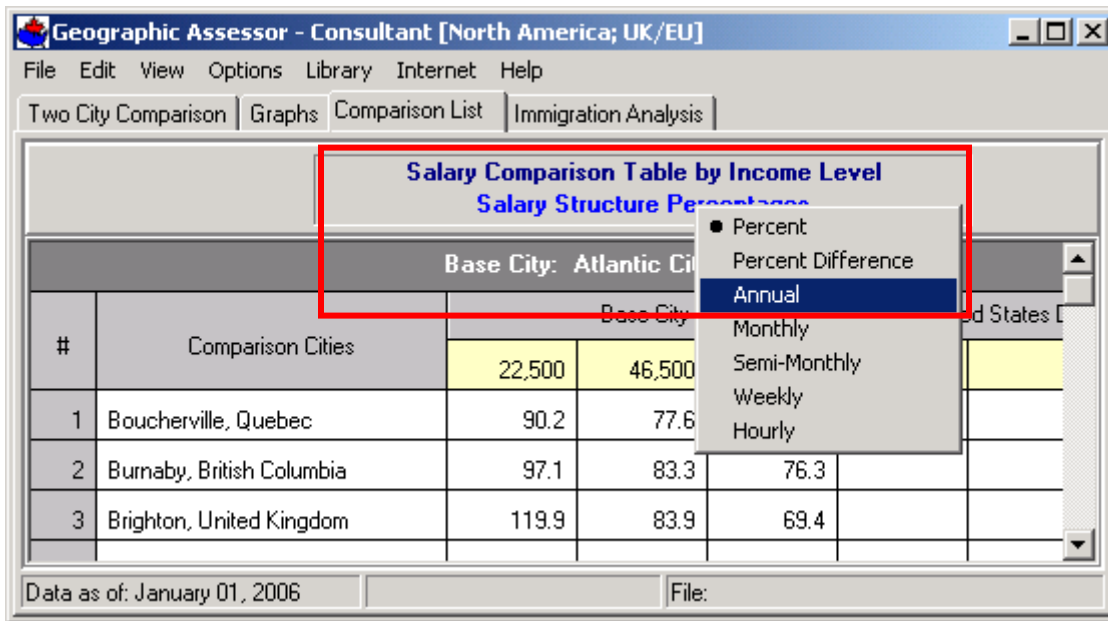
What do these results show? The screen gives you salary levels in these cities compared to Atlantic City. The columns show percentile differences for specific earnings levels. You can adjust these salary levels by clicking on *Base City Annual Income Levels in United States Dollars*. (The type of currency used changes based on the location of the Base City. At any time, you can manually adjust the currency used by selecting **Edit | Currency** at the top of the screen.)

When the *Modify Income Levels* box opens, input the three levels you have been given for your research comparisons: \$22,500, \$46,500 and \$77,775. Type '0' in the remaining edit boxes. Now click on the **OK** button to return to the Comparison List screen.

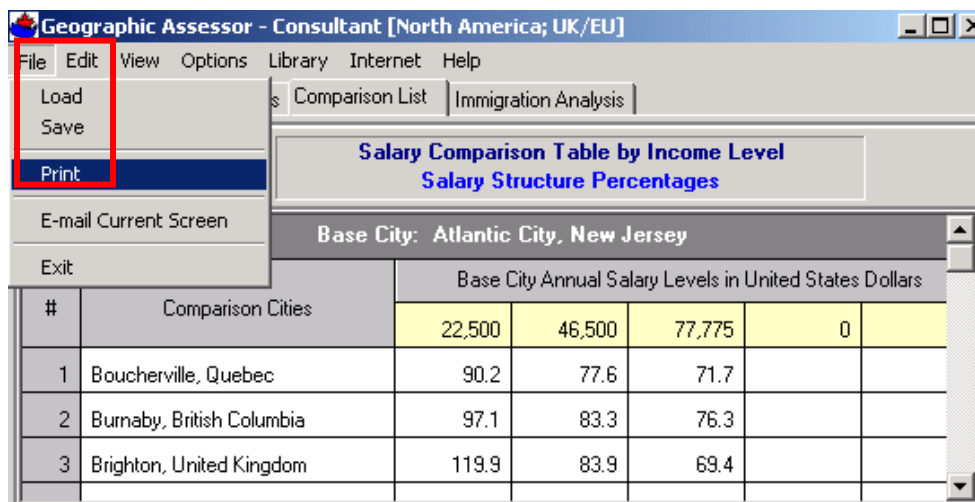


This screen shows that all the cities have lower average salaries overall, but in order to do an accurate analysis, you will need to manipulate the data further.

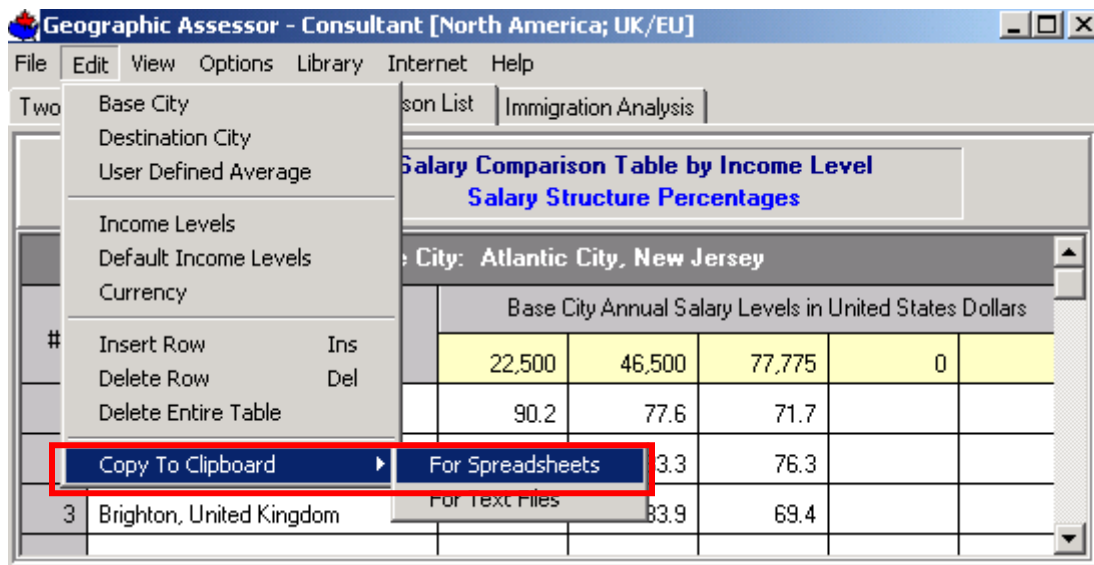
First, change the data in the table from percentages to dollars by clicking on **Salary Structure Percentages** near the top of the screen. Then select 'Annual' from the drop-down menu.



To print out the data on this screen, click on **File** at the top left of the screen. Then select **Print** from the drop-down menu.



To export the data to another application, such as Microsoft Excel, select **Edit | Copy to Clipboard | For Spreadsheets**. Next, open a spreadsheet application, and use **Edit | Paste** or the keyboard command “Ctrl” + “v” to insert the data.



Now you need to develop a table in which you multiply the annual salary level reported by the software times the number of employees in each level. This will give you an accurate picture of what the total salary bill (less benefit costs) would be for each location.

Using the Copy to Clipboard feature, copy the data directly from the **Geographic Assessor** software *Comparison List* table to a spreadsheet where you could add formulas like those noted in the table below.

City	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total	Average
Atlantic City	\$22,500 x 25 = \$562,500	\$46,500 x 10 = \$465,000	\$77,775 x 2 = \$155,550	\$1,183,050	\$31,974
Boucherville	\$20,128 x 25 = \$503,200	\$35,534 x 10 = \$355,340	\$54,977 x 2 = \$109,954	\$968,494	\$26,176
Brighton	\$26,903 x 25 = \$672,575	\$40,133 x 10 = \$401,330	\$55,341 x 2 = \$110,682	\$1,184,587	\$32,016
Birmingham	\$26,917 x 25 = \$672,925	\$40,386 x 10 = \$403,860	\$55,269 x 2 = \$110,538	\$1,191,323	\$32,198
Burnaby	\$21,762 x 25 = \$544,050	\$38,254 x 10 = \$382,540	\$58,652 x 2 = \$117,304	\$1,043,894	\$28,213

Research Results

Your finished table should look like the above. The average salary in the far right column of the table was found by dividing the data in the total column by the number of employees (37) in the new site. Your research

shows that Boucherville would be the LEAST expensive site, and Birmingham would be the MOST expensive when it comes to labor costs.

Lesson 3: Prevailing Wage Determinations

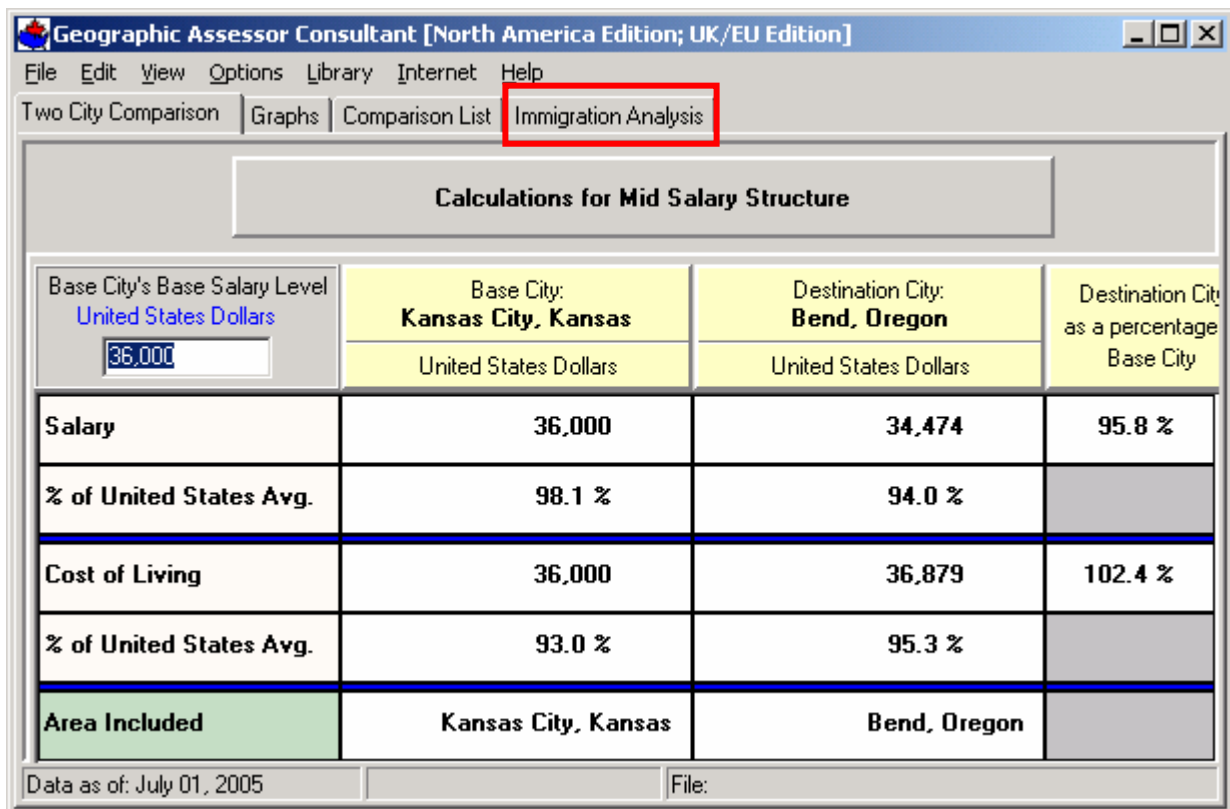
ERI's **Geographic Assessor** Consultant Edition provides straight Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) wage survey data in an easy-to-view format. This data is useful for determining prevailing wages needed in H-1B immigration visa applications and bids on government contracts.

Problem Statement

Your company does research and development in the field of Biomedicine. It has locations in Buena Park, California and Albuquerque, New Mexico. Recently, hiring enough scientists and engineers has been very difficult. The company uses engineers and physicists interchangeably, so long as they have experience in the field of Biomedicine.

Through a foreign recruitment source, you have found a viable applicant from India: Ganesh Lahiri. This applicant has 7 years of experience in Biomedicine Engineering, although his degree is in Physics. You have started the process of hiring Ganesh and know that as part of the immigration application process you must show you are going to pay him the prevailing wage. To research this wage, you'll use ERI's **Geographic Assessor** software.

Begin by clicking on the **Immigration Analysis** tab.

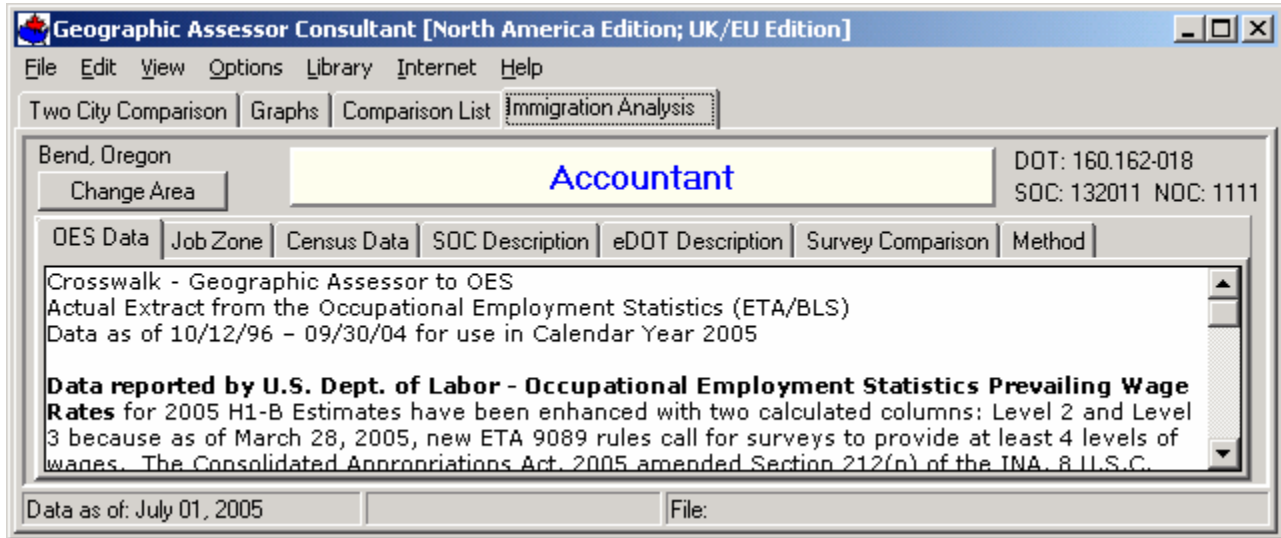


The screenshot shows the 'Geographic Assessor Consultant' software interface. The 'Immigration Analysis' tab is selected and highlighted with a red box. The main window displays 'Calculations for Mid Salary Structure' with a table comparing Kansas City, Kansas (Base City) and Bend, Oregon (Destination City). The base city's salary is set to \$36,000. The table shows that the destination city's salary is \$34,474 (95.8% of the base city's salary), the cost of living is \$36,879 (102.4% of the base city's cost of living), and the area included is Bend, Oregon.

Base City's Base Salary Level United States Dollars	Base City: Kansas City, Kansas United States Dollars	Destination City: Bend, Oregon United States Dollars	Destination City as a percentage Base City
<input type="text" value="36,000"/>	36,000	34,474	95.8 %
% of United States Avg.	98.1 %	94.0 %	
Cost of Living	36,000	36,879	102.4 %
% of United States Avg.	93.0 %	95.3 %	
Area Included	Kansas City, Kansas	Bend, Oregon	

Data as of: July 01, 2005

The *Immigration Analysis* screen reports OES salary survey extracts. On this screen, note the position title bar at the top. Currently, it displays the position of *Accountant*. We'll be changing this to an appropriate title for Ganesh.

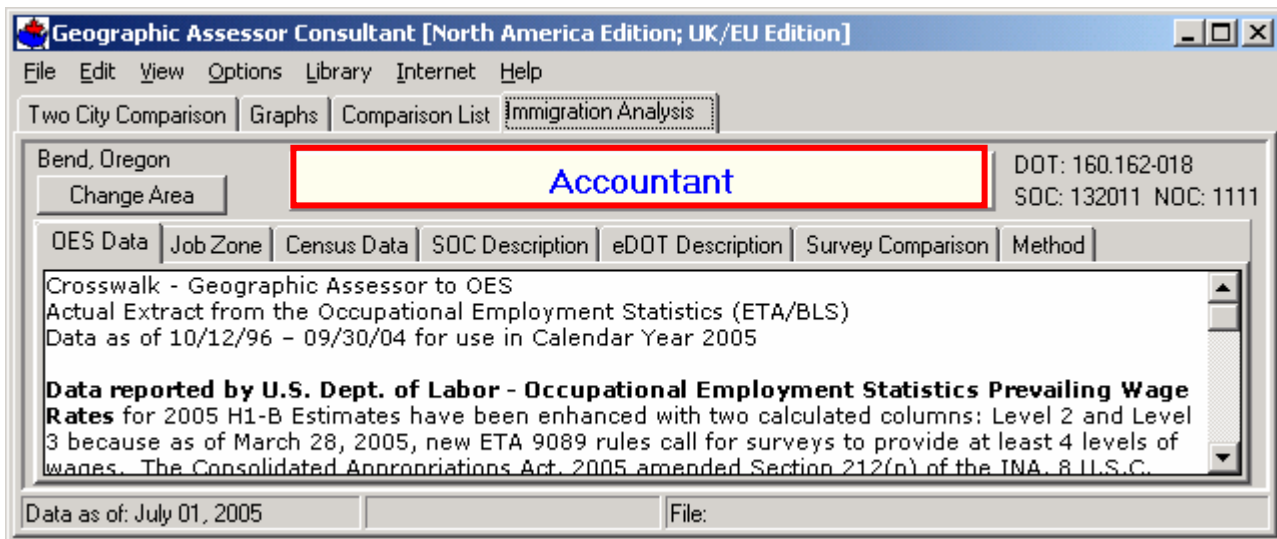


To the right of the position title bar are the DOT, SOC, and NOC position codes for the title selected. To the left of the position title bar is a *Change Area* button. We'll be using this to adjust the location for your company's labs.

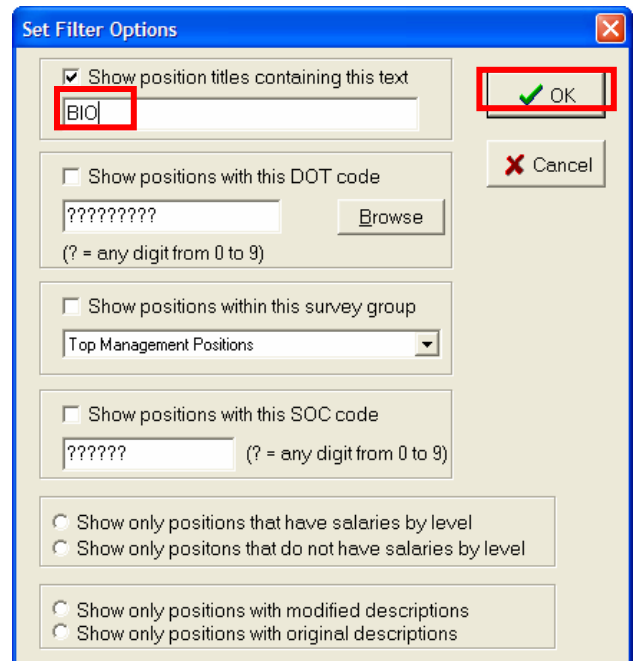
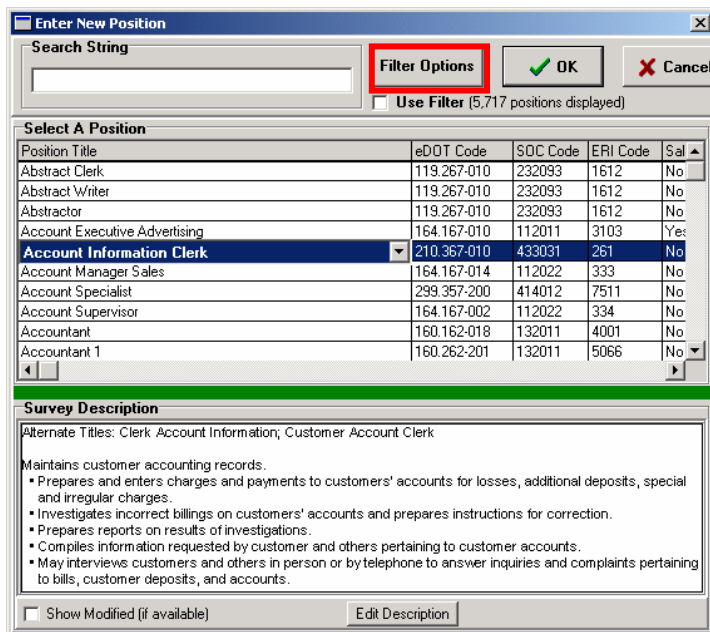
Below the position title bar are 7 sub-tabs. These bring together US OES data, US Census data, position descriptions, and salary survey input capability.

- **OES Data:** This is the first tab selected. We'll use it to find prevailing wage data for Ganesh.
- **Job Zone:** This tab displays the experience, education, and job training requirements for the position selected:
- **Census Data:** This gives you the US Census estimates for the number of those employed in the position and area you have selected. The data is broken down by gender and race.
- **SOC Description:** This lets you quickly review the 6-digit SOC code and a brief position description for the job title you have selected.
- **DOT Description:** This includes an abbreviated job description as taken from the US government's *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (DOT). [General Administrative Letter 2-98](#) refers to DOT crosswalks in both Section II (D) Nature of Job and II (E) Determining Similar Levels of Skills.
- **Survey Comparison:** This tab helps you find private salary surveys for the position. We'll explain how to use it later.
- **Methodology:** This explains the methodology for **ERIGA** immigration analyses. OES data as shown on the **Geographic Assessor** is acceptable for immigration analyses; but as we will find out, use of this data may lead to overpayments.

Now it's time to start our analyses. Right now, we're on the OES data screen. Currently the default position of *Accountant* is selected. We need to enter a new position title. Click on the **position title banner**.

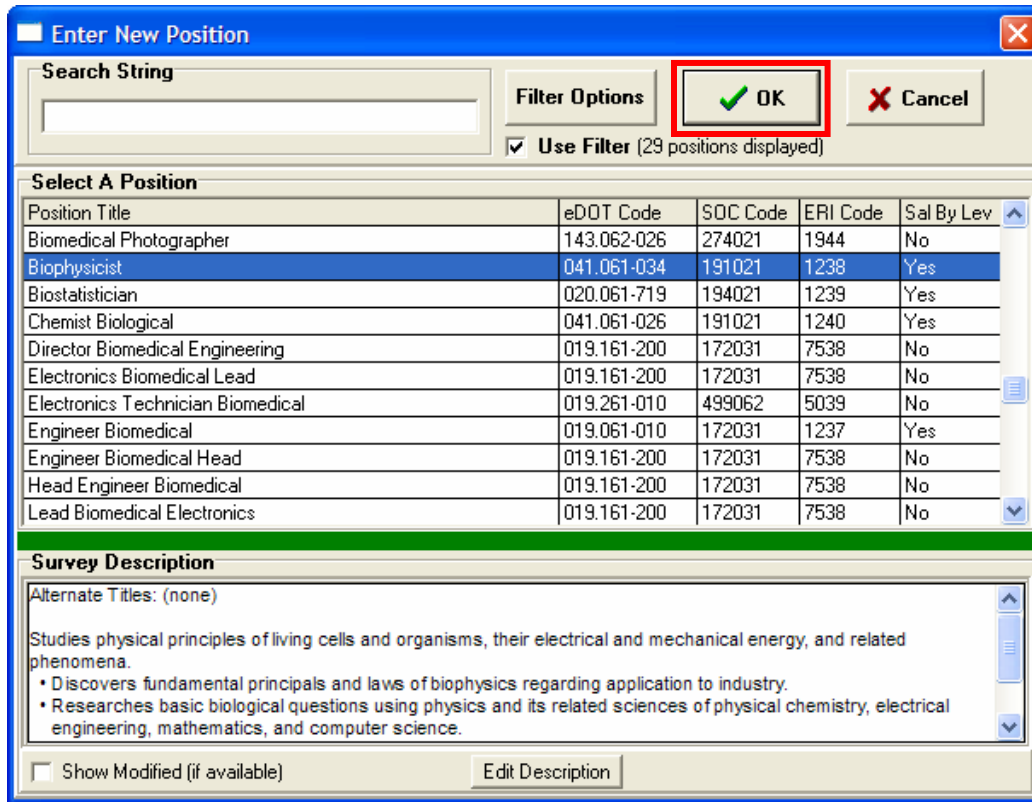


The *Enter New Position* dialog box opens. To find an applicable job title, click on the **Filter Options** button near the top of the screen. Type "bio" in the top field. Then click on the **OK** button.

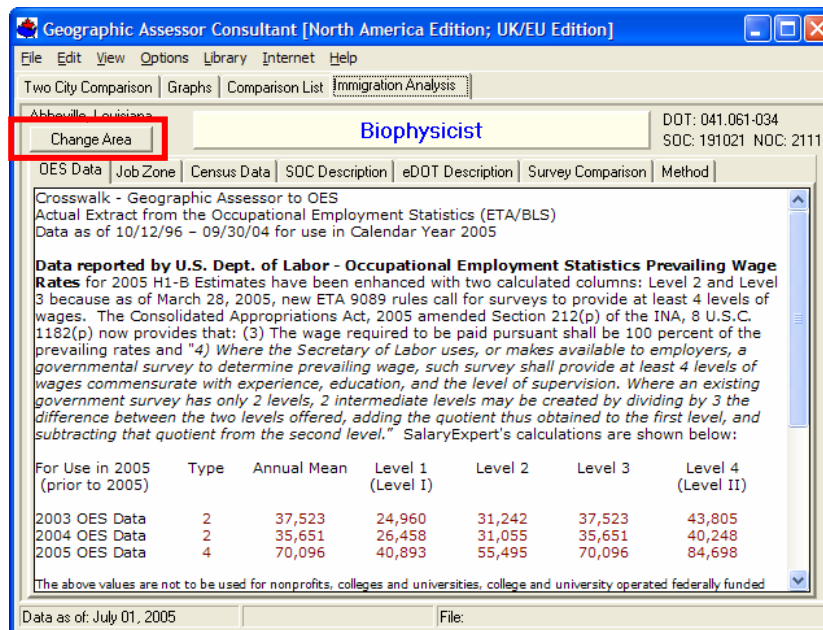


A list of 29 position titles containing *Bio* will appear. Click on each position title to highlight it, and a short description will appear in the lower window. Two of these positions seem appropriate for Ganesh. They are Biomedical Engineer and Biophysicist.

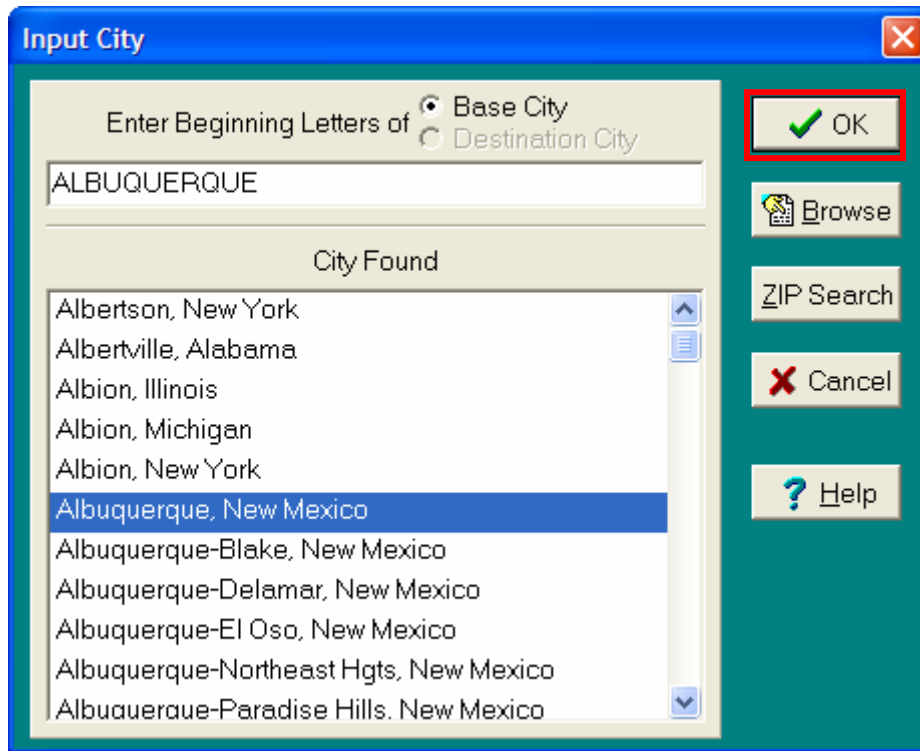
We'll want to research salary levels for each one. Click on the **Biophysicist** job title to highlight it. Then click the **OK** button to return to the OES screen.



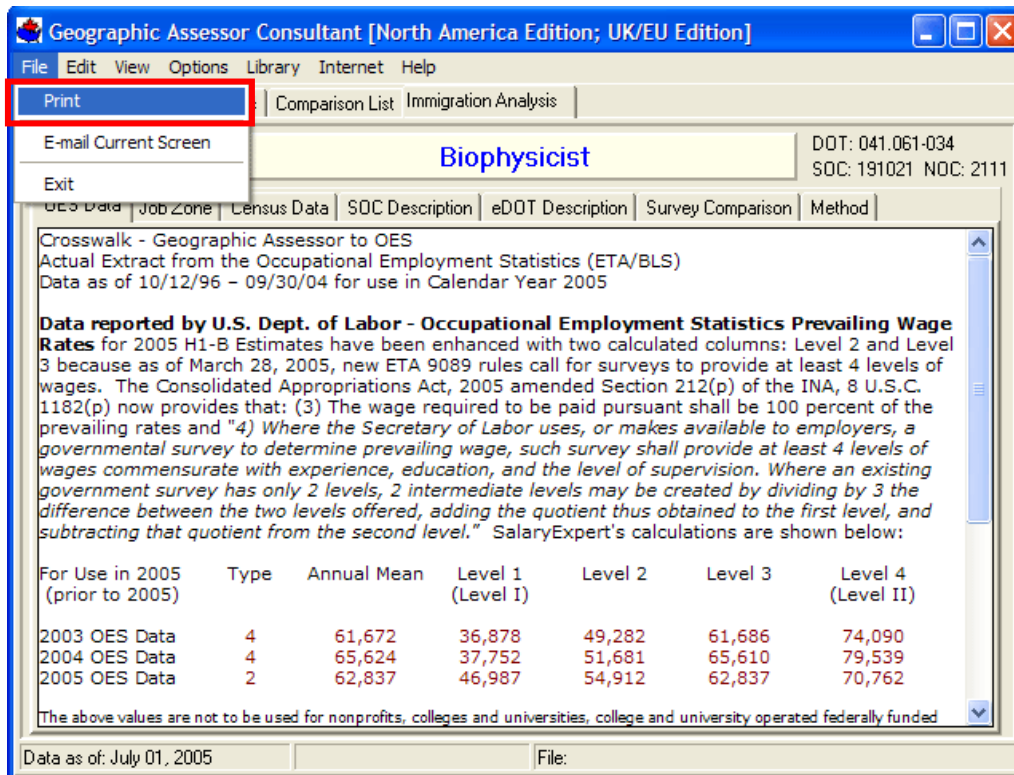
The OES Data Screen now shows data for the *Biophysicist* position. But in order to find accurate information, we also need to specify the geographic location. Click on the **Change Area** button.



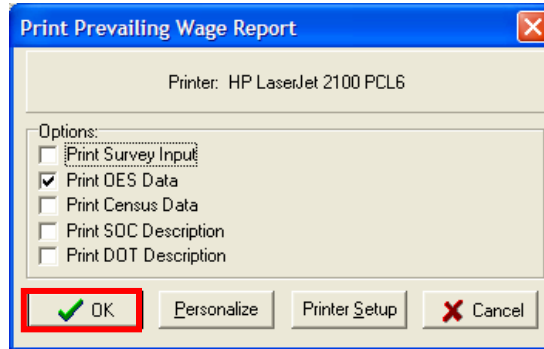
The *Input City* dialog box appears. You could scroll through the list to find the right location, but instead begin typing "Albuquerque" until it appears highlighted in the list. Then click on the **OK** button.



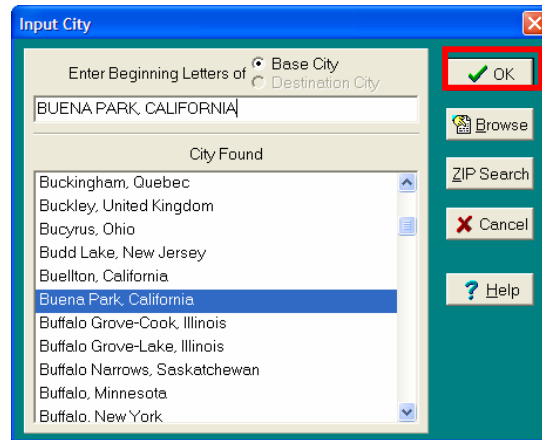
Back again on the OES Data Screen, you have data for the correct job title and location. You'll want to print out this screen for future reference. Select the **File | Print** menu from the top of the screen.



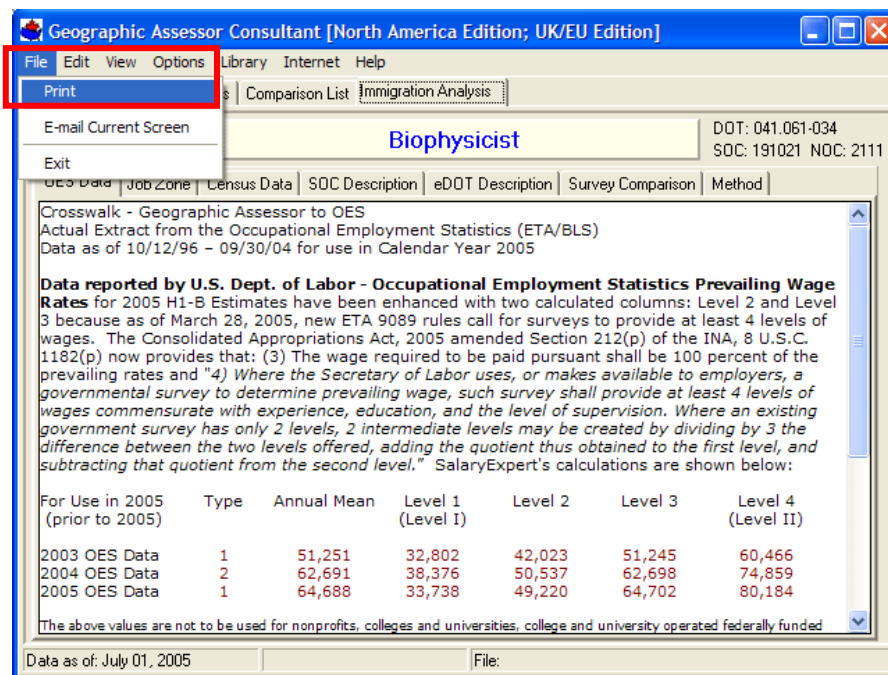
Uncheck all of the boxes except the one next to *Print OES Data*. Click the **OK** button.



Because you're not sure where Ganesh will work, you also need to research the wage for this position in Buena Park, California. So you'll want to change the geographic area again. Remember, you'll click on the **Change Area** button. When the *Input City* dialog box appears, type in "Buena Park, California" until it appears highlighted in the list. Then you'll click on the **OK** button.



You'll also want to print the page with OES data for a Biophysicist in Buena Park, California by clicking on **File | Print**.



Now you need to change the job to Biomedical Engineer.

Again, you'll click on the **position title banner**. When the *Enter New Position* dialog box opens, you'll type in "Biomedical Engineer" until it appears highlighted in the list of positions. Then click on the **OK** button.

OES Data for a Biomedical Engineer in Buena Park now appears. Print out this data before proceeding by clicking on **File | Print**.

Geographic Assessor Consultant [North America Edition; UK/EU Edition]

File Edit View Options Library Internet Help

Print Comparison List Immigration Analysis

E-mail Current Screen

Exit

Biomedical Engineer DOT: 019.061-010
SOC: 172031 NOC: 2148

OES Data Job Zone Census Data SOC Description eDOT Description Survey Comparison Method

Crosswalk - Geographic Assessor to OES
Actual Extract from the Occupational Employment Statistics (ETA/BLS)
Data as of 10/12/96 - 09/30/04 for use in Calendar Year 2005

Data reported by U.S. Dept. of Labor - Occupational Employment Statistics Prevailing Wage Rates for 2005 H1-B Estimates have been enhanced with two calculated columns: Level 2 and Level 3 because as of March 28, 2005, new ETA 9089 rules call for surveys to provide at least 4 levels of wages. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005 amended Section 212(p) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1182(p) now provides that: (3) The wage required to be paid pursuant shall be 100 percent of the prevailing rates and "4) Where the Secretary of Labor uses, or makes available to employers, a governmental survey to determine prevailing wage, such survey shall provide at least 4 levels of wages commensurate with experience, education, and the level of supervision. Where an existing government survey has only 2 levels, 2 intermediate levels may be created by dividing by 3 the difference between the two levels offered, adding the quotient thus obtained to the first level, and subtracting that quotient from the second level." SalaryExpert's calculations are shown below:

For Use in 2005 (prior to 2005)	Type	Annual Mean	Level 1 (Level I)	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4 (Level II)
2003 OES Data	1	88,234	48,755	68,494	88,234	107,973
2004 OES Data	1	98,925	50,066	74,499	98,932	123,365
2005 OES Data	1	70,907	42,266	56,590	70,914	85,238

Data as of: July 01, 2005 File:

Now you need to change the area back to Albuquerque. Click on the **Change Area** button. When the *Input City* dialog box appears, you'll type in "Albuquerque, New Mexico" until it appears highlighted in the list. Then click on the **OK** button.

OES Data for a Biomedical Engineer in Albuquerque now appears. Print out this data before proceeding by clicking on **File | Print**. You could also email this data by selecting **File | Print | Email**.

EMail - Geographic Assessor - Immigration Analysis

E-Mail Preview

Attachments (52 kb)

Survey Input OES Description Census Data Send E-mail to ERI

OES Data DOT Description Screen Snapshot

Click on "To", "Cc", "Bcc" to bring up your address book or simply type in one or more addresses.

To: hr@abccompany.com

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject: Prevailing Wages

Message (optional):

Send E-Mail Cancel

Comparing the data

This research shows large pay disparities depending upon which job title your company uses and where Ganesh works.

Note: Since he is fully qualified and has 7 years of experience, you should use the Level 4 means.

POSITION	ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO	BUENA PARK, CALIFORNIA
Biophysicist	\$70,762	\$80,184
Biomedical Engineer	\$79,227	\$85,238

Why the wage differences?

OES data can vary from your expectations due to 2 factors:

- position title
- geographic area

Position title. Some of the disparity in your results is explained by the nature of the OES data. Because the OES groups jobs into a limited number of job categories, another occupation could be throwing the mean off for this particular title. Note that the OES combines Biophysicists and Biochemists into one job, which may lower or raise wage rates depending upon demand for these two different skills. In contrast, Biomedical Engineer is a classification unto itself. In addition, most positions in the OES survey include first-line supervision (making averages higher).

Geographic area. OES prevailing wages cover different geographic areas based on the position selected.

These levels are defined as follows:

Level	Geographic Area
1	MSA, PMSA, or Balance of State Area
2	Contiguous Areas
3	Statewide
4	US Nationwide

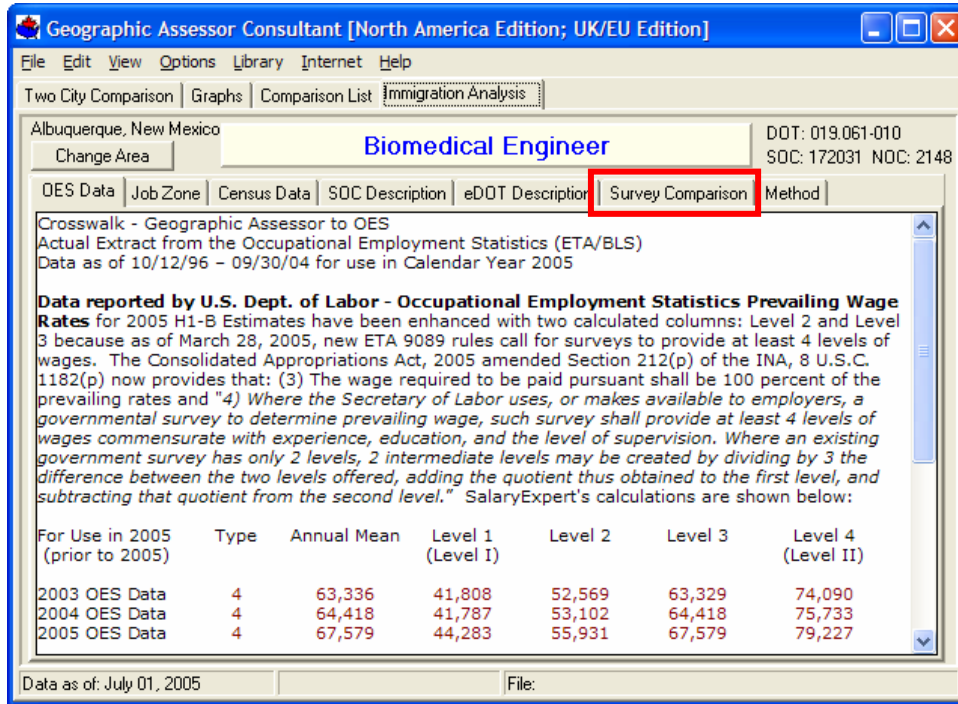
Unusual occupations or occupations in lightly populated areas may not have sufficient local data. In these cases, the area would expand to include statewide (3) data or nationwide (4) data.

These differences in survey areas can skew wages.

Using alternative data

Your organization may find these OES wage rates are high compared with what you are used to paying US national employees.

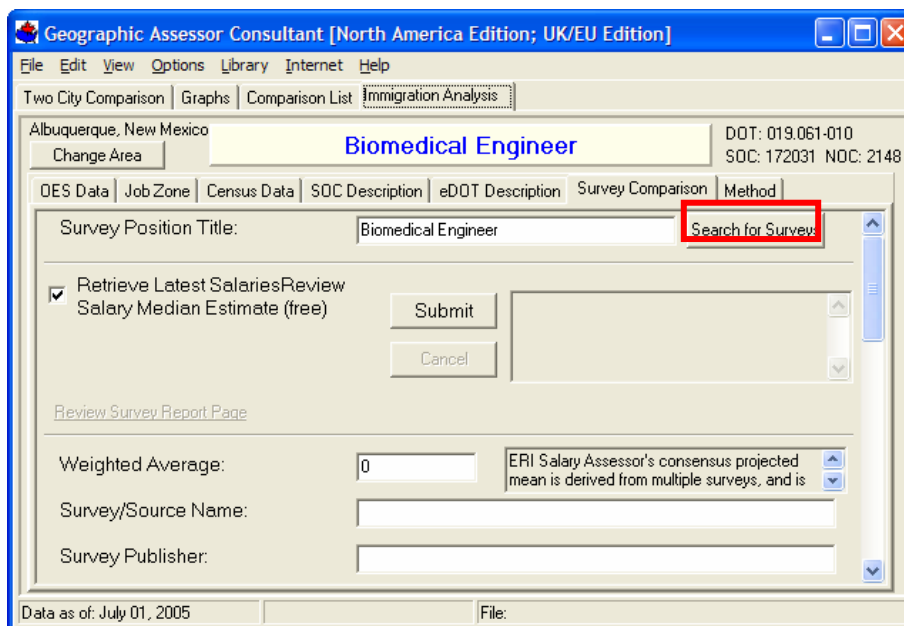
Because of this, the **Geographic Assessor** software provides you with a way to check on this data. Click on the **Survey Comparison** sub-tab below the position title bar.



This screen was designed to help you locate a private survey that reports a "competitive rate" for the position. You can then compare this to the data found in the most recent OES salary survey (as reported by the **Geographic Assessor** software). If the OES data appears to be inflated compared to the private survey results, then your organization may wish to present alternative survey data to the State Employment Security Agency (SESA).

This screen gives you 2 options for retrieving private survey data.

Click on the **Search for Surveys** button at the top of the screen to open up a list of private surveys (and their Internet sites – where available) that cover the selected position title.



If there are no surveys available, your second option is to retrieve a SalariesReview.com single-position salary report for \$19.

For our research, SalariesReview.com information presents a somewhat different picture of the prevailing median salary. These differences may reflect the way in which the OES groups jobs into categories.

SalariesReview.com Median Salary Data

POSITION	ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO	BUENA PARK, CALIFORNIA
Biophysicist	\$53,499	\$65,822
Biomedical Engineer	\$59,975	\$65,548

OES Survey

POSITION	ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO	BUENA PARK, CALIFORNIA
Biophysicist	\$70,762	\$80,184
Biomedical Engineer	\$79,227	\$85,238

The SalariesReview.com data tells you that you may want to purchase private survey data to submit as the prevailing wage (instead of using inflated OES data).

SalariesReview.com data is only a guide.

Because SalariesReview.com reports median rates, not weighted averages, you **CANNOT** submit these reports with prevailing wage applications.

However, SalariesReview reports can help you determine if private survey data may be more favorable (such as those surveys listed when you click on **ERIGA's Search for Surveys** button on its **Survey Comparison** tab).

Likewise, ERI's [Salary Assessor](#)[®] software provides salary information for over 5,000 positions, but this survey data CANNOT be used for prevailing wage purposes. ERI's **Salary Assessor** software reports medians and projected means from multiple sources. Also, it does not report single year, weighted averages, nor are its consensus results (of a combined analysis of numerous surveys) considered to be a single "private survey."

Remember: Immigration analyses require use of either a single private survey or the latest OES data. In addition, General Administrative Letter 2-98 prohibits the use of medians AND requires means.

To learn more about prevailing wages, please see ERI Distance Learning Center [Course 14: Prevailing Wage Analyses](#).

More Information

For more instructions on the [Geographic Assessor](#) software's uses and features, click **Help | On Current Screen** while using this software. ERI technical support files are also available online at: <http://www.eri.com/TechSupport/NewTechFaq/index.htm>. In addition, ERI offers live subscriber training sessions on Thursday mornings. Visit our [Conference Call webpage](#) to sign up for a teleconference training seminar this month.