



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

Commissioner's Office

Contact Casey Kyler-West, Communications Director
TELEPHONE: (406)444-1520
FAX: (406)444-1394
e-mail: ckylerwest@mt.gov

P.O. BOX 1728
HELENA, MT
59624-1728

Barbara Wagner, Senior Economist
(406) 444-5474

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(HELENA) --- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DOWN FOR SECOND STRAIGHT MONTH

(HELENA) --- Montana's unemployment rate decreased by 0.1% for the second straight month, ending at 7.6% in October. The U.S. unemployment rate also decreased by 0.1% to 9.0%.

"Montana's economy has seen slight growth in employment, personal income, and gross domestic product," said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly. "The recent unemployment declines are encouraging news, and I hope that job growth continues through the holiday season."

Final estimates for the third quarter indicate that total employment, which includes payroll, self-employed, and agricultural workers, gained about 2,200 jobs over the past year. Total employment hit a low in December 2009 and has been trending upwards during 2011 after little change in 2010. Preliminary estimates for total employment in October indicate continued slow job growth of about 600 jobs.

Payroll employment estimates indicate stronger growth in the past year, posting an increase of about 6,000 jobs from the third quarter of 2010 to the third quarter of 2011. Strong private sector growth across most industries has offset job losses in the government sector. The manufacturing industry continues to experience slow job losses, while the construction industry has stabilized with little employment change in the last two quarters. Preliminary employment estimates for October indicate continued job growth of about 1,800 payroll jobs.

Prices declined in October, with a 0.1% decline in the seasonally adjusted Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). A decline in the energy index offset small increases in the food index and all items less food and energy index. The index for all items less food and energy (also called core inflation) increased by 0.1%.

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**Unemployment figures are seasonally-adjusted. Seasonally-adjusted numbers remove the effects of events that follow a more or less regular month-to-month pattern each year. These adjustments make nonseasonal patterns easier to identify. The margin of error for the unemployment rate is plus or minus 1.0 percentage points at the 90 percent*

confidence level. All questions relating to the calculation of unemployment rates should be directed to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau at 1-800-541-3904.

The November 2011 Labor Situation Report will be released on Tuesday, December 20, 2011.

******* INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET *******



Visit our website at www.ourfactsyourfuture for additional information and analysis, including answers to questions about the unemployment rate, county labor force information, industry employment levels, and annual employment data for Montana's Indian Reservations. Check out this month's Economy at a Glance article on gender differences in labor force participation and wages!