



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

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(HELENA) --- UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS HALF POINT TO 7.1%

(HELENA) --- Montana's unemployment rate dropped by 0.5% to 7.1% in November, marking the third straight month of unemployment rate decreases. The U.S. unemployment rate also experienced a large decrease, dropping 0.4% to 8.6% in November.

"Montana's economy continues to recover, and the pace of job growth is improving. It is nice to share positive economic news during the holiday season," said Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly.

The drop in the unemployment rate is primarily due to an increase of about 1,730 jobs over the last month. The number of unemployed fell 2,230 over the last month. Total employment estimates have posted job growth throughout 2011, with the exception of the third quarter.

Payroll employment estimates, however, indicate a drop of 2,600 jobs over the month, with employment losses concentrated in Government, Construction, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation. Contradictory results from the two employment estimates are not unusual because of a small sample size, and preliminary estimates are regularly revised in the following month when additional employment information becomes available. Both the total and payroll employment estimates have indicated job growth over the past year.

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) was unchanged for November after price declines in October. The energy index declined for the second straight month, offsetting increases other prices. The index for all items less food and energy (also called core inflation) increased by 0.2%.

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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 December 2011 Labor Situation Report will be released on Tuesday, January 24, 2012.

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



Visit our website at [www.ourfactsyourfuture](http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org) for additional information and analysis, including answers to questions about the unemployment rate, industry employment levels, and annual employment data for Montana's Indian Reservations. Check out this month's Economy at a Glance article on the prevalence of environmentally friendly business practices in Montana!

County labor force information can be found by using this link:

<http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=205>