

Local, state, national unemployment rates continue to climb

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson
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LAKE COUNTY – The number of people without work in Lake County, California and the nation continued to rise in October, according to the latest report on unemployment statistics.

Lake County's unemployment rate climbed to 11.2 percent for October, according to the Employment Development Department (EDD).

That's up from 10 percent unemployment in September, and a big increase from the October 2007 rate of 7.9 percent, as Lake County News has reported.

Statewide, unemployment was at 8.2 percent, according to the EDD, up from 7.7 percent in September and 5.7 percent in October 2007.

The U.S. unemployment rate also increased in October to 6.5 percent, the EDD reported.

October's unemployment rate ranks Lake at No. 50 among California's 58 counties, based on EDD statistics.

Of the county's 26,480-person workforce, 2,950 people were out of work in October.

The lowest unemployment in the state was found in Marin County, with 4.9 percent unemployment.

One of Lake's neighboring counties, Napa, ranked No. 2 for lowest unemployment, with 5.4 percent, while Sonoma ranked No. 7 with 6.2 percent.

Other neighboring counties included Mendocino, No. 10, 6.7 percent; Yolo, No. 23, 7.9 percent; Glenn, No. 39, 9.4 percent; and Colusa, No. 53, 11.8 percent.

A federal survey referred to in the EDD's report estimates the number of Californians holding jobs in October was 17,053,000, a decrease of 14,000 from September, and down 162,000 from the employment total in October of last year. A survey of California businesses showed a decrease of 101,300 jobs between October 2007 and October 2008.

“Our economy continues to be difficult, especially for people who have lost their jobs or who have begun looking for one. As our state unemployment rate rises, my administration continues to work hard to generate jobs and help re-train people who have lost jobs in our hard-hit industries,” Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said.

Through the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, \$33 million in job training funds have been allocated to military veterans and to regions of the state hardest hit by the tough financial times, Schwarzenegger said. The grant funding is meant to provide education, training, and job placement assistance for thousands of residents across the state.

Schwarzenegger said the state's Unemployment Insurance Fund needs to be fixed in order to keep it solvent, and with current pressures it's now “racing toward the red.” He has a plan in place to address the problems which the Legislature didn't pass earlier this week.

Last week, President George W. Bush signed a bill that extends unemployment benefits seven weeks. That's in addition to a 13-week extension that the EDD said was part of federal legislation enacted in June, which helps workers who have exhausted their regular unemployment insurance benefits.

The federal legislation also gave an additional 13-week extension to workers in high unemployment states such as California. So, in total, the state's workers have up to 33 weeks of extended benefits, according to the EDD.

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