

Texas Workforce Press Release

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Unemployment Rate Rises Slightly to 5.1 Percent

AUSTIN — The Texas seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased to 5.1 percent in September, up from 5.0 percent in August 2008 and 4.3 percent in September 2007. Texas' unemployment rate remained well below the national rate of 6.1 percent. Seasonally adjusted nonagricultural employment in Texas fell by 4,000 jobs in September. Texas employers have added 247,900 jobs over the past 12 months, for an annual growth rate of 2.4 percent.

“September job losses in Texas reflect continued turbulence in the national economy,” said Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Chairman Tom Pauken. “Hurricane Ike has had a major impact on the state’s unemployment claims, which have swelled by nearly 300 percent over the past month. Due to the statistical formula used in our monthly calculations, the negative effect of Hurricane Ike won’t begin to register until our October numbers are released.”

The Midland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) experienced the lowest unemployment rate in the state at 3.2 percent (not seasonally adjusted). The Odessa MSA was second at 3.8 percent, followed by the Amarillo MSA at 3.9 percent.

Despite the net job loss for September, many industries experienced job growth. Education and Health Services added 2,300 positions in September, for a total of 38,800 jobs created since September 2007. Leisure and Hospitality increased by 1,600 positions last month, for a total of 41,900 jobs added in the past 12 months. Professional and Business Services saw gains of 1,100 positions in September, with 59,400 jobs added over the year.

“With nearly 11.8 million workers, Texas has recorded the largest labor force in the state’s history, despite national economic challenges,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Ronny Congleton.

Natural Resources and Mining grew by 2,200 jobs in September, adding 18,000 positions in the past 12 months. The industry’s annual growth rate is still a strong 8.7 percent.

“Although up slightly, the Texas unemployment rate remains a full percentage point below the unemployment rate for the nation as a whole,” said TWC Commissioner Representing the Public Andres Alcantar. “Nine of eleven industries displayed positive annual job growth, resulting in nearly a quarter of a million jobs added in the last year.”

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**Civilian Labor Force Estimates for Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas
Not Seasonally Adjusted (In Thousands)**

	September 2008				August 2008				September 2007			
	C.L.F.	Emp.	Unemp.	Rate	C.L.F.	Emp.	Unemp.	Rate	C.L.F.	Emp.	Unemp.	Rate
United States	154,509.0	145,310.0	9,199.0	6.0	155,387.0	145,909.0	9,479.0	6.1	153,400.0	146,448.0	6,952.0	4.5
State of Texas	11,798.0	11,181.6	616.4	5.2	11,785.4	11,181.7	603.7	5.1	11,542.2	11,040.2	502.0	4.3
Abilene	81.5	78.1	3.4	4.2	81.5	78.1	3.4	4.2	80.6	77.6	3.0	3.7
Amarillo	129.4	124.4	5.0	3.9	129.7	124.8	4.9	3.8	128.6	124.2	4.4	3.5
Austin-Round Rock	866.4	826.0	40.4	4.7	870.2	830.9	39.3	4.5	853.7	821.9	31.8	3.7
Beaumont-Port Arthur	182.3	169.4	12.9	7.1	181.8	169.6	12.2	6.7	179.6	169.8	9.8	5.5
Brownsville-Harlingen	145.5	134.6	10.9	7.5	145.4	134.6	10.8	7.5	141.6	133.3	8.3	5.9
College Station-Bryan	106.4	101.9	4.5	4.2	102.0	97.5	4.5	4.4	103.3	99.4	3.9	3.7
Corpus Christi	201.7	191.1	10.6	5.2	200.9	190.6	10.3	5.1	198.1	189.3	8.8	4.4
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington	3,165.7	2,998.4	167.3	5.3	3,178.4	3,014.9	163.5	5.1	3,116.7	2,982.2	134.5	4.3
Dallas-Plano-Irving MD	2,112.7	1,998.7	114.0	5.4	2,124.3	2,013.1	111.2	5.2	2,081.9	1,990.8	91.1	4.4
Fort Worth-Arlington MD	1,053.1	999.8	53.3	5.1	1,054.0	1,001.8	52.2	5.0	1,034.9	991.5	43.4	4.2
El Paso	300.9	281.0	19.9	6.6	298.3	279.1	19.2	6.4	294.3	277.4	16.9	5.8
Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown	2,808.3	2,664.4	143.9	5.1	2,809.4	2,668.8	140.6	5.0	2,751.1	2,632.6	118.5	4.3
Killeen-Temple-Fort Hood	155.2	146.9	8.3	5.4	154.9	146.8	8.1	5.2	152.2	145.2	7.0	4.6
Laredo	91.1	86.0	5.1	5.6	90.9	85.6	5.3	5.9	87.9	83.8	4.1	4.6
Longview	108.9	104.1	4.8	4.4	108.7	103.9	4.8	4.4	106.2	102.0	4.2	4.0
Lubbock	138.7	133.1	5.6	4.0	139.0	133.3	5.7	4.1	138.9	133.9	5.0	3.6
McAllen-Edinburg-Mission	283.5	261.0	22.5	7.9	279.9	258.0	21.9	7.8	268.8	252.0	16.8	6.3
Midland	72.7	70.3	2.4	3.2	73.1	70.8	2.3	3.1	72.2	70.1	2.1	3.0
Odessa	68.9	66.3	2.6	3.8	69.1	66.5	2.6	3.7	67.5	65.2	2.3	3.4
San Angelo	52.6	50.3	2.3	4.4	52.9	50.6	2.3	4.3	52.4	50.5	1.9	3.7
San Antonio	950.5	902.9	47.6	5.0	950.8	903.5	47.3	5.0	929.6	891.3	38.3	4.1
Sherman-Denison	57.5	54.4	3.1	5.3	57.5	54.5	3.0	5.2	55.9	53.2	2.7	4.7
Texarkana	64.3	61.2	3.1	4.9	63.5	60.5	3.0	4.8	61.9	59.0	2.9	4.6
Tyler	98.2	93.2	5.0	5.1	98.4	93.5	4.9	5.0	96.6	92.6	4.0	4.2
Victoria	57.9	55.3	2.6	4.4	57.9	55.4	2.5	4.3	57.7	55.5	2.2	3.8
Waco	115.3	109.8	5.5	4.8	115.5	110.0	5.5	4.8	113.7	108.9	4.8	4.2
Wichita Falls	75.5	71.5	4.0	5.2	75.5	71.8	3.7	4.9	74.4	71.4	3.0	4.1

Please note that the unemployment estimates for the United States and Texas in this chart are “Not Seasonally Adjusted” for purposes of comparison to the “Not Seasonally Adjusted” Metropolitan Statistical Area data.

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The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in unison with its network of local workforce development boards, call (512) 463-8556 or visit www.texasworkforce.org.