



Washington Labor Market Quarterly Review

Volume 28, Number 3

July - September 2004

INDICATORS

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Washington

(Seasonally Adjusted)

September (prel)	2004	5.6%
August (rev)	2004	6.2%
July	2004	6.0%

United States

(Seasonally Adjusted)

September (prel)	2004	5.4%
August (rev)	2004	5.4%
July	2004	5.5%

Nonagricultural Employment

(in thousands)

July	2004	2,719.6
August	2004	2,714.7
September	2004	2,735.2

Nonagricultural Employment % Change

(in thousands)

July	2003-2004	2.1%
August	2003-2004	1.9%
September	2003-2004	2.1%

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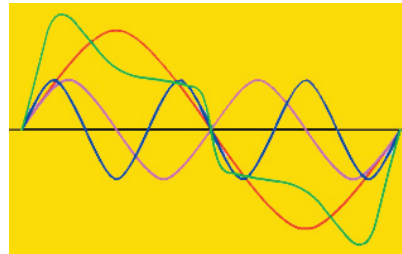
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"Oops! I Did it Again!" *B. Spears*

Current State Economic Conditions

By Scott Bailey, Regional Labor Economist

In the second quarter of the year, Washington's labor market had a strong April followed by a weak May and June. Comments in these pages turned musical, whimsically comparing seasonally-adjusted job growth to a waltz: three beats



to a measure, with one strong beat followed by two weak beats. Well, three months later, here we are again, moving to the same rhythm. After July delivered 13,500 new jobs, August took a step back (-2,200) and September barely moved (1,300). The band played on; over in the corner the unemployment rate was doing its own thing. After virtually no movement for seven months (6.2 percent plus or minus a tenth), the seasonally-adjusted rate dove six tenths of a point to 5.6 percent in September.

Nonfarm Employment by Industry (from the monthly survey of employers)

Like a teenager on summer vacation, unadjusted nonfarm employment typically takes a dive in July, stays under water in August, and comes back up for air in September. Schools are the main driver, with nontenured personnel on layoff

over the summer. Other, smaller seasonal forces are afoot as well: construction hits its stride, various food processing activities accelerate, and summer recreation brings hiring to golf courses, fairs, motels, and fast-food outlets. This year, unadjusted employment fell by

15,000 in July, 5,000 more in August, and rebounded with 21,000 jobs in September.

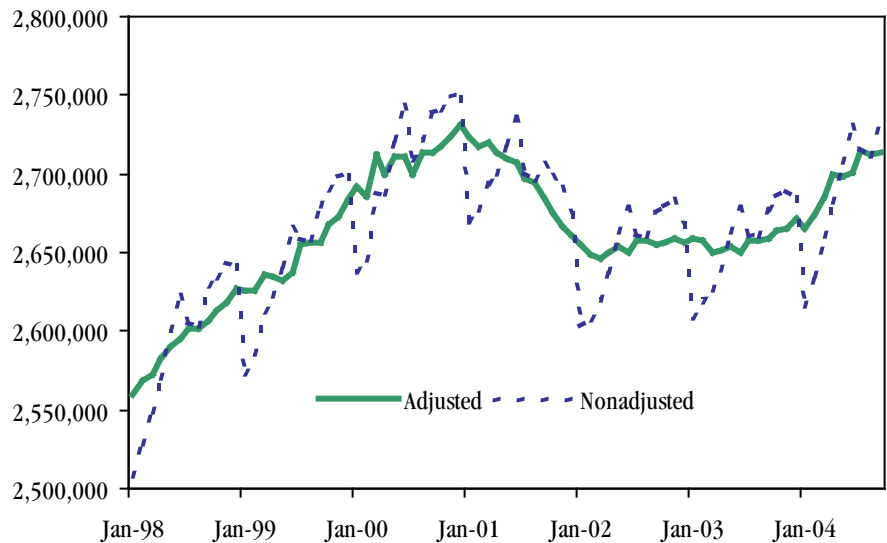
Once these seasonal patterns are factored out, the underlying trend, or lack thereof, shows through. On the plus side, job growth in the third quarter was 2.0 percent, slower than the 3.7 percent of the second quarter but well above the current population growth rate of 1.1 percent. Also on the plus side, 2004 has brought four months of solid job growth, four months of little change, and only one month with a large decline. On the down side, four out of the last five months have been decidedly lackluster.

What lies ahead? The guardedly optimistic outlook points towards continued job growth at an average of 2 percent, with little improvement in the unemployment rate.

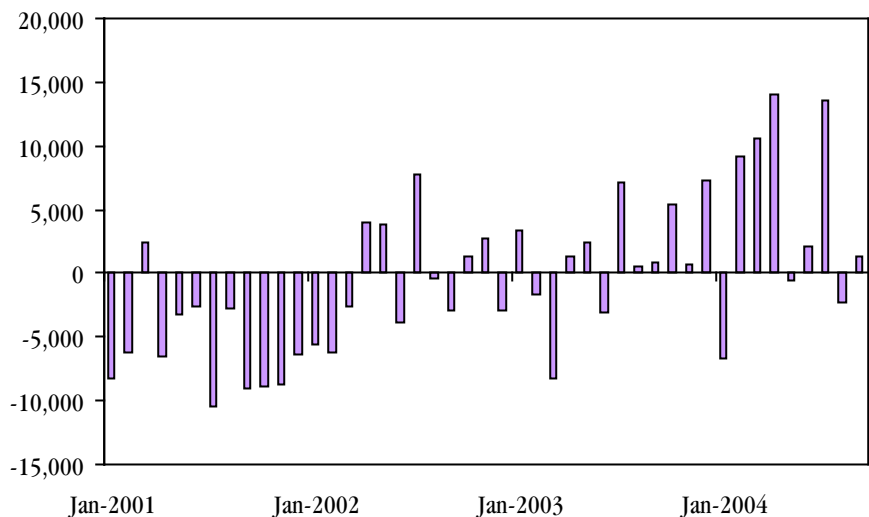


... this was essentially a manufacturing recession: almost half of the drop came in factory jobs...

Washington Nonfarm Employment



Monthly Change in Seasonally-Adjusted Nonfarm Employment



Since the recession began...

From December 2000 to March 2002, Washington lost 85,000 jobs, a 3.1 percent decline. While most major sectors lost jobs, this was essentially a manufacturing recession: almost half of the drop came in factory jobs, initially in electronics and then (after 9-11) aerospace. Both lost 8,000 jobs. Aluminum, which had been starting to slide before the recession began due to high energy prices, fell precipitously as most of the state's smelters were out of action at least part of the time. Outside of manufacturing, there were

some notable hits: construction (-10,000, 6 percent), information (-8,000, 8 percent), computer systems design (-7,000, 21 percent), and employment services (-15,000, 28 percent).

A few industries continued to add jobs during the downturn. Software grew by 2,000 jobs (6 percent), but actually declined the last half of 2001. Banking, boosted by refinancing, added 2,000. Health services continued its seemingly inexorable march forward, bringing on 11,000 jobs. Finally, government payrolls,

playing a countercyclical role, rose by nearly 12,000.

From March 2002 to June 2003, the stagnant Washington economy added a net 3,800 jobs. Three sectors kept the labor market from heading further south: banking, health care, and government. Historically-low interest rates helped keep the housing finance market strong, and lenders boosted their staffing by 8,000. Health care providers expanded by another 6,000 jobs. The public sector added another 8,000 jobs. In software, hiring continued to be positive but slow by historic standards.

Some sectors that had lost jobs in the downturn began to turn around—as consumers improved their cash flow through refinancing and tax cuts, construction, retail trade, and leisure and hospitality all benefited, though growth rates were modest.

Other sectors remained in the red. Manufacturing continued to hemorrhage, losing another 24,000 jobs, including 13,000 in aerospace and 4,000 in electronics. Wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, information, and computer design services all lost ground, but at a slower pace.

The state began picking up steam in July of 2003, and took off in earnest in the first months of 2004; nonfarm employment rose by 63,000 jobs. Manufacturing still bled, but lost only 5,000 jobs during this period. Aerospace and electronics continued to lay off workers, but other segments began calling workers back. Construction enjoyed a burst of activity, adding 9,000 jobs. The service sector expanded, almost across the board. Trade, transportation, and utilities chipped in 10,000 jobs, Software picked up the pace (2,300 jobs, 6 percent), but the rest of information, and primarily wired telecom, cut back staffing. Financial activities slowed with the refinancing market, but professional, scientific, and technical services added 6,000 jobs (4 percent). Other strong performers included administrative services (11,000 jobs, 9 percent), education services (5,000 jobs,

11 percent), and arts, entertainment, and recreation services (4,000 jobs, 8 percent). Government was the slowest growing of the services (1 percent).

Even after fifteen months of decent job growth, total nonfarm employment remains 18,000 jobs below its peak. If population growth is factored in, the deficit is substantial: if jobs had grown at the same rate as residents over the past four years, the state would have 120,000 more jobs, not 18,000 fewer.

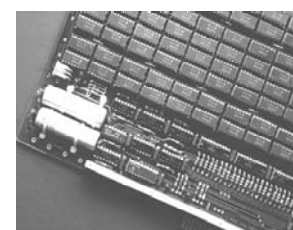
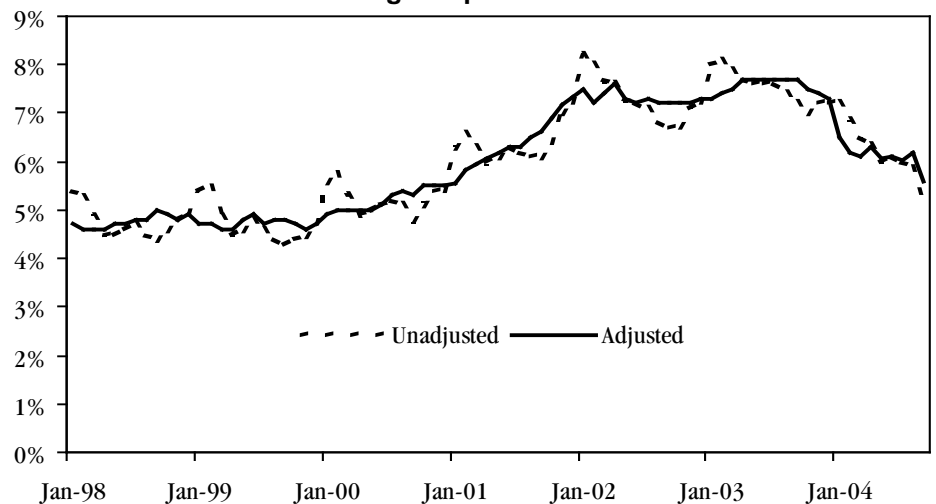
Unemployment

Washington's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate fell six tenths of a point to 5.6 percent in September. The rate had been at or near 6.2 percent since February. At the state level, the unemployment rate is considerably less precise than nonfarm employment. The annual unemploy-

ment rate has a standard error of plus or minus six tenths of a point; for the monthly estimate, sample data from the household survey is combined with other factors, so a margin of error cannot be properly applied. Using the unemployment rate as a benchmark is further compromised by the shift of workers into and out of the labor force. If unemployed workers stop looking for work, they fall out of the equation, and the unemployment rate would fall. Similarly, when economic growth attracts people off the sidelines and back in to the labor market, the rate might increase while these would-be workers are still in a job-search mode.

It's fair to say that the state's labor market has improved substantially since last summer, with good job growth and falling unemployment. We still have a ways to go to get back to the top, however.

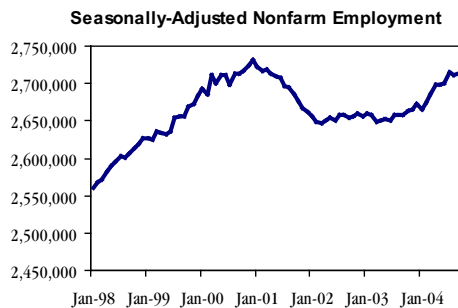
Washington's Unemployment Rate, through September 2004



Aerospace and electronics continued to lay off workers, but other segments began calling workers back.

Industry Summary

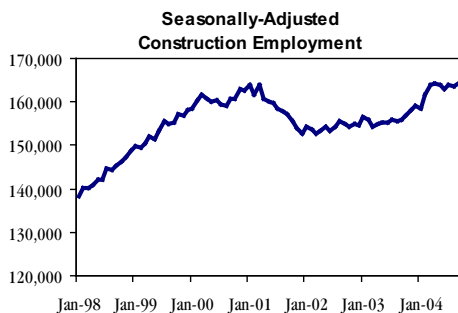
Washington's seasonally-adjusted non-farm employment, after a strong July (+13,500), took a step back in August (-2,200) and a small step forward in September (1,300).



Over the past twelve months, employment is up 54,800 jobs, or 2.1 percent.

Construction

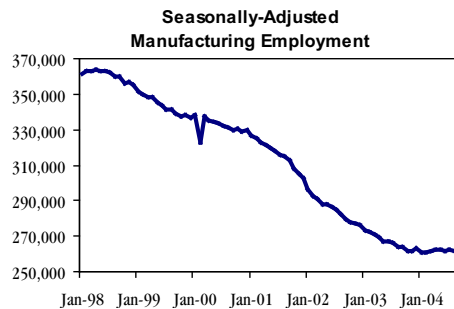
Construction job growth slowed noticeably in the second quarter, but bounced back somewhat in the third quarter. After adding 4,900 jobs in the first three months of the year, builders laid off



1,200 in the spring but brought back 1,400 in the summer. Employment levels are still 5 percent above last September. Look for modest growth in the months ahead as the housing market slows.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing suffered through another slow quarter this summer, losing 90 jobs. That's the bad news. For a change, there's good news in the offing. Aerospace added 400 jobs in September, and Boeing has announced it will add 3,000 workers by the end of the year. The Office of the Forecast Council predicts that the state will add 20,000 factory jobs over the next



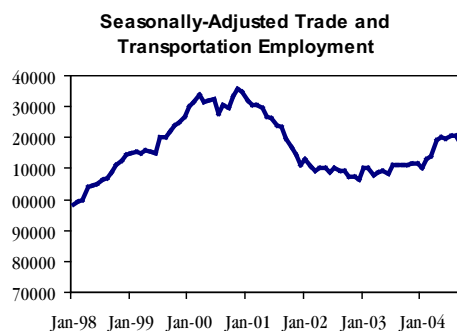
three years, with 14,000 of those in aerospace. Add the reopening of an aluminum smelter in Wenatchee, and a new glass plant coming to Centralia—things are looking up for a change.

Since peaking in mid-1998, manufacturing employment has declined by over 100,000 jobs, including 2,400 (-0.9 percent) in the past year.

Trade, Transportation, and Utilities

Wholesalers had a strong third quarter, adding 1,200 jobs, well above the 400 increase in the spring. Growth over the year now stands at 3,000 jobs or 2.5 percent. Non-durable goods wholesalers, which include fruit and vegetable packers, are employing 400 workers fewer than last September.

Hiring in retail trade, on the other hand, has flagged of late. After a huge second quarter (+4,400 jobs) merchants cut payrolls by 1,800 in the summer. Half of the decline came in "other retail," which includes direct mail and retailing establishments (along with book stores, gas stations, and home electronics stores, among others). General merchandise

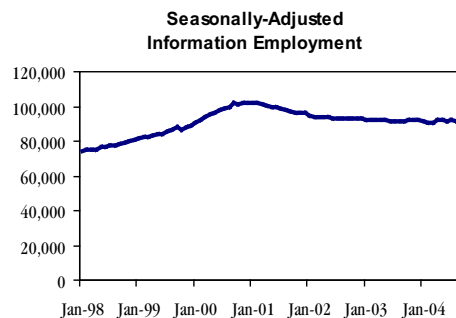


stores, grocery stores, and clothing stores also were shedding workers. For the year, retailers have added 3,200 jobs, a 1.1 percent growth rate.

Most transportation modes were laying off workers over the summer. Employment fell by 700 jobs, with layoffs in air and water transportation as well as warehousing. Growth in this sector since last September comes to 1,200 jobs or 1.3 percent.

Information

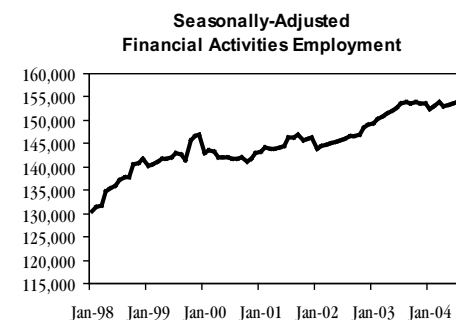
Information continued its interesting ride in the third quarter, overall adding 1,000 jobs. Software accounted for 700 of the new hires. Telecom, broadcasting, and publishing all declined, however.



Over the year, employment gains are modest at 700 jobs or 1 percent. Software has gained 800 jobs (2 percent) but most other segments are down, including telecom (-700, -3 percent). The Forecast Council expects software growth to pick up in coming months.

Financial Activities

Finance activities continued to slow in the third quarter. A loss of 700 jobs in August, and no change in September, resulted in an annual loss of 300 jobs. Banking employment has fallen by 400 jobs, insurance by 800. The decline in banking is not unexpected, given the drop-off in mortgage refinancing.





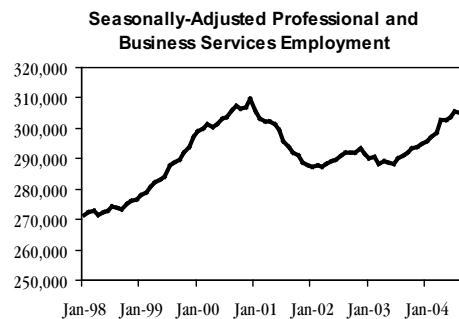
Washington's seasonally-adjusted nonfarm employment, after a strong July (+13,500), took a step back in August (-2,200) and a small step forward in September (1,300).



Professional and Business Services

This sector slowed a bit in the third quarter, with 2,200 net new hires, well below the 4,000 and 5,000 in the previous two quarters.

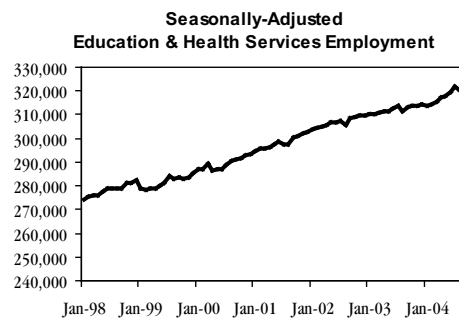
The drop was shouldered entirely by employment services (mostly temp agencies), which declined by 1,100 jobs. Other administrative support services—a motley crew including janitorial and landscaping services, call centers, private mail centers, travel agents, and security services—forged ahead with 1,400 new jobs. Professional and scientific services had a strong quarter, adding 2,000 staff.



Overall, the sector has grown by 14,200 jobs or 5 percent in the past twelve months. Even after declining over the summer, employment services has grown by 8 percent.

Education and Health Services

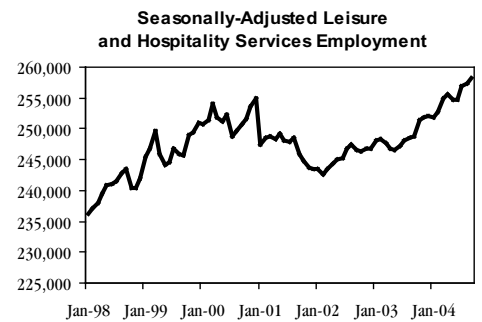
September's estimate for private education came in 13 percent above the year-ago level. It's likely that such a large increase is due to an unusual seasonal hiring pattern, rather than permanent jobs growth. Up until June, the over-the-year rate of expansion was 4 percent—probably a better benchmark.



Health services and social assistance continues to expand employment, 1,800 jobs in the third quarter, entirely in outpatient health clinics and social service agencies. Employment growth since last September stands at 5,300 jobs, or 1.9 percent.

Leisure and Hospitality

Hiring in leisure and hospitality accelerated in the third quarter. Recreation services, lodging, and food services all expanded, with 3,500 new jobs overall.



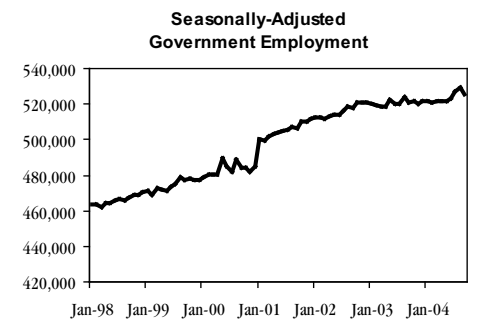
Growth rates for the year range from 2 percent in lodging to 7 percent in arts, entertainment, and recreation. Food services is now 5,000 jobs above its pre-recession peak.

Other Services

Other services such as repair services, personal services, and membership associations fell by 100 jobs over the quarter, but have grown by 1,700 jobs over the year.

Government

Public sector employment rose by 2,000 jobs in the third quarter. State education services added 2,300 jobs, while other state agencies cut payrolls by 700. K-12 education was unchanged, but local governments added 400 jobs. Federal employment stayed put.



Over the year, government employment is up by 4,300 jobs, or 0.8 percent. Federal agencies have slimmed down by 1,300 jobs, and local governments outside of education are only 800 higher, just 0.5 percent.

National Outlook

Soft Patch or Dog Patch?

By Scott Bailey, Regional Labor Economist

The nation's labor market conditions continued to weaken in September. Non-farm employment rose by only 96,000 jobs, far less (about 65,000 short) of what was needed to keep up with population growth. Key sectors were a mixed bag. Manufacturing declined by 11,000 jobs, information by 12,000, and corporate headquarters by 10,000. Professional and technical services, however, rose by 24,000 jobs, and financial services payrolls increased by 26,000. A third of the net new jobs for the month were at temporary help agencies, and more than a third were in government, including 10,000 in local government outside of education—which, according to one report, may have been added to process the large number of newly-registered voters for the November election. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.4 percent, only because 200,000 people dropped out of the labor force. Had they stayed in, the rate would have been a tenth of a point higher.

How much of an effect have the recent hurricanes had? According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, "At the national level, the severe weather appears to have

held down employment growth, but not enough to change materially the Bureau's assessment of the employment situation in September." In other words, some effect but not much.

Truly, this is one strange recovery, if one can still use that word. Since bottoming out thirteen months ago, employment growth has averaged 137,000 jobs a month. In comparison, job growth in 1983 coming out of the horrendous 1982 recession averaged 300,000 jobs per month—and with a smaller population base. Job growth coming out of the 1991 recession was not as strong, but the job loss was much smaller as well; a year's worth of slow growth was enough to recoup all of the lost jobs. At current job growth rates, we're still six months away from the break-even point.

Indeed, the metaphor of a "soft patch" used to describe the current economy might be misleading. It may be instead that we went through a brief "good patch" and have now settled into a labor market equilibrium, where things aren't getting worse, but neither are they getting better. Job growth more or less keeps

up with population growth (for the last four months, it hasn't), GDP growth is decent, corporate profits are healthy, and wages are stable—but there's nothing to drive the economy the next level up. Low expectations become self-fulfilling.

The federal government has enacted a number of initiatives to stimulate the economy, most of which have run their course. Interest rates, despite the recent Federal Reserve rate hike, are still at historically low levels. Federal spending has grown rapidly, mostly for the war in Iraq. Taxes have been cut—though most of that benefit went to the highest income brackets. The large budget deficit makes it difficult to increase the magnitude of spending or tax cuts. And despite some efforts at reform, increasing health care costs—in a system with a host of inefficiencies—continues to be a drag on economic growth.

For the foreseeable future, however, it looks like the labor market has set up camp at a higher-than-desirable unemployment rate. How long it remains there, and what will provide the impetus for a move, remain to be seen.

Business Briefs

By Dave Wallace, Economic Analyst

The Trouble with Success: Larger than Expected Apple and Pear Harvests

To some extent apple and pear growers in Washington have suffered from a kind of "be careful what you wish for" syndrome. A very warm early summer and a very wet early fall have set the table for an early bountiful harvest.

The problem with this has been finding adequate labor to pick the fruit. And it has arisen due to the larger harvest plus several other factors: fewer pickers traveling from California due to rumors of a smaller harvest, and several varieties have ripened simultaneously. This labor shortage has been much less acute in the North Central area as the harvest there has been more along the predicted timeline.

According to the Washington Agricultural Statistics Service, this year's harvest is forecasted at 5.4 billion pounds. This amounts to a 20 percent jump in production over 2003 and about a 6 percent rise over the 2002 crop. Washington's share of the national harvest has also risen from 52 to 57 percent.

NASCAR Gearing up for the Northwest

After looking at several other areas in Washington, the International Speedway Corp. (ISC) has selected a site about 30 miles north of Seattle for a prospective NASCAR racetrack site.

The company has submitted an initial proposal to the legislature for a \$300 million track with a capacity of 75,000 seats. ISC has proposed putting up \$50 million of the stake with the state coming up with \$200 to \$250 million. The stadium would be publicly owned and leased to NASCAR for three events annually.

The Legislative Committee on Economic Development and International Relations scheduled a meeting for the public to let their opinions on the track be known. It was held in Marysville on November 10, 2004.

Industry Focus: Real Estate and Renting and Leasing

By Rick Lockhart, Economic Analyst

As the Washington economy is pulling out of the 2001 recession and its aftershocks, talk has commonly been focused on industries that took the brunt of the blow. Aerospace, high tech development and manufacturing, and investment services and banking have all seen employment losses and unfavorable (sometimes scandalous) press on their business practices/dealings. One of the bright spots through the recession and beyond was real estate and rental and leasing. In fact, going into the recession the real estate industry was moving along at a steady pace having grown by 7,072 jobs between 1990 and 2002. As interest rates were reduced to minimize the length and impact of the recession, the hous-

ing market saw an unprecedented boom. And even though we have seen a slight increase of the prime rate, mortgage rates have remained steadily low, under the 6 percent rate.

Figure 1 contains data from the Northwest Multiple Listing Service. For each of the categories dealing with listings and sales, September 2004 saw a reduction in the number of homes. With the reduced number of homes on the market the average number of days on the market also decreased, as there is more competition for available homes among potential buyers.

Employment and wages have seen steady increases in the real estate and rental and leasing industry and employ-

ment projections forecast continued growth. Based on Figure 2 below, it is evident that employment patterns in this industry are fairly seasonal. The growth trends continued through two recessions and remained steady during the high times of the 1990s with slight annual up and down movement. Additionally, the wages have been steadily growing. Between 1992 and 2002, the inflation-adjusted wage grew by 36 percent ending up at \$28,974. Occupationally, most of the industry is made up of clerical and maintenance service workers (janitorial, landscaping, and building maintenance) with a small percentage (4 percent) being real estate sales agents and brokers. Agents and brokers are vastly underrepresented in our data. According to Glenn Crellin at the Washington Center for Real Estate Research, they are overwhelmingly independent contractors, not covered by unemployment insurance. Additionally, he said there are approximately 40,000 licensed sales agents and brokers in Washington with about 28,000 actively working in the occupation.

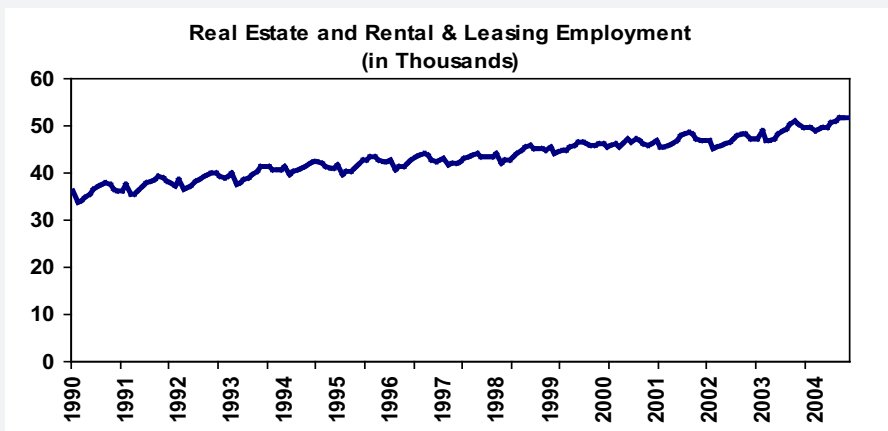
Looking forward, the real estate and rental and leasing industry is expected to continue on its steady upward growth trend. Employment is projected to outpace the all-industries growth rate of 1.6 percent per year with the industry growing at 2 percent per year through 2007 then slowing to 1.3 percent through 2012. It is worth stating that with the recent unusually low interest rates and unusually high levels of real estate sales, the coming years may be a little more moderate in growth than past years if interest rates creep up and consumers shy away from non-necessity home purchases.

Figure 1

Washington State	Sept. 2003	Sept. 2004	Percent Change
New Listings	8,811	8,670	-1.6%
Total Active Listings	24,087	21,597	-10.3%
Closed Sales	7,379	7,026	-4.8%
Average Days on Market	63	58	-7.9%

Source: Northwest Multiple Listing Service (Consolidated) Statistical Recap: September 2004

Figure 2



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department, Current Employment Statistics Survey

Occupational Focus: Picture a Career as a Multimedia Artist or Animator

By Dave Wallace, Economic Analyst

A moderate familiarity of art history leaves one with an impression of how difficult it has been for artists to make a living. During his lifetime Van Gogh sold one painting, and Renaissance period artists for the most part survived by securing wealthy patrons. Against this tide of history, there is a growing (and well-paying) demand for multi-media artists and animators.

Employment for this occupation is projected to grow by 2.6 percent annually between 2002 and 2012. This level of expansion would lead to an average of 143 job openings per year from 2002 to 2007, rising to 158 per year from 2007 to 2012. According to the Occupational Employment Survey for 2003, the average

wage for workers in this profession was \$28.58 per hour. Typical starting wages were \$17.77 per hour, rising to \$33.99 per hour for experienced workers.

Work usually involves creating animation and other images on film, video, or computers. Specific tasks might include storyline development, conversion of real objects to animated objects, creation of product labels, producing pen-and-paper images to be scanned, and developing multimedia presentations. A

bachelor's degree is typically required, but familiarity with animation programs and computer languages are important.

Early on in a career, most animators and multimedia artists work with teams and specialize under supervision. This can be a major challenge for the creative types drawn to this kind of work. However, I suspect it is less of a challenge than finding a wealthy patron or working directly for the Pope (as Michelangelo did).

Estimated Employment 2002	Estimated Employment 2012	Average Annual Growth 2002-2012	Average Annual Total Openings 2002-2007	Average Annual Total Openings 2007-2012	Mean Wage 2003	Mean Entry Wage 2003	Mean Experienced Wage 2003
2,768	3,592	2.60%	143	158	\$28.58	\$17.77	\$33.99

Across the State

“Lights! Camera! No Action!”

By Scott Bailey, Regional Labor Economist

Ahhh, September, the start of a new school year, construction jackhammers busting up the last bit of concrete before winter weather creeps in, orchards full of workers harvesting the crop, fruit packers and food processors working at capacity, retailers pausing before gearing up for the holiday season... such are the random thoughts that emerge from the minds of labor market economists as autumn begins.

When comparing unadjusted June to unadjusted September, there was little change in total nonfarm employment—only 500 jobs. Only a handful of industries statewide moved more than a few hundred jobs. The exceptions included industries that tend to peak in the August-October period: construction, food processing, employment services, recreation services, accommodations, and food services—the latter three related to summer tourism. Health care was another exception, because it's big and keeps on growing. Education, which doesn't get back to form until October, at this point shows fewer jobs than in June.

So it went around the state. Most counties added construction jobs. Most food processing centers (with the exception of Columbia County, which peaks in the spring) moved toward seasonal highs. The Seattle PMSA, the only area that tracks employment services, showed a 1,700 job gain over the summer. Some counties had job gains in leisure and hospitality (e.g. Seattle, Tacoma, Wenatchee) but others hit their stride in June and had fewer workers (e.g. Skamania, Walla Walla). All but two counties had less government employment in September than in June.

Statewide, nonfarm employment has grown by 53,300 jobs over the past twelve months, a 2 percent growth rate. All but three counties have enjoyed over-the-year growth. San Juan County has grown the most rapidly, at 5.3 percent, and two counties are above 4 percent. Four metro areas, including Tacoma, Skagit, Clark, and Olympia are above the state average. Snohomish is right on 2 percent, but the other urban areas are lagging behind.

Rural counties, on average, are growing at about the same rate as the metro counties.

Two workforce development areas are adding jobs at relatively slow rates: Region 9 (Yakima, Kittitas, Klickitat) is growing at 0.5 percent, and Region 10 (the ten easternmost counties excluding Spokane) at 0.6 percent. Regions 2 and 6, a contiguous six-county area including Pierce County and stretching westward, are growing at 2.7 percent.

In other words, for most county labor markets, the word is hum-drum—moderate job gains at best, but not much going on. There are a few glimmers of hope on the horizon—the announcement that a new glass plant will be built in Lewis County, and the reopening of an aluminum smelter in Wenatchee (albeit after labor concessions). Ten counties are still below pre-recession employment levels. The three areas that have grown the fastest over the last four years—Kittitas, the Tri-Cities, and Jefferson—have slowed markedly in the last year or two.

Food Processing

By Dave Wallace, Economic Analyst

Traditionally, fall is the harvest season when we gather the summer's produce to survive another winter. Most produce however, must be transformed in some way to be preserved for later consumption. This has led to the development of the food processing industry (North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Sub sector 311).

With such high profile commodities as apples and cherries, agriculture in Washington State is very prominent. Lesser-known but also important in terms of economic impact is the manufacturing associated with it. That employment averaged about 34,000 during 2003, and constituted about 44 percent of total agriculture employment.

The 2003 employment level represents a decline of seven percent from 1991,

a period during which total employment climbed by 25 percent. A drop of seven percent is never a good thing, but in light of the 24 percent fall that total manufacturing employment suffered, it doesn't look quite as dire. Figure 1 shows year-over-year changes in average annual employment from 1991 to 2003.

The most recent setback suffered by the food processing industry closely coincides with the recession of 2001. However, some of the causes underlying the economic troubles in food processing were distinct to the sector. Food processing firms have found it difficult to remain profitable with rising costs due to high-energy prices and competition from countries with lower wages in Asia and South America. Coupled with this is the fact that consumer demand is fairly sensitive to price changes in food prod-

ucts. Because of the competition some processors have ceased operations in Washington State.

Given its close relationship to the agriculture industry, it is not surprising that food processing shows strong seasonal fluctuations during the year. Figure 2 illustrates how quarterly employment varies throughout the year, typically peaking in the 3rd quarter and bottoming out in the 1st quarter.

One of the reasons that food processing employment displays such seasonal variation is that it is dominated by fruit and vegetable preserving. In 2003 there was an average of about 11,000 workers involved in processing fruits and vegetables, or almost one-third of total food processing employment statewide. The next closest employment contributor comes from seafood processing (19 percent), another industry affected by seasonality.

The outlook for food processing is mixed. Ten-year projections do forecast growth, but at a rather slow pace of 0.2 percent annually (from 2002-2012). The fruit and vegetable preserving sub sector is expected to experience annual employment declines of 0.2 percent from 2002 to 2007, but then to grow by 0.7 percent from 2007 to 2012.

In 2003, the average monthly wage in food processing was \$2,692. This compares unfavorably against the average for all industries (\$3,361 per month), but favorably against agriculture (\$1,818 per month).

In conclusion, despite recent hard times, the food processing industry remains an important industry in Washington. It is complimentary to the agriculture industry, pays adequate wages, and provides employment opportunities in areas with traditionally fewer employment options.

Figure 1

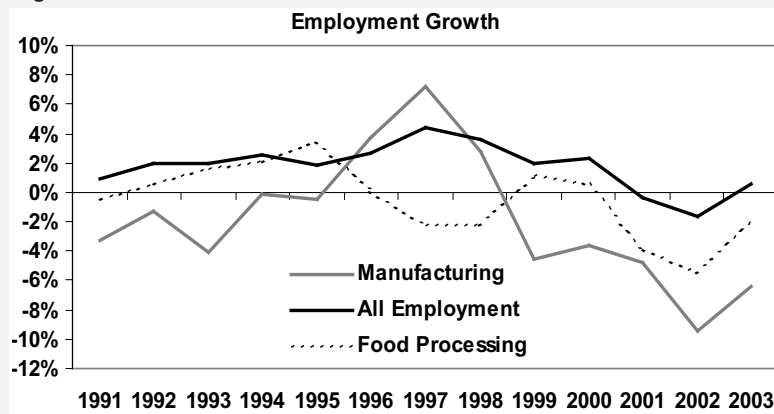
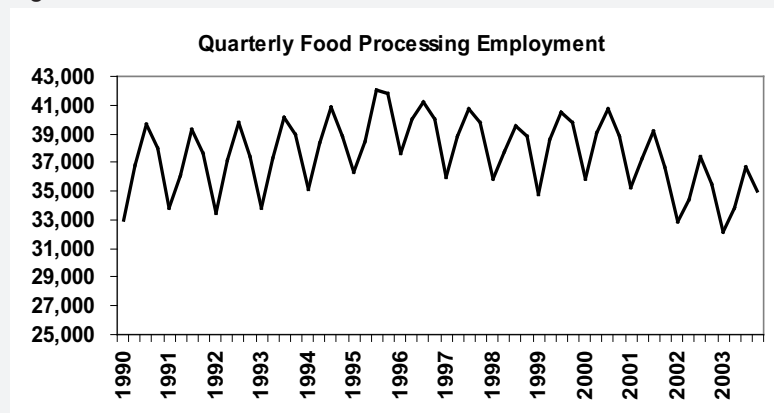


Figure 2

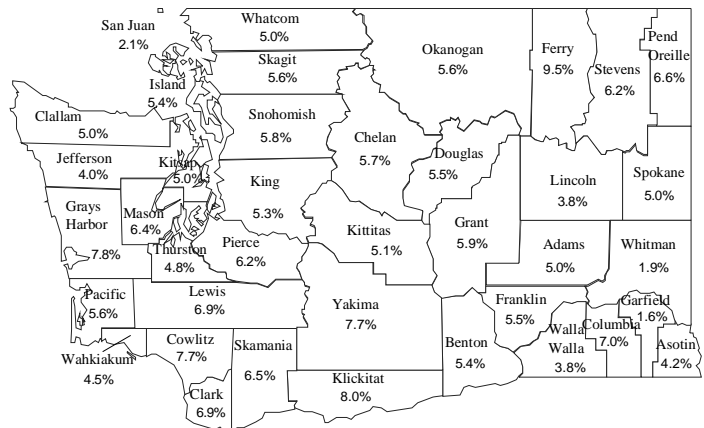


Third Quarter Stats-At-A-Glance

**Average Unemployment Rates by County
July, August, and September 2004**
Washington State = 6.8%
United States = 6.1%
Not Seasonally Adjusted

Monthly Resident Civilian Labor Force and Employment in Washington State

	July 2004 (Rev)	August 2004 (Rev)	Sept 2004 (Rev)
<i>(In Thousands)</i>			
Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment:			
Washington State	6.0%	6.2%	5.6%
United States	5.5%	5.4%	5.4%
Not Seasonally Adjusted:			
Resident Civilian Labor Force	3,253.8	3,210.9	3,184.7
Employment	3,059.5	3,022.7	3,021.8
Unemployment	194.3	188.2	162.9
Percent of Labor Force	6.0%	5.9%	5.1%



Civilian Labor Force Estimates for Washington State Counties and MSAs

Washington State
Employment Security Department
Labor Market and Economic Analysis

Benchmark: March 2003

	July 2004 Revised				August 2004 Revised				September 2004 Preliminary			
	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Not Seasonally Adjusted												
Washington State Total	3,253,800	3,059,500	194,300	6.0	3,210,900	3,022,700	188,200	5.9	3,183,300	3,020,700	162,600	5.1
Bellingham MSA	93,200	88,400	4,800	5.2	92,200	87,300	4,800	5.2	88,800	84,600	4,200	4.7
Bremerton PMSA	106,600	101,000	5,600	5.3	106,300	100,900	5,300	5.0	104,500	99,500	5,000	4.8
Olympia PMSA	112,900	107,400	5,600	4.9	112,200	106,800	5,500	4.9	110,300	105,300	5,000	4.5
Seattle-Bellevue-Everett PMSA	1,432,400	1,349,600	82,800	5.8	1,422,200	1,343,000	79,200	5.6	1,404,700	1,334,800	70,000	5.0
King County 2/	1,048,800	989,700	59,200	5.6	1,041,700	984,800	56,900	5.5	1,029,200	978,800	50,400	4.9
Snohomish County 2/	354,500	332,500	21,900	6.2	351,600	330,900	20,700	5.9	347,000	328,900	18,100	5.2
Island County 2/	29,100	27,400	1,700	5.8	28,900	27,300	1,600	5.6	28,500	27,100	1,400	4.9
Spokane MSA	220,600	209,000	11,600	5.2	218,200	206,900	11,300	5.2	217,800	207,900	9,900	4.6
Tacoma PMSA	370,200	346,000	24,200	6.5	365,700	342,500	23,200	6.3	364,900	344,200	20,600	5.7
Tri-Cities MSA	109,600	103,300	6,400	5.8	107,200	101,100	6,100	5.7	107,000	101,800	5,200	4.9
Benton County 2/	83,300	78,500	4,800	5.7	81,500	76,900	4,600	5.7	81,400	77,400	4,000	4.9
Franklin County 2/	26,400	24,700	1,600	6.1	25,700	24,200	1,500	5.7	25,600	24,400	1,200	4.8
Yakima MSA	120,600	110,300	10,300	8.5	115,200	105,500	9,700	8.4	116,400	109,300	7,000	6.0
Adams	9,130	8,610	520	5.7	8,850	8,400	450	5.1	8,790	8,430	360	4.1
Asotin 2/	12,200	11,650	550	4.5	12,300	11,770	540	4.3	12,260	11,800	460	3.7
Chelan-Douglas LMA	64,170	60,910	3,260	5.1	56,900	52,510	4,390	7.7	58,790	56,270	2,520	4.3
Chelan County 2/	42,650	40,510	2,150	5.0	37,950	34,920	3,030	8.0	39,100	37,420	1,680	4.3
Douglas County 2/	21,520	20,410	1,110	5.2	18,950	17,590	1,360	7.2	19,690	18,850	840	4.3
Clallam	27,020	25,560	1,460	5.4	27,020	25,600	1,420	5.3	26,420	25,250	1,170	4.4
Clark 2/	187,200	173,800	13,400	7.2	185,600	172,500	13,200	7.1	184,800	173,200	11,600	6.3
Columbia	1,210	1,130	80	6.6	1,220	1,130	90	7.1	1,150	1,070	80	6.6
Cowlitz	41,620	38,310	3,310	8.0	40,740	37,450	3,280	8.1	40,160	37,320	2,840	7.1
Ferry	2,580	2,300	270	10.6	2,430	2,200	230	9.4	2,390	2,190	200	8.4
Garfield	1,320	1,300	20	1.5	1,270	1,240	20	1.7	1,170	1,150	20	1.5
Grant	41,840	39,110	2,730	6.5	41,430	38,840	2,590	6.3	42,340	40,230	2,110	5.0
Grays Harbor	28,270	26,020	2,250	8.0	27,980	25,720	2,260	8.1	27,320	25,340	1,980	7.2
Jefferson	12,910	12,380	530	4.1	12,480	11,950	530	4.2	12,160	11,730	430	3.6
Kititas	15,780	14,830	950	6.0	15,700	14,900	810	5.1	16,600	15,920	680	4.1
Klickitat	9,710	8,840	860	8.9	9,000	8,220	780	8.7	8,820	8,260	570	6.4
Lewis	30,870	28,640	2,230	7.2	30,680	28,560	2,120	6.9	30,000	28,070	1,930	6.4
Lincoln	5,210	4,990	220	4.3	5,140	4,930	200	4.0	4,860	4,700	160	3.3
Mason	21,490	20,070	1,420	6.6	21,370	19,960	1,410	6.6	21,040	19,780	1,260	6.0
Okanogan	24,700	23,360	1,350	5.4	21,110	19,710	1,400	6.6	22,970	21,850	1,120	4.9
Pacific	8,960	8,460	500	5.6	8,980	8,460	520	5.8	8,500	8,050	450	5.3
Pend Oreille	4,770	4,430	340	7.1	4,700	4,370	320	6.9	4,510	4,250	260	5.8
San Juan	8,260	8,090	170	2.1	8,330	8,150	180	2.2	7,700	7,540	160	2.1
Skagit	57,140	53,760	3,380	5.9	56,970	53,640	3,330	5.8	55,270	52,420	2,850	5.2
Skamania	4,210	3,910	300	7.1	4,150	3,890	260	6.3	3,880	3,660	230	5.8
Stevens	18,130	16,920	1,210	6.7	17,600	16,480	1,120	6.4	17,250	16,320	930	5.4
Wahkiakum	1,770	1,680	90	5.1	1,780	1,700	80	4.5	1,750	1,670	70	4.2
Walla Walla	29,130	27,950	1,190	4.1	27,710	26,630	1,080	3.9	27,430	26,520	910	3.3
Whitman	17,950	17,540	420	2.3	20,190	19,780	400	2.0	20,700	20,390	310	1.5

1/ Official U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics data.
 2/ Estimates are determined by using the Population/Claims Share disaggregation methodology.
 Note: Detail may not add due to rounding.

July

Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Workers in Washington State, Place of Work¹

In Thousands, Not Seasonally Adjusted	Numeric Change					
	July 2004 (Prel)	June 2004 (Rev)	July 2003 (Rev)	June 2003 (Rev)	Jun. 2004 to Jul. 2004	Jul. 2003 to Jul. 2004
Total Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Workers	2,719.0	2,735.4	2,663.1	2,679.7	-16.4	55.9
Natural Resources and Mining	8.8	8.6	9.1	8.9	0.2	-0.3
Logging	5.7	5.5	6.0	5.9	0.2	-0.3
Construction	171.6	166.8	163.2	158.2	4.8	8.4
Construction of Buildings	45.4	44.0	43.3	41.8	1.4	2.1
Heavy and Civil Engineering	22.1	21.1	21.5	20.1	1.0	0.6
Specialty Trade Contractors	104.1	101.7	98.4	96.3	2.4	5.7
Manufacturing	264.3	262.5	268.3	268.6	1.8	-4.0
Durable Goods	180.5	180.0	184.0	184.6	0.5	-3.5
Wood Product Manufacturing	17.6	17.6	17.9	17.9	0.0	-0.3
Fabricated Metal Products	16.8	16.7	17.1	16.9	0.1	-0.3
Computer and Electronic Products	23.0	23.0	23.3	23.5	0.0	-0.3
Transportation Equipment	73.8	73.4	76.4	76.8	0.4	-2.6
Aerospace Products and Parts	62.0	62.0	65.3	65.7	0.0	-3.3
Nondurable Goods	83.8	82.5	84.3	84.0	1.3	-0.5
Food Manufacturing	35.7	34.9	36.0	35.3	0.8	-0.3
Wholesale Trade	118.8	118.6	117.0	116.2	0.2	1.8
Retail Trade	315.5	313.1	308.6	305.9	2.4	6.9
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	42.5	42.2	41.5	41.1	0.3	1.0
Food and Beverage Stores	62.3	62.1	60.5	60.3	0.2	1.8
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	25.9	25.2	24.7	24.2	0.7	1.2
General Merchandise Stores	54.6	54.2	52.8	52.1	0.4	1.8
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	91.4	91.6	88.3	87.7	-0.2	3.1
Utilities	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5	0.1	0.1
Transportation and Warehousing	86.8	87.1	83.8	83.2	-0.3	3.0
Air Transportation	13.4	13.4	13.2	13.3	0.0	0.2
Water Transportation	3.6	3.5	3.2	3.2	0.1	0.4
Truck Transportation	23.0	22.3	22.6	22.0	0.7	0.4
Support Activities for Transportation	17.6	17.9	16.1	15.7	-0.3	1.5
Support Activities for Water Transportation	6.5	6.9	5.5	5.1	-0.4	1.0
Warehousing and Storage	8.1	8.0	7.6	7.5	0.1	0.5
Information	98.0	97.3	92.4	92.0	0.7	5.6
Software Publishers	40.3	39.8	37.8	36.8	0.5	2.5
Telecommunications	28.2	28.1	27.2	27.2	0.1	1.0
Financial Activities	159.3	158.2	155.1	153.2	1.1	4.2
Finance and Insurance	107.4	107.0	104.7	103.8	0.4	2.7
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	56.7	56.4	53.1	52.5	0.3	3.6
Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	39.8	39.6	40.5	40.1	0.2	-0.7
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	51.9	51.2	50.4	49.4	0.7	1.5
Professional and Business Services	305.4	303.1	293.0	290.1	2.3	12.4
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	138.4	138.2	135.2	135.0	0.2	3.2
Legal Services	21.6	21.6	21.1	21.1	0.0	0.5
Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	32.1	31.9	31.3	31.1	0.2	0.8
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	21.3	21.1	20.9	20.8	0.2	0.4
Management of Companies and Enterprises	32.9	32.6	32.2	32.0	0.3	0.7
Admin., Suppt. Svcs., Waste Mgmt., and Remediation	134.1	132.3	125.6	123.1	1.8	8.5
Employment Services	47.4	46.6	42.5	40.3	0.8	4.9
Education and Health Services	314.1	317.2	307.9	311.7	-3.1	6.2
Educational Services	37.1	40.0	35.9	40.6	-2.9	1.2
Hospitals	63.1	63.3	62.8	62.5	-0.2	0.3
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	53.9	53.8	53.4	52.9	0.1	0.5
Social Assistance	46.3	46.9	45.3	45.7	-0.6	1.0
Leisure and Hospitality	261.8	258.0	258.7	256.0	3.8	3.1
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	44.1	43.0	45.2	44.2	1.1	-1.1
Accommodation	30.7	29.7	30.2	29.3	1.0	0.5
Food Services and Drinking Places	187.0	185.3	183.3	182.5	1.7	3.7
Government	507.2	537.9	500.9	530.4	-30.7	6.3
Federal	71.0	70.6	71.2	70.5	0.4	-0.2
State	131.9	150.5	130.8	149.3	-18.6	1.1
State Educational Services	63.3	82.1	63.0	81.8	-18.8	0.3
Local	304.3	316.8	298.9	310.6	-12.5	5.4
Local Educational Services	144.8	156.7	140.1	155.5	-11.9	4.7
Workers in Labor-Management Disputes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

¹Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of armed forces, & private household employees. Includes all full- & part-time wage & salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month. ²Workers excluded because of involvement in labor-management dispute.

August

Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Workers in Washington State, Place of Work¹

In Thousands, Not Seasonally Adjusted					Numeric Change	
	August 2004 (Prel)	July 2004 (Rev)	August 2003 (Rev)	July 2003 (Rev)	Jul. 2004 to Aug. 2004	Aug. 2003 to Aug. 2004
Total Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Workers	2,715.1	2,719.6	2,664.4	2,663.1	-4.5	50.7
Natural Resources and Mining	8.9	8.8	9.1	9.1	0.1	-0.2
Logging	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.0	0.0	-0.3
Construction	175.5	171.8	166.9	163.2	3.7	8.6
Construction of Buildings	46.1	45.1	44.2	43.3	1.0	1.9
Heavy and Civil Engineering	22.7	22.1	22.0	21.5	0.6	0.7
Specialty Trade Contractors	106.7	104.6	100.7	98.4	2.1	6.0
Manufacturing	265.2	264.3	268.0	268.3	0.9	-2.8
Durable Goods	180.5	180.6	183.4	184.0	-0.1	-2.9
Wood Product Manufacturing	17.8	17.7	18.1	17.9	0.1	-0.3
Fabricated Metal Products	16.8	16.8	17.1	17.1	0.0	-0.3
Computer and Electronic Products	23.0	23.0	23.2	23.3	0.0	-0.2
Transportation Equipment	73.7	73.9	75.6	76.4	-0.2	-1.9
Aerospace Products and Parts	61.9	62.0	64.1	65.3	-0.1	-2.2
Nondurable Goods	84.7	83.7	84.6	84.3	1.0	0.1
Food Manufacturing	36.4	35.6	36.5	36.0	0.8	-0.1
Wholesale Trade	119.1	118.8	117.1	117.0	0.3	2.0
Retail Trade	316.0	315.3	309.3	308.6	0.7	6.7
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	42.5	42.4	41.8	41.5	0.1	0.7
Food and Beverage Stores	62.7	62.2	60.8	60.5	0.5	1.9
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	25.9	25.9	24.8	24.7	0.0	1.1
General Merchandise Stores	55.0	54.7	53.4	52.8	0.3	1.6
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	92.0	91.5	88.4	88.3	0.5	3.6
Utilities	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	0.0	0.1
Transportation and Warehousing	87.4	86.9	83.9	83.8	0.5	3.5
Air Transportation	13.5	13.4	13.1	13.2	0.1	0.4
Water Transportation	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.2	0.0	0.2
Truck Transportation	22.8	22.8	22.7	22.6	0.0	0.1
Support Activities for Transportation	17.8	17.6	16.3	16.1	0.2	1.5
Support Activities for Water Transportation	6.6	6.5	5.5	5.5	0.1	1.1
Warehousing and Storage	8.3	8.2	7.6	7.6	0.1	0.7
Information	98.2	97.8	93.2	92.4	0.4	5.0
Software Publishers	40.5	40.2	38.1	37.8	0.3	2.4
Telecommunications	28.2	28.0	27.1	27.2	0.2	1.1
Financial Activities	159.0	159.0	156.0	155.1	0.0	3.0
Finance and Insurance	106.9	107.3	105.0	104.7	-0.4	1.9
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	56.5	56.5	53.5	53.1	0.0	3.0
Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	39.4	39.7	40.4	40.5	-0.3	-1.0
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	52.1	51.7	51.0	50.4	0.4	1.1
Professional and Business Services	308.5	305.3	297.4	293.0	3.2	11.1
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	139.2	138.4	136.1	135.2	0.8	3.1
Legal Services	21.7	21.6	21.2	21.1	0.1	0.5
Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	32.1	32.1	31.4	31.3	0.0	0.7
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	21.4	21.3	21.0	20.9	0.1	0.4
Management of Companies and Enterprises	32.8	32.8	32.1	32.2	0.0	0.7
Admin., Suppt. Svcs., Waste Mgmt., and Remediation	136.5	134.1	129.2	125.6	2.4	7.3
Employment Services	49.0	47.2	45.6	42.5	1.8	3.4
Education and Health Services	314.0	313.6	307.3	307.9	0.4	6.7
Educational Services	36.0	36.6	34.7	35.9	-0.6	1.3
Hospitals	63.2	63.2	62.8	62.8	0.0	0.4
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	53.9	53.8	53.3	53.4	0.1	0.6
Social Assistance	46.3	46.2	45.0	45.3	0.1	1.3
Leisure and Hospitality	263.7	261.6	261.7	258.7	2.1	2.0
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	44.2	44.0	45.8	45.2	0.2	-1.6
Accommodation	31.1	30.6	30.6	30.2	0.5	0.5
Food Services and Drinking Places	188.4	187.0	185.3	183.3	1.4	3.1
Government	492.1	509.1	489.2	500.9	-17.0	2.9
Federal	71.4	71.1	71.1	71.2	0.3	0.3
State	134.3	132.5	132.3	130.8	1.8	2.0
State Educational Services	66.0	64.1	65.1	63.0	1.9	0.9
Local	286.4	305.5	285.8	298.9	-19.1	0.6
Local Educational Services	130.3	145.9	127.2	140.1	-15.6	3.1
Workers in Labor-Management Disputes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

¹Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of armed forces, & private household employees. Includes all full- & part-time wage & salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month. ²Workers excluded because of involvement in labor-management dispute.

Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics

September

Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Workers in Washington State, Place of Work ¹

In Thousands, Not Seasonally Adjusted	September		August		Numeric Change	
	2004 (Prel)	2004 (Rev)	2003 (Rev)	2003 (Rev)	Aug. 2004 to Sep. 2004	Sep. 2003 to Sep. 2004
Total Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Workers	2,735.2	2,714.7	2,680.6	2,664.4	20.5	54.6
Natural Resources and Mining	8.9	8.9	9.1	9.1	0.0	-0.2
Logging	5.7	5.7	5.9	6.0	0.0	-0.2
Construction	174.6	175.6	165.4	166.9	-1.0	9.2
Construction of Buildings	46.2	46.1	43.9	44.2	0.1	2.3
Heavy and Civil Engineering	22.6	22.8	21.8	22.0	-0.2	0.8
Specialty Trade Contractors	105.8	106.7	99.7	100.7	-0.9	6.1
Manufacturing	264.9	264.6	267.8	268.0	0.3	-2.9
Durable Goods	180.4	180.2	182.5 ^{2/}	183.4	0.2	-2.1
Wood Product Manufacturing	17.6	17.7	18.0	18.1	-0.1	-0.4
Fabricated Metal Products	16.8	16.8	17.0	17.1	0.0	-0.2
Computer and Electronic Products	22.9	23.0	23.0	23.2	-0.1	-0.1
Transportation Equipment	73.9	73.7	74.9	75.6	0.2	-1.0
Aerospace Products and Parts	62.4	62.0	63.2	64.1	0.4	-0.8
Nondurable Goods	84.5	84.4	85.3	84.6	0.1	-0.8
Food Manufacturing	36.7	36.2	37.5 ^{2/}	36.5	0.5	-0.8
Wholesale Trade	119.1	119.4	117.1	117.1	-0.3	2.0
Retail Trade	313.6	315.6	308.4	309.3	-2.0	5.2
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	42.4	42.5	41.7	41.8	-0.1	0.7
Food and Beverage Stores	61.9	62.4	60.6	60.8	-0.5	1.3
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	24.8	25.9	24.3	24.8	-1.1	0.5
General Merchandise Stores	54.9	54.9	53.7	53.4	0.0	1.2
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	92.5	91.6	89.7	88.4	0.9	2.8
Utilities	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.5	-0.1	0.1
Transportation and Warehousing	88.0	87.0	85.3	83.9	1.0	2.7
Air Transportation	13.4	13.4	13.0	13.1	0.0	0.4
Water Transportation	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.3	0.0	-0.1
Truck Transportation	22.7	22.8	22.7	22.7	-0.1	0.0
Support Activities for Transportation	17.8	17.8	16.3	16.3	0.0	1.5
Support Activities for Water Transportation	6.8	6.6	5.5	5.5	0.2	1.3
Warehousing and Storage	8.8	8.4	8.3	7.6	0.4	0.5
Information	97.9	98.2	92.4	93.2	-0.3	5.5
Software Publishers	40.4	40.5	38.1	38.1	-0.1	2.3
Telecommunications	27.9	28.0	27.2	27.1	-0.1	0.7
Financial Activities	158.3	158.7	155.3	156.0	-0.4	3.0
Finance and Insurance	106.6	106.9	104.8	105.0	-0.3	1.8
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	56.6	56.6	53.7	53.5	0.0	2.9
Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	39.1	39.4	40.1	40.4	-0.3	-1.0
Real Estate and Rental Leasing	51.7	51.8	50.5	51.0	-0.1	1.2
Professional and Business Services	308.8	308.2	297.3	297.4	0.6	11.5
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	139.4	139.3	135.3	136.1	0.1	4.1
Legal Services	21.4	21.6	21.0	21.2	-0.2	0.4
Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	32.1	32.1	31.3	31.4	0.0	0.8
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	21.4	21.4	20.9	21.0	0.0	0.5
Management of Companies and Enterprises	32.7	32.7	32.0	32.1	0.0	0.7
Admin., Suppt. Svcs., Waste Mgmt., and Remediation	136.7	136.2	130.0	129.2	0.5	6.7
Employment Services	49.8	48.7	46.3	45.6	1.1	3.5
Education and Health Services	320.2	314.1	311.7	307.3	6.1	8.5
Educational Services	41.7	36.1	39.4	34.7	5.6	2.3
Hospitals	63.4	63.2	62.9	62.8	0.2	0.5
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	53.8	53.9	53.1	53.3	-0.1	0.7
Social Assistance	47.1	46.3	45.4	45.0	0.8	1.7
Leisure and Hospitality	263.2	264.6	259.6	261.7	-1.4	3.6
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	45.2	44.3	46.3	45.8	0.9	-1.1
Accommodation	30.1	31.1	29.2	30.6	-1.0	0.9
Food Services and Drinking Places	187.9	189.2	184.1	185.3	-1.3	3.8
Government	511.2	492.3	506.6	489.2	18.9	4.6
Federal	70.4	71.6	70.9	71.1	-1.2	-0.5
State	141.5	134.9	138.9	132.3	6.6	2.6
State Educational Services	74.0	66.4	73.2	65.1	7.6	0.8
Local	299.3	285.8	296.8	285.8	13.5	2.5
Local Educational Services	139.5	129.7	137.3	127.2	9.8	2.2
Workers in Labor-Management Disputes	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.2

¹Excludes proprietors, self-employed, members of armed forces, & private household employees. Includes all full- & part-time wage & salary workers receiving pay during the pay period including the 12th of the month. ²Workers excluded because of involvement in labor-management dispute.

Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics

What's New?

Economic Symposium Highlights Recovery, Importance of Education for Washington Job Seekers

Washington's economy is definitely improving, although parts of the state including Seattle and Yakima lag in recovery, economists said during the Washington State Employment Security Department's 10th annual Economic Symposium.

State and national economists pointed to a number of trends with potential impacts on the labor market, including retiring baby boomers and a relative shortage of workers to replace them and the increased importance of education and training for higher-paying jobs.

"We had a sharp recession in Washington but on the other hand, we've had a sharp recovery," Greg Weeks, director of the department's Labor Market and Economic Analysis branch, told the 150 attendees. "For the first time in a long while, we are within one-tenth of a percentage point from the national unemployment rate."

Department statistics show nearly 25,000 fewer unemployment claims from last year.

"Private employment led us into the recession and is also leading us out," Weeks said.

Read more about this year's Economic Symposium at:

www.workforceexplorer.com



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