

HOUSTON CREATES 57,000 NEW JOBS IN DECEMBER

While Texas lost 25,700 jobs in December, Houston employment unexpectedly increased, with employers creating 57,300 new jobs compared to December 2007 -- a year-over-year increase of 2.2 percent. This is despite mounting initial claims for unemployment benefits. The number of area residents who filed for benefits rose by 18.4% compared to October. Claims are up 101.8% from 2007. Houston's unemployment rate stayed steady at 5.5% in December, even as the state's rate jumped to 6%.

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