

WHATCOM COUNTY IS EXPERIENCING UNEMPLOYMENT CHANGE NUMBERS



Whatcom County is hitting the news channels for some interesting news reports. Unemployment numbers are dropping in the county but people are saying it "is not because of job growth." Over the past few months the unemployment rates have been slowly dropping. In August the county saw an unemployment rate of 8.3 and then in September it went down to an 8.1%. That is a excessive number drop in just a few weeks. However, the data from the county employment department is showing that "the people working in Whatcom County also shrunk." "Last month, 92,150 people were employed in the county, down 4,460 people compared to August." The people that are actually working in Whatcom County keeps shrinking. Huge numbers of people are not working and it is strange that the numbers keep going down. While it is no surprise that the economy keeps adding jobs at a very slow pace, people are still wondering what is going on in Whatcom County. One of the best news in Whatcom County is that the "non-farm workforce" has seen a pretty "stable" work environment. "One of the few bright spots locally continues to be manufacturing, which added 100 people between August and September, increasing the overall total to 8,400. That's the highest monthly total since December 2008. Several other industries shrank in the same period, including construction (down 100 people) and leisure and hospitality (down 300)." This is great news for a county that has a shrinking workforce but is still showing an improvement in unemployment numbers. A few areas of employment are seeing increases and others not so much. The biggest news is in manufacturing department and the gloomiest news is in the government employment sector. Statistics released by the county explained the following: "Government employment locally posted one of the biggest declines - it is down by 1,600 people from September 2010. As of last month, government employed 13,900 people in the county." While the 13,900 might seem like a large number, it is not compared to what the amount of people who were employed before. The big gap in data is because the employment numbers are collected at one time and then released at a later date. So even though Whatcom County is experiencing more job losses now, the unemployment rate has done down due to the data collected previously. Whatcom County even has a smaller unemployment rate then the surrounding counties. Ferry County had the highest unemployment rate in that area and Whitman County had the very lowest. The actual state of Washington has a fairly low unemployment rate all together at a rate of 8.5%. Overtime, Whatcom County would like to see the numbers reflect what is actually happening in their county. The surrounding counties are not far off from the Whatcom County unemployment percentages. In any situation, Whatcom County would like to see their unemployment rate decrease.