

## JOBLESS RATE IS INCREASING IN EACH COUNTY



The Illinois Department of Employment Security has recently released a report featuring statistics that prove each county in the state has dealt with an increase in the number of jobless individuals, meaning the unemployment rate has risen. Effingham County still had the lowest jobless rate out of all other counties in the area. However, while at a 7.6 percent jobless rate, it is still an increase from the previous rate during the month of November in 2011, when the jobless rate was at 7 percent. And, the unemployment rate in December of 2011, at 7.6 percent, was also a rise from the same month during the previous year of December 2010 when the unemployment rate was at 7.3 percent. And, while the numbers prove that there has been an increase in the number of unemployed individuals, an economist for the labor market, Dennis Hoffman, has said the levels of employment have still continued to increase throughout 2011 and that these percentages are not necessarily something that residents of the area should fret over. Hoffman says, "Seasonal and temporary hiring in retail trade and food services boosted employment in the last quarter." He also says, "Employment advances were reported in health care services, transportation and wholesale trade, while favorable weather conditions enabled many construction projects to remain active through December." Hoffman also believes that the residents of Illinois in the different counties should not be very concerned about the higher jobless rates because an increase so small is not as significant as higher increases. Hoffman says, "The whole year has been mostly stable." He also says, "There have been no significant changes one way or another." Hoffman has also made prediction that labor market will begin to improve at a gradual pace throughout 2012. He says that at the end of 2011, in the fourth quarter, many new job opportunities were available in a number of different sectors. Such sectors included health care, transportation, administrative and office support, and food services, amongst several others. The vast majority of the counties in the area had seen an increase in the jobless rates in December of 2011 from December of 2010. However, there were two specific counties that did manage to see a decline in the jobless rate. These counties were Shelby County and Jasper County. In Shelby County, the jobless rate was at 9.4 percent in December of 2011, down from 9.5 percent from the same month of December in the previous year, during 2010. Jasper County went from a jobless rate of 8.8 percent in December of 2010 to a jobless rate of 8.7 percent in December of 2011, which shows that progress was made, while it was a very small decline.

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