

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN LOUISIANA DROPS SLIGHTLY



The Louisiana Workforce Commission released the employment report for the month of October and the parish of St. Landry is witnessing its best employment numbers so far for 2012, according to the Daily World. The monthly survey from the LWC for non-seasonally adjusted, non-farm jobs said that St. Landry Parish had a 6.2 percent unemployment rate for the month of October. This was a tiny drop from the 6.3 unemployment rate in September and over a full percentage point under the 7.4 percent rate from October of 2011. Of all the parishes, St. Landry Parish was the only parish to experience a drop in the unemployment rate for the month of October. Acadia Parish's unemployment rate from October increased to 5.6 percent from 5.4 percent. In Evangeline Parish, the unemployment rate jumped from 6.7 percent in September to 6.9 percent in the month of October. Lafayette Parish provided the lowest unemployment rate in the entire state, coming in at 4.1 percent, which was an increase from 4.0 percent in September. "These numbers are very good for us," said Frankie Bertrand with the Opelousas-St. Landry Parish Chamber of Commerce. "These are the October numbers, so this doesn't include the extra help many businesses add for the holidays." Bertrand noted that local business seems to be very busy right now and that there has been talk of added jobs at some of the local companies along with rumors of a new team at the Opelousas Yoo-hoo plant. "All this means more people employed, more spending and more tax revenues," Bertrand said. Bertrand did express her worry for the coming year as the new insurance requirements from the Affordable Care Act that could force some employers to scale back their hiring. "Hopefully our employment numbers won't drop after the first of the year," Bertrand said. For the month of October, Louisiana posted an unemployment rate of 6.6 percent, tying it with Texas. That rate beat out all the other Southern states except for Virginia, which posted an unemployment rate of 5.7 percent in October. The executive director for the LWC, Curt Eysink, said that the numbers for the state were the lowest since April of 2009. He also noted that October marked the 26th consecutive month for over-the-year private sector job gains. "The state added 26,400 nonfarm jobs over the year and 12,200 jobs over the month. Louisiana's over-the-month increase in employment of 0.6 percent was second only to Utah," Eysink said. "More jobs, more people working and fewer unemployed indicate our labor markets in Louisiana are doing well," Eysink said. "These broad-based and consistent improvements make Louisiana more competitive than ever as a place to grow a business or find a job."