

The Vermont Labor Market

Departments of Employment & Training / Labor & Industry

Vermont Department of

Employment & Training

September 2003

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<http://www.det.state.vt.us>

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Commissioner's Message

New Workshops for Upper Level Managers and Executives Debut in January 2004

Offered by *The Vermont Business Center at UVM*

The newly formed "Vermont Business Center" at The University of Vermont announces an innovative series of courses designed specifically for executives and mid-to high level managers. Beginning in January 2004, seminars will be offered at the main UVM Campus, at the Howard Dean Education Center in Springfield, or online. These "credit-free" (non-credit) training opportunities incorporate:

- Hands-On Learning – Participants attend an intensive session, take back their new knowledge and apply it to their own business. Students learn how to apply new skills and concepts to their organization's unique needs.
- Instructors who are Practitioners - Our instructors are practitioners with extensive business and industry experience, in addition to their academic credentials.
- Schedule-Friendly Format. These condensed workshops deliver maximum benefit in a minimum amount of time. Sessions are only one or two days in length and several online courses are also planned.

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The Edge

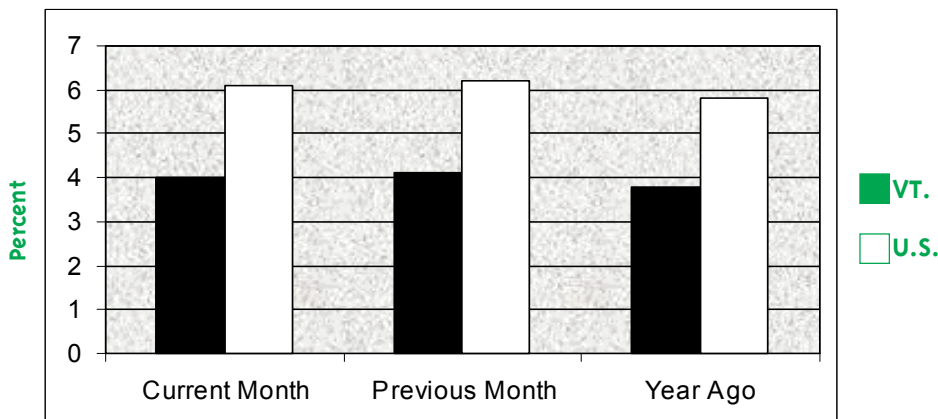
Whenever jobs are discussed, the subject of employee benefits comes up, whether the discussion is among employers, job seekers, or career counselors. The Bureau of Labor Statistics just released a report covering data collected by the National Compensation Survey (NCS) which provides comprehensive measures of occupational earnings, compensation cost trends and details of benefit provisions.

Health care is probably the first employee benefit we think of. Perhaps not surprisingly, the proportion of employees covered by employer-sponsored medical care plans has fallen gradually over the past ten years. In March 2003, 45 percent of employees had elected coverage, which is down from 63 percent in 1992-3. Most of the plans required employee contributions for both single and family coverage. These contributions averaged \$229/month for family coverage and \$60/month for single coverage. Since 1992-3, the average monthly contribution required of employees has risen about 75 percent for both family and single coverage. Dental and vision care benefits are utilized less than medical care. Only 32 percent of employees participate in

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Unemployment Rates Vermont and U.S.

August (SA) 2003 Rates
VT 4.0% • U.S. 6.1%



Commissioner's Message –

(continued from front page)

Planned Programs

Initial course offerings include: Strengthening Operations, Strategic Marketing, Leadership and Communications, Finance for Non-Finance Managers, Human Resources, and Project Management. New courses will be announced regularly on the Center's website (<http://learn.uvm.edu/vbc>). Courses begin in January 2004 and will take place at the main UVM Campus, at the Howard Dean Education Center in Springfield, or online. Intensive one or two day sessions, and the use of online technologies, enable participants to minimize their time away from work.

What is The Vermont Business Center?

The Vermont Business Center is a partnership between The School of Business Administration and Continuing Education. "The Vermont Business Center is a logical collaboration between the School of Business Administration and Continuing Education," says Rocki Lee DeWitt, Dean of the School of Business. "We have the management, marketing, and finance expertise, and Continuing Education has the outreach and adult-education experience." She says there are many growing Vermont companies that do not have the in-house expertise to take their employees and their companies to the next level. "The game really changes once you're billing for over 5 or 10 million dollars. The need for capital and good debt management, leaner operations, market expansion, and employee development all increase significantly. This is the level where we can really bring something to the table."

Complementary Services

Besides a full range of high-level courses, The Vermont Business Center offers related services including:

- eLearning (online courses) – Businesses can save substantially on travel expenses & minimize time away from the office.
- Training Needs Assessment – Assistance with pinpointing a company's critical training needs.
- Customized Training - The Center can develop training to fit your organization's "skill gaps"
- Co-Sponsored Training - Companies may realize substantial savings on employee training by partnering with UVM to offer a particular course or program.
- Vermont Family Business Initiative – Offers four forums specifically for family and closely-held businesses
- Consulting Services: Strategies for Profitable Growth, Organization Development for Efficient Growth, Stakeholder Analysis and Consensus Building.
- Access to the wider resources of the university: research, potential partnerships, and more
- For-Credit Programs: Business Savvy Summer Intensive for undergrads, MBA and Pre-MBA

For more information about the Vermont Business Center or programs currently under development, please contact Greg Dunkling, Director of New Business Initiatives, at 888-222-3413 or 802-656-4033. The Center's website is <http://learn.uvm.edu/vbc>; send email inquiries to vbc@uvm.edu.

The Edge - *(continued from front page)*

dental care plans, and 19 percent in vision care.

Retirement is another benefit offered by some employers. Overall, coverage by retirement plans has remained relatively steady for the last few years, however participation in the different types of plans has shifted. Defined benefit plans cover a smaller portion of workers (20 percent) than they did 10 years ago, while defined contribution plans, such as 401 Ks cover a larger portion (40 percent). Some employees participate in both types.

Access to and participation in benefits plans varied by occupational group, full- and part-time workers, union status and earnings. Workers in white-collar occupations were more likely to participate in defined contribution plans than service workers. Union workers had higher rates of coverage for most benefits. Paid vacation, holiday and other leave was available to most full-time workers, but not as frequently for part-time employees. Workers in higher paid occupations were twice as likely as workers in lower paid jobs to participate in health and retirement plans.

The study showed a significant difference between large and small establishments when it came to offering benefits. Nearly all establishments with 100 workers or more offered health insurance, compared with just over half of smaller establishments. Larger establishments were also nearly twice as likely to offer retirement plans. For more detailed information, see table on back or go to www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/home.htm



DET Notebook

Rapid Response - The Key to Employer Service

“An instant suite of services to support employees facing layoffs or staff reductions.” That’s one definition of Rapid Response, a strategy employed by the Department of Employment & Training to meet the needs of those workers being separated from employers (large & small) throughout the state of Vermont. When a Career Resource Center is notified by an employer of an upcoming layoff or plant closing, our Employer Resource Consultant sets up a rapid response session or sessions at the employer’s place of business or at a location where the employer has asked the affected employees to meet. Each session includes a representative of the Unemployment Insurance Division.

At each rapid response session, our agency staff will

provide information on the following DET services:



- (1) Unemployment Insurance in terms of when and how to file an initial claim for benefits, eligibility requirements, possible benefit amounts, filing continuous claims and work search requirements.
- (2) Re-employment Services available at local DET Career Resource Centers, a data base of open positions and the means of accessing them via telephone, internet and direct referrals from DET staff, on-line resume bank, veterans services, labor market information

(occupational projections, average wage rates).

During the past 12 months, in addition to IBM, DET delivered Rapid Response sessions to approximately 550 separated employees from 16 companies in the Chittenden County labor market. The number laid-off varied from a low of 6 to a high of 70 employees with an average of 34 per layoff. These employers represented all sectors of the economy including health care, media, transportation, service and manufacturing. As is evident

in this one labor market alone (and it's true in all of Vermont's 12 labor markets), DET delivers rapid response sessions to many small and mid-sized employers in addition to the larger employers of our state.

During the same period, the DET in Chittenden County worked with six (6) employers in positive recruitment efforts to hire 281 additional employees.

We surely hope to be involved in many more recruitment strategies with new and expanding efforts in the next couple of years as the overall economy recovers.

Economic Spotcheck

Local Unemployment Rates (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Town/City*	Aug. '03	July '03	Aug. '02
Barre City	6.5	7.4	6.9
Barre Town	2.1	2.5	2.9
Bennington Town	5.0	5.4	5.8
Brattleboro Town	4.0	4.3	3.0
Burlington City	3.6	3.7	3.2
Colchester Town	3.2	3.2	2.6
Essex Town	2.7	2.8	3.1
Hartford Town	1.6	1.6	1.4
Middlebury Town	2.1	2.4	2.0
Milton Town	4.6	4.6	4.3
Montpelier City	2.0	1.9	2.0
Rutland City	3.2	3.8	3.3
St. Albans City	2.0	2.1	3.2
St. Johnsbury Town	4.8	4.7	4.5
So. Burlington City	2.4	2.4	2.4
Springfield Town	6.6	6.8	7.8

*16 Largest Towns in Vermont

U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX Base Period (1982 - 1984 = 100)

	Aug. 2003	July 2003	Aug. 2002
All Items Index	184.6	183.9	180.7
Annual Percent Change	2.2	2.1	1.8

BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE CPI - The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time of a fixed market basket of goods and services. It is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, fuels, transportation fares, and other items that people buy for day to day living. The CPI shown above represents the U.S. city average for all urban consumers and is not seasonally adjusted.

There is no separate Consumer Price Index for Vermont or any area within the state.

Employment Trends

Total seasonally adjusted August employment dropped slightly, down 200 from the previous month with 339,700 working Vermonters. This estimate includes all Vermont residents who worked, whether at wage and salary jobs, or as self-employed.

On a seasonally adjusted basis, the estimated number of nonfarm jobs rebounded, adding 700 from the revised July estimate, to 304,700. Education & Health Services was the largest contributor to the gain, with an additional 600. Some schools added employment to their rosters earlier than usual. Leisure & Hospitality also presented a slight gain during the busy summer season. Retail was the loss leader, contributing a loss of 400 after a jump in the opposite direction in July. Professional & Business Services took a downward turn after a jump in the opposite direction last month. Government showed some weakness, due in part to towns cutting seasonal jobs earlier than in previous years.

The more detailed unadjusted estimates were relatively stable, adding only 350 in August. Accommodations was the largest contributor, with an additional 700 jobs, continuing to reflect the busy summer season. Also showing strength in August was Durable Goods, after having lost jobs in July due to short-term seasonal lay-offs. Other Local Government fell by 300 over the

month. As echoed in the seasonally adjusted data, a large percentage of this could be attributable to early seasonal lay-offs. Retail Trade also mimics the seasonally adjusted data to some degree, turning downward after a spike in July.

The preliminary August estimates reflect an annual increase of 1.7%. The change in private sector employment is considered statistically significant. Education & Health Services are responsible for the largest share of growth. Leisure & Hospitality follow close behind, adding a similar number of jobs over the year.

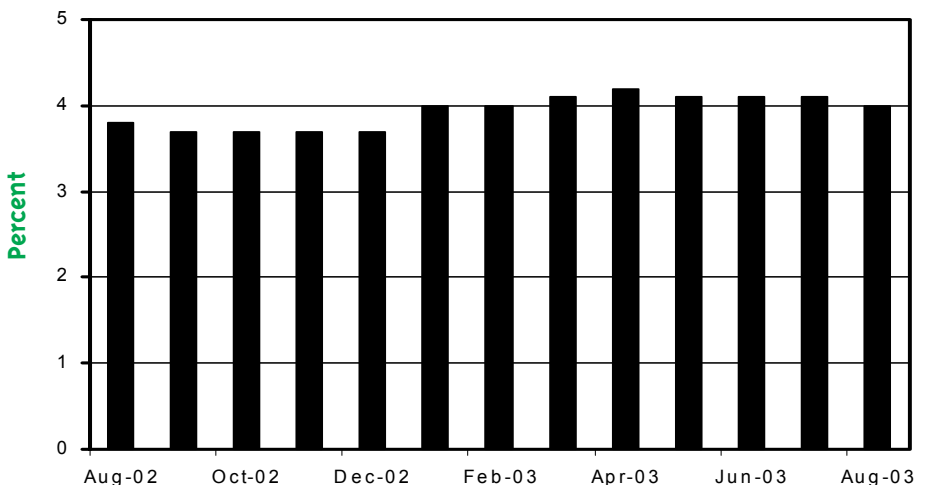
Unemployment Trends

Vermont's seasonally adjusted August unemployment rate of 4.0 percent was down slightly from the revised July rate, with an estimated 14,000 Vermonters unemployed during the month.

The comparable national unemployment rate was 6.1 percent for August, down one tenth from the revised July rate. Vermont continues to be well under the national rate.

The number of initial claims for Unemployment Insurance filed in August decreased modestly from the previous month. Decreases in claims were found in areas of manufacturing and select service industries. Both of which may be reflecting seasonal patterns.

Vermont Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate



Labor Force Estimates *(Seasonally Adjusted)*

Vermont	Aug. '03	July '03	Aug. '02	Changes from:	
				July '03	Aug. '02
TOTAL LABOR FORCE¹	353,700	354,400	349,600	-700	4,100
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	339,700	339,900	336,300	-200	3,400
TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT	14,000	14,600	13,300	-600	700
RATE	4.0	4.1	3.8	-0.1	0.2

¹Includes proprietors, professionals, and unpaid family workers.
VCM Regression Methodology

Labor Market Areas *(Not Seasonally Adjusted)*

	August 2003	July 2003	August 2002		August 2003	July 2003	August 2002
BARRE-MONTPELIER				MORRISTOWN-STOWE			
Labor Force	41,750	41,950	41,150	Labor Force	20,050	19,800	19,500
Unemployment	1,450	1,600	1,550	Unemployment	700	750	650
Rate	3.5	3.9	3.8	Rate	3.5	3.8	3.3
Employment	40,300	40,350	39,600	Employment	19,350	19,050	18,850
BENNINGTON-MANCHESTER				NEWPORT			
Labor Force	22,050	22,500	21,600	Labor Force	13,500	13,600	13,100
Unemployment	850	950	850	Unemployment	700	750	750
Rate	3.9	4.3	4.0	Rate	5.4	5.6	5.5
Employment	21,200	21,500	20,750	Employment	12,800	12,850	12,400
BURLINGTON				RANDOLPH			
Labor Force	108,100	108,600	107,750	Labor Force	6,350	6,400	6,200
Unemployment	3,350	3,450	3,250	Unemployment	300	250	300
Rate	3.1	3.2	3.0	Rate	4.4	4.1	4.5
Employment	104,750	105,150	104,500	Employment	6,050	6,100	5,950
ENOSBURG				RUTLAND			
Labor Force	11,450	11,600	11,000	Labor Force	30,450	30,200	30,700
Unemployment	500	550	500	Unemployment	1,500	1,600	1,200
Rate	4.5	4.7	4.4	Rate	5.0	5.3	3.9
Employment	10,950	11,050	10,500	Employment	28,900	28,550	29,500
HARTFORD-LEBANON,VT-NH LMA (VT PORTION ONLY)				ST. JOHNSBURY			
Labor Force	30,450	30,150	31,200	Labor Force	15,300	15,450	15,000
Unemployment	550	550	500	Unemployment	650	650	650
Rate	1.7	1.9	1.6	Rate	4.2	4.3	4.2
Employment	29,950	29,550	30,700	Employment	14,650	14,800	14,350
KEENE-BRATTLEBORO,NH-VT LMA (ENTIRE AREA)				SPRINGFIELD			
Labor Force	60,800	61,650	58,100	Labor Force	9,400	9,700	9,250
Unemployment	1,850	1,900	1,700	Unemployment	500	600	550
Rate	3.1	3.0	2.9	Rate	5.5	6.0	6.1
Employment	58,900	59,750	56,400	Employment	8,850	9,100	8,700
MIDDLEBURY				STATEWIDE			
Labor Force	21,550	22,050	20,850	Labor Force	355,750	357,650	351,800
Unemployment	650	700	600	Unemployment	12,550	13,400	11,950
Rate	3.0	3.2	2.9	Rate	3.5	3.7	3.4
Employment	20,900	21,350	20,250	Employment	343,150	344,250	339,850

Monthly estimates are preliminary and subject to revision.

Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

Vermont Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment in Thousands

BY NAICS	Prelim.	Revised	Revised	Changes From:	
	Aug. '03	July '03	Aug '02	July '03	Aug. '02
Total - All Industries	304.7	304.0	299.0	0.7	5.7
Private Industries	253.0	252.1	248.1	0.9	4.9
Construction	14.8	15.0	14.5	-0.2	0.3
Manufacturing	38.6	38.5	39.5	0.1	-0.9
Retail Trade *	40.5	40.9	40.4	-0.4	0.1
Professional & Business Services	20.9	21.2	20.3	-0.3	0.6
Education & Health Services	54.0	53.4	50.5	0.6	3.5
Leisure & Hospitality*	34.4	34.3	33.0	0.1	1.4
Total Government	51.7	51.9	50.9	-0.2	0.8

*These estimates are not endorsed by the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Note: Total - All Industries estimate is seasonally adjusted independently.

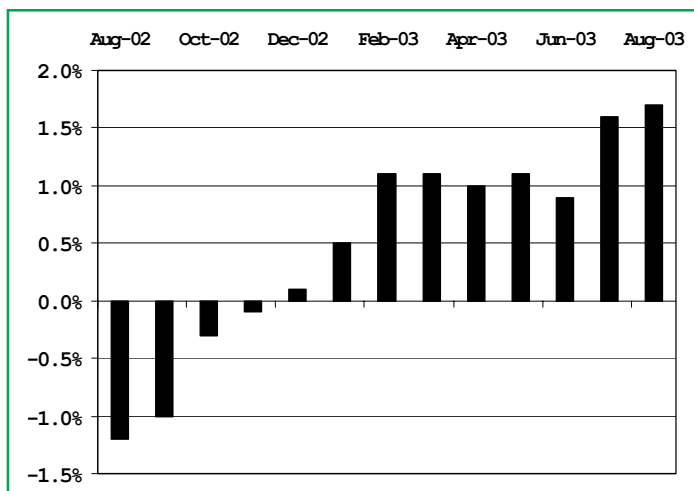
All seasonal adjustment performed with X12-ARIMA. Seasonal factors available from DET/LMI on request.

Produced by the Vermont Department of Employment and Training in cooperation with the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, unless otherwise noted.

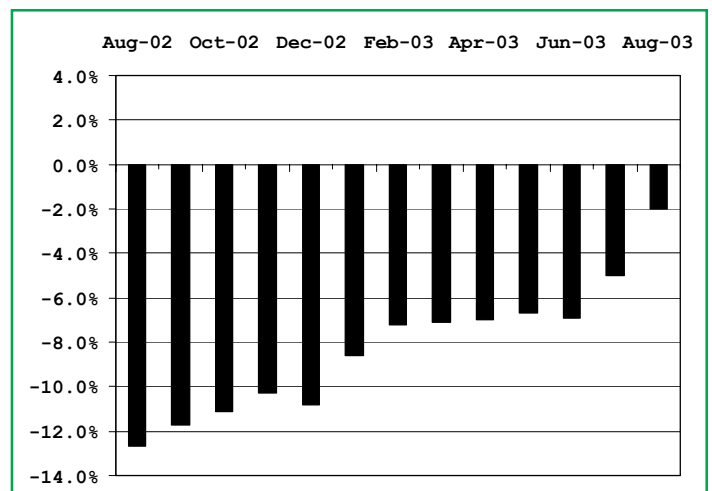
Vermont Annual Job Growth

Not Seasonally Adjusted Data

All Industries



Manufacturing



Nonfarm Employment In Vermont (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Compiled by the Department of Employment and Training in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

INDUSTRY BY NAICS	Prelim.	Revised	Revised	Changes From:	
	Aug. '03	July '03	Aug. '02	July '03	Aug. '02
TOTAL NONFARM	299,200	298,850	294,100	350	5,100
TOTAL PRIVATE	256,300	255,750	251,950	550	4,350
GOODS PRODUCING	56,700	56,400	57,050	300	-350
MANUFACTURING	39,000	38,650	39,700	350	-700
Durable Goods	27,950	27,550	28,300	400	-350
Computer & Electrical Equipment Mfg.	10,200	10,300	10,300	-100	-100
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	2,650	2,600	2,900	50	-250
Machinery Mfg.	3,000	3,050	3,100	-50	-100
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	2,350	2,350	2,250	0	100
Furniture & Related Product Mfg.	2,550	2,500	2,550	50	0
Non-Durable Goods	11,050	11,100	11,400	-50	-350
Food Mfg.	3,900	3,900	4,000	0	-100
CONSTRUCTION	16,450	16,550	16,300	-100	150
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	1,250	1,200	1,050	50	200
SERVICE-PROVIDING	242,500	242,450	237,050	50	5,450
TRADE TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES	60,000	60,450	59,250	-450	750
Wholesale Trade	10,600	10,650	10,050	-50	550
Retail Trade	40,850	41,100	40,650	-250	200
Food & Beverage Stores	10,250	10,400	10,300	-150	-50
General Merchandise Store	3,500	3,450	3,400	50	100
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	8,550	8,700	8,550	-150	0
Utilities	1,700	1,750	1,750	-50	-50
Transportation & Warehousing	6,850	6,950	6,800	-100	50
INFORMATION	6,750	6,800	6,700	-50	50
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	13,500	13,500	13,500	0	0
Finance & Insurance	10,300	10,300	10,250	0	50
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	3,200	3,200	3,250	0	-50
PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES	21,350	21,250	20,900	100	450
Professional, Scientific and Technical	12,500	12,450	12,400	50	100
Administrative, Support and Waste	8,650	8,600	8,200	50	450
EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH SERVICES	51,000	51,050	49,200	-50	1,800
Educational Services	11,450	11,450	10,750	0	700
College, Universities and Professional	6,300	6,300	6,150	0	150
Health Care and Social Assistance	39,550	39,600	38,450	-50	1,100
Ambulatory Health Care Services	15,650	15,600	15,100	50	550
Hospitals	10,350	10,350	9,950	0	400
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	6,700	6,750	6,600	-50	100
LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	36,450	35,600	34,950	850	1,500
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	4,900	4,800	4,450	100	450
Accommodation and Food Services	31,550	30,800	30,500	750	1,050
Accommodations	12,300	11,600	11,600	700	700
Hotel & Motels	9,550	9,200	9,300	350	250
Food Services and Drinking Places	19,250	19,200	18,900	50	350
OTHER SERVICES	10,550	10,700	10,400	-150	150
GOVERNMENT	42,900	43,100	42,150	-200	750
Federal Government	6,400	6,400	6,050	0	350
State Government Education	6,150	6,000	5,750	150	400
Local Government Education	13,700	13,750	13,700	-50	0
Other State Government	9,300	9,300	9,300	0	0
Other Local Government	7,350	7,650	7,350	-300	0

Nonfarm Employment By Area *(Not Seasonally Adjusted)*

Note: Monthly estimates are preliminary and subject to revision. See Annual Employment & Earnings for details. Benchmark 3/2002.

Burlington

INDUSTRY BY NAICS	Preliminary	Revised	Revised	Changes From:	
	Aug. '03	July '03	Aug. '02	July '03	Aug. '02
TOTAL NONFARM	107,650	107,550	105,900	100	1,750
TOTAL PRIVATE	92,400	92,100	91,550	300	850
GOODS PRODUCING	20,950	20,800	21,450	150	(500)
MANUFACTURING	15,450	15,450	16,200	0	(750)
Durable Goods	12,100	12,200	12,450	(100)	(350)
NATURAL RESOURCES, MINING & CONST.	5,500	5,350	5,250	150	250
SERVICE PROVIDING	86,700	86,750	84,450	(50)	2,250
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES	21,250	21,350	21,300	(100)	(50)
Wholesale Trade	3,650	3,650	3,600	0	50
Retail Trade	14,650	14,700	14,550	(50)	100
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	2,950	3,000	3,150	(50)	(200)
INFORMATION	3,200	3,200	3,150	0	50
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	5,600	5,600	5,450	0	150
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	10,700	10,500	9,800	200	900
Professional Scientific and Technical	6,900	6,800	6,450	100	450
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	17,000	17,050	16,750	(50)	250
Health Care and Social Assistance	13,800	13,850	13,850	(50)	(50)
LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	9,950	9,800	10,000	150	(50)
Accommodation and Food Services	8,100	8,000	8,000	100	100
Food Services and Drinking Places	6,500	6,450	6,450	50	50
OTHER SERVICES	3,750	3,800	3,650	(50)	100
GOVERNMENT	15,250	15,450	14,350	(200)	900
Federal Government	2,950	2,950	2,750	0	200
State Government Education	4,300	4,250	4,200	50	100
Local Government Education	3,950	4,100	3,650	(150)	300
Other State Government	1,650	1,650	1,600	0	50
Other Local Government	2,400	2,500	2,150	(100)	250

Barre-Montpelier

TOTAL NONFARM	34,900	34,800	34,000	100	900
TOTAL PRIVATE	27,100	27,100	26,150	0	950
GOODS PRODUCING	4,850	4,800	5,000	50	-150
MANUFACTURING	3,150	3,100	3,200	50	-50
NATURAL RESOURCES, MINING & CONST.	1,700	1,700	1,800	0	-100
SERVICE-PROVIDING	30,050	30,000	29,000	50	1050
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES	6,200	6,250	6,000	-50	200
Wholesale Trade	1,050	1,050	1,050	0	0
Retail Trade	4,350	4,400	4,200	-50	150
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	800	800	750	0	50
INFORMATION	700	700	700	0	0
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	2,950	2,950	2,850	0	100
PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES	2,150	2,100	1,950	50	200
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	5,500	5,500	5,300	0	200
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,800	3,850	3,700	-50	100
LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	3,250	3,250	2,900	0	350
Accommodation and Food Services	2,800	2,850	2,550	-50	250
OTHER SERVICES	1,500	1,550	1,450	-50	50
GOVERNMENT	7,800	7,700	7,850	100	-50
Federal Government	350	350	350	0	0
State Government Education	300	300	300	0	0
Local Government Education	1,850	1,750	1,750	100	100
Other State Government	4,550	4,550	4,700	0	-150
Other Local Government	750	750	750	0	0

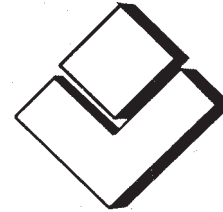
Unemployment Insurance Program Summary

	August 2003	July 2003	August 2002	Percent Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
UI Trust Fund	\$257,876,199	\$258,925,968	\$302,449,305	-0.4%	-14.7%
UI Reg. Benefit Payments *	\$5,513,994	\$6,209,549	\$6,203,493	-11.2%	-11.1%
UI Initial Claims	2,337	2,891	2,799	-19.2%	-16.5%
UI Weeks Claimed	30,098	30,338	28,957	-0.8%	3.9%

**Includes benefit payments for reimbursable employers.*

Average Hours and Earnings of Production and Nonsupervisory Workers

INDUSTRY BY NAICS	Average Weekly Earnings(\$)			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings(\$)		
	Aug. '03 Prelim.	July '03 Revised	Aug. '02 Revised	Aug. '03 Prelim.	July '02 Revised	Aug. '02 Revised	Aug. '03 Prelim.	July '03 Revised	Aug. '02 Revised
GOODS PRODUCING	595.36	593.48	591.05	40.2	40.1	40.4	14.81	14.80	14.63
Natural Resources & Mining	465.79	464.07	458.62	33.9	33.8	33.5	13.74	13.73	13.69
Construction	639.32	635.82	644.68	41.3	41.1	41.7	15.48	15.47	15.46
Manufacturing	582.40	580.15	573.83	40.0	39.9	40.1	14.56	14.54	14.31
Durable Goods	604.38	602.49	594.95	40.4	40.3	40.5	14.96	14.95	14.69
Non-Durable Goods	514.71	514.32	511.54	38.7	38.7	38.9	13.30	13.29	13.15
SERVICE PROVIDING									
Wholesale Trade	639.02	636.87	650.80	35.6	35.5	36.5	17.95	17.94	17.83
Retail Trade	368.33	366.83	361.43	30.9	30.8	30.5	11.92	11.91	11.85
Health Care & Social Assist.	546.62	540.89	526.85	30.2	29.9	29.4	18.10	18.09	17.92
BURLINGTON AREA									
Manufacturing	571.52	569.63	573.76	37.6	37.5	38.2	15.20	15.19	15.02



Commissioner's Message

National Fire Prevention Week

October 5-11 is National Fire Prevention Week, the longest running public health and safety observance on record. Fire Prevention Week was originally established to commemorate the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Whether or not that terrible fire was indeed started by Mrs. O'Leary's cow remains open to debate, but it is clear that the Chicago fire changed the way firefighters and public officials thought about fire safety.

Fire is a leading cause of accidental death and injury in Vermont, and fire losses to property alone exceed \$20 million a year. Every Vermonter, young and old, should be educated about fire risks and what to do when a fire does occur. Here are twelve fire safety tips that may save your life or the life of someone you love:

1. Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement. Make sure there is a smoke alarm *and* a carbon monoxide detector in or near every sleeping area.
2. Test all smoke alarms once a month and replace the batteries at least once a year (or as soon as the low battery alarm "chirps").
3. Have a home escape plan, and make sure everyone – no matter their age – is familiar with it. If you have a baby or a family member with mobility limitations, make sure someone is assigned to assist them. Practice your escape plan at least twice per year.
4. Never leave food cooking on the stovetop or in the oven unattended. Keep cooking areas clean and clear of materials that could catch fire, such as potholders, towels, rags, food packaging and drapes.
5. If you use space heaters, make sure they are at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Always turn the heaters off when leaving the room or going to bed. Space heaters are designed for temporary use only, and should not be used as full-time heating appliances.
6. Have your heating equipment, including furnaces and chimneys, inspected every year and cleaned when necessary.
7. Candles should only be used when an adult is present. Make sure all candles have been extinguished when you leave the room or go to sleep. Use candle holders that are made of non-combustible materials, won't tip over, and are big enough to catch dripping wax.
8. If there are smokers in your home, make sure ashtrays are large and deep and won't tip over. Matches and lighters should be kept in a safe place, out of the sight and reach of children.

9. Replace or repair any electrical device with a loose, frayed or broken cord. If you don't already have them, you should consider hiring an electrician to install GFCIs (ground-fault circuit interrupters) to protect against shock hazards and AFCIs (arc-fault circuit interrupters) to protect against fire.

10. Store liquids like gasoline, kerosene, oil and propane outside the home. Store them only in small quantities, either in their original containers or in safety containers. Never bring even a small amount of gasoline indoors.

11. In the hands of a competent adult, a portable fire extinguisher can save lives and minimize property damage by putting out or containing small fires (such as a stovetop fire). But keep in mind that fire spreads very, very quickly and if the fire extinguisher isn't putting out the fire, GET OUT.

12. When a fire does occur, your first priority should be to get you and your family out of the house. Once you're out, STAY OUT and leave the firefighting to the professionals!

National Fire Prevention Week also provides us with an opportunity to thank all members of the Vermont fire services for their dedication and professionalism. Vermonters should be proud that there are so many individuals and organizations dedicated to making Vermont a safer place to live.

(continued on page 11)

Labor & Industry

(continued from page 10)

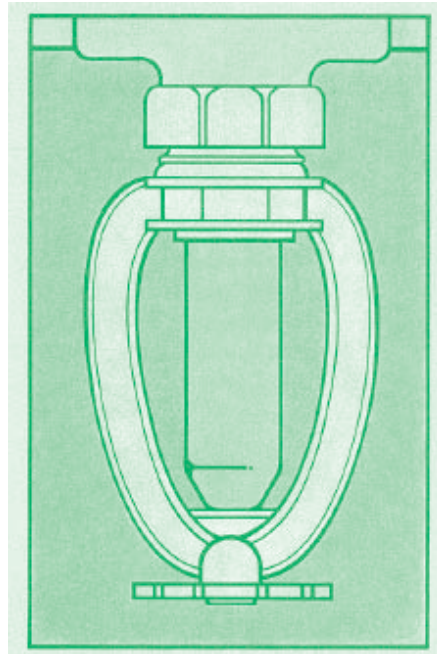
Incentives for the Installation of Fire Sprinkler Systems

Fire sprinkler systems have a strong record of property protection stretching back over 100 years. Over the last 20 to 30 years people have become more and more aware of what fire sprinkler systems can do to protect lives. There has never been a multiple loss of life due to fire in fully sprinklered buildings and the only loss of life has been a person who was close to the source of ignition. Motivated by national incidents such as the "Station" nightclub fire in Rhode Island and recent fires closer to home, such as the loss of the building containing "Play it Again Sam" in Montpelier, business owners, municipal officials and fire safety professionals are looking for incentives so that more buildings will be protected by fire sprinkler systems.

A number of incentives for building owners or tenants to install fire sprinkler systems are already in place, and more incentives are being discussed at both the national and state level.

Over the last several years the legislature has developed several incentives for the installation of fire sprinkler systems in buildings in designated downtown areas as part of a larger initiative to promote the use of existing downtown areas. Initially grants were available for two years through the Downtown Board for the correction of safety problems, including the installation of fire sprinkler systems. Approximately ½ of the grants given out during that timeframe were to address safety issues and several significant buildings were provided with fire sprinkler systems through those grants. Currently the incentive program for the installation of fire sprinklers in buildings in designated downtown is focused on Vermont tax credits. The credit may be up to 50% of the cost of the fire sprinkler system

installation, up to \$25,000. The credit has some flexibility on how it can be used and can be carried forward up to 14 years. In addition the construction permit fee paid to the Department of Labor & Industry for review of the installation of the fire sprinkler system is rebated to the building owner once the fire sprinkler system is installed and approved. Building owners in designated village centers are also eligible for a \$5,000 tax credit for the



installation of a required fire sprinkler system.

Municipal tax stabilization programs may also offer incentives to business to install fire sprinkler systems. The tax stabilization programs can be justified because where there are more buildings with fire sprinkler systems there will be less need for municipal services and businesses with fire sprinkler systems will be paying taxes well into the future.

Because of the excellent loss record a building owner or tenant may pay reduced insurance premiums as an incentive to install a complete or partial fire sprinkler system. However, the benefits vary significantly by insurance company and by the use of the building. A building owner may want to check with different insurance companies to benefit the most from the installation of a fire sprinkler system.

One of the most common incentives for a building owner to install a fire sprinkler system is to permit the expanded use or adaptive reuse of a building. The codes allow more flexibility for the location of higher risk uses when a fire sprinkler system is installed. It is an additional incentive for many building owners to install fire sprinkler systems during construction or renovation work to take advantage of the many exceptions and alternatives allowed under the state fire code when a fire sprinkler system is installed, facilitating the use of existing building materials and the existing building arrangement.

Whether in a highly competitive market, or a specialty market, it is an incentive for a business owner to protect against the loss of business by installing a fire sprinkler system. The majority of businesses that have a fire don't reopen or if they do reopen they go out of business in a short time. Even with moderate fire damage, where the building can be repaired, the business may still be a loss as retail customers quickly change their habits and commercial clients need the services or materials being provided without interruption to keep their own businesses going.

The state or local fire authority often provides an incentive to building owners who are installing a fire sprinkler system by permitting phased in installation of the fire sprinkler system. Additional time may be allowed to complete the system, or the fire sprinkler system may be installed in phases, or by sections of the building.

Or significant savings may be achieved for building owners by having a common water supply for fire sprinkler systems in adjacent buildings.

There are more and more reasons to install a fire sprinkler system to protect life and property and fewer and fewer reasons why not to. For technical assistance contact Robert.Howe@labind.state.vt.us or (1-800-640-2106) or for tax incentive information for buildings in designated downtowns or village centers contact Chris.Cochran@state.vt.us.



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**Percent of Workers Participating in Health Care and Retirement Benefits,
 by Selected Characteristics, Private Industry, National Compensation Survey
 March 2003**

Characteristics	Retirement benefits			Health care benefits			
	All Plans	Defined Benefit	Defined Contribution	Medical Care	Dental Care	Vision Care	Plan type not available
All Employees	49	20	40	45	32	19	8
Worker Characteristics:							
White-Collar Occupations	59	22	51	50	37	21	8
Blue-Collar Occupations	50	24	38	51	33	20	10
Service Occupations	21	7	16	22	15	9	3
Full-Time	58	24	48	56	40	23	9
Part-Time	18	8	14	9	6	5	3
Union	83	72	39	60	51	37	23
Nonunion	45	15	40	44	30	17	7
Average Wage Less Than \$15 Per Hour	35	11	29	35	22	12	6
Average Wages \$15 Per Hour or Higher	70	33	57	61	47	28	12
Metropolitan Areas	50	21	41	45	33	19	9
Nonmetropolitan Areas	42	14	36	44	27	17	4
New England	44	15	37	43	31	14	9

The Department of Employment & Training is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD: (802) 828-4203.