

The Vermont Labor Market

Departments of Employment & Training / Labor & Industry

Vermont Department of

Employment & Training

December 2004

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

Labor & Industry section
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Commissioners' Message

During my first six weeks as Commissioner, I have been focusing primarily on three areas: the FY05 and 06 budgets and the proposed DET and L&I merger. These initiatives have definitely provided some challenges and opportunities. One of those opportunities was to learn about the many services the department provides. In my discussions with employees, various constituents, federal and state partners and others, I have learned how the department might improve and streamline the delivery of those services. One such area is employer services. As stated in last month's *The Vermont Labor Market* article, we recognize it is "imperative that we be able to offer employers a well-trained, educated and highly skilled workforce". And, "in order to be successful, we need to work closely with employers and understand the industries we serve". Some of the services we provide are listed below. We are currently exploring more opportunities for the Department of Employment & Training to better serve Vermont's employers.

Labor Market Information

Our department provides information that can help developers, policy makers, business owners, workers, job seekers and students, and it is readily accessible on our LMI website: www.vtLmi.info Included is information about wages and trends, industry patterns, employment statistics, career planning resources and links to national sources of economic data.

(Continued on page 2)

The Edge

Last month this column addressed the growing shortage of nurses in Vermont and focused on retaining older nurses. This month we will be addressing increasing educational capacity for nurses, as outlined in a June 30, 2004 document released by the Office of Nursing Workforce Research, Planning and Development, University of Vermont College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Directors of Vermont's five nursing programs predict that by 2006, graduation of Registered Nurses (RNs) will have increased by 74% from 1999 levels, and 21% from 2003 levels. This is good news. However, over half of these programs reported having to turn away qualified students for the 2003-2004 academic year. The reasons: lack of qualified faculty and a shortfall in funding for nursing school expansion.

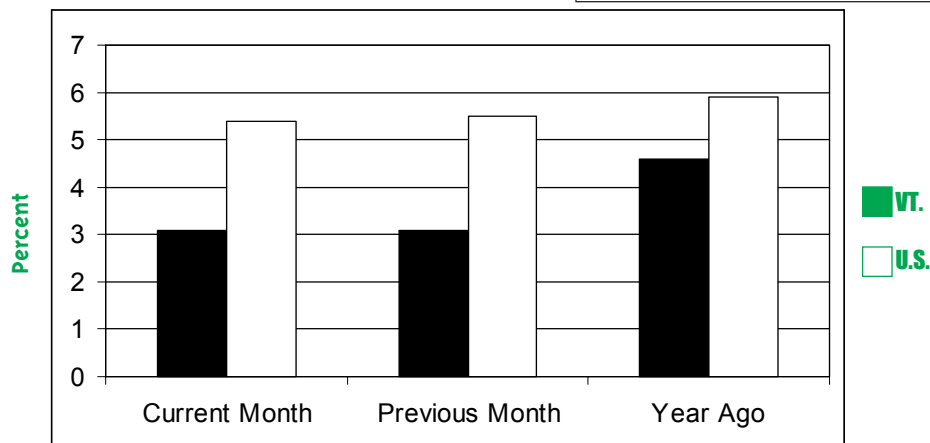
According to a white paper produced by American Association Colleges of Nursing, there are a variety of factors contributing to the national nursing faculty shortage. These include:

- aging of current faculty, and the expectation of a wave of retirement over the next 10 years,
- increased opportunities and higher salaries for master's and doctorally prepared nurses outside of academic settings
- high tuition and loan burden for graduate studies in nursing

(Continued on page 3)

Unemployment Rates Vermont and U.S.

November (SA) 2004 Rates
VT 3.1% • U.S. 5.4%



Commissioner's Message –

(continued from front page)

Apprenticeship

DET's Apprenticeship Division will soon graduate its first students from the newly established Tramway Maintenance Apprenticeship Program. The program, created because of the need for skilled tramway maintenance technicians in the ski industry, included 3 years of related instruction and 6000 hours of on-the-job training. The program focuses on technical and safety issues in a very important sector of the Vermont economy.

Workforce Education and Training Fund

The Workforce Education and Training Fund (WETF) is experiencing an increased demand for training assistance, with three new proposals scheduled for review on December 17th, by the WETF State Level Review Panel. With approximately \$389,000 available to fund training projects through June 30, 2005, just under \$78,000 has been committed so far this year. In addition to the proposals that met the deadline for December review, we're aware of several other proposals in the development stage. As employment opportunities increase, there continues to be an urgent need to provide the workforce training necessary to match workers with available job openings.

Unemployment Claims Center Information

The Vermont Department of Employment & Training successfully launched the Unemployment Claims Center in September of 1999. Individuals now file for unemployment benefits by telephone with a Customer Service Representative, and all eligibility determinations are processed in this manner as well. Creation of the automated claims taking process allows individuals toll-free access for handling all their unemployment benefit matters. The centralization has allowed us to provide better customer service to employers and claimants, with all benefit related calls being handled through one location. In addition, the department has worked towards meeting the needs of our customers with the implementation of direct deposit services of unemployment benefits and weekly continued claims

filing by phone and via the internet. We continue to improve upon our levels of service and customer satisfaction as technology advances.

2005 Vermont Employer Outreach Seminars

The department, along with other state and federal agencies, begins its 5th year in providing Employer Outreach Seminars to Vermont business communities. The seminars address requirements placed on businesses by state and federal government and are provided free of charge. For more information, dates and locations, see the announcement on the back of this publication.

Healthcare Workforce Summit

In late spring of 2005, the department will be a primary sponsor of a statewide summit focused on healthcare workforce needs. A planning group will work with the Human Resources Investment Council (HRIC) to plan the event. The summit will give participants the opportunity to examine workforce needs in many areas including long-term care, nursing, allied sciences, and substance abuse/mental health counseling. Current and future education and training needs will be identified and strategies for meeting these needs will be developed. Special attention will also be paid to recruitment and retention as well as early career exposure for youth and transition opportunities for the older healthcare worker. Finally, increasing the state's capacity to provide adequate education and training in healthcare-related areas will also be emphasized.

www.vermontjoblink.com/

Vermont Job Link is a free job match and workplace information service for employers and jobseekers. Employers can create and manage job orders, search job-seeker resumes, and access useful occupational and labor market information. Vermont Job Link allows job seekers to search for work, post resumes online, research career information, sign up for automatic job notification by e-mail, and much more.

Patricia A. McDonald

The Edge - *(continued from front page)*

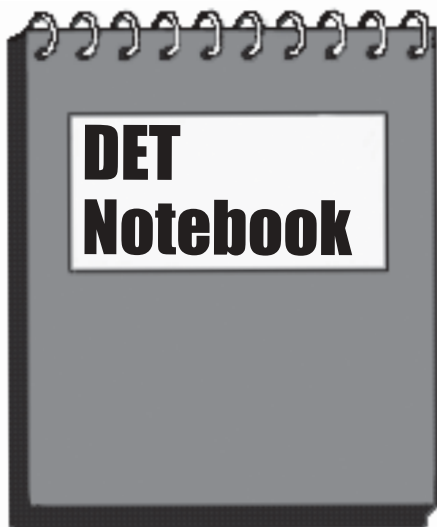
- decreased enrollment and graduation rate for doctoral students.

Almost half of the schools surveyed cited these factors as contributing to the insufficient numbers of faculty. These schools also indicated that the faculty shortage was the reason for not accepting all qualified applicants.

National initiatives to address the nursing faculty shortage include a recruitment campaign. Print ads, career profiles of nurse educators and a newsletter are the basis of the campaign that will target younger nurses who will add to the pool of educators for years to come. The attrition rate of nursing faculty is being examined and new strategies are being developed to increase retention. Academic environments need to be scrutinized with the same attention as corporate work environments have. Retiring faculty can be used in new roles. Specifically, more part-time opportunities need to be created, and updating nurse educators' technical skills will allow them to deliver on-line courses from remote locations to a larger pool of students.

Collaboration between schools of nursing and their partners in the health care delivery field has resulted in a variety of benefits. Examples of collaborative efforts include: hospitals offering scholarships, funding for faculty positions, on-site classrooms and jointly appointed faculty. Joint clinical appointments do increase nursing school capacity, however there are both benefits and challenges to the model. On the plus side, there is the opportunity for both increased clinical competence and increased salary for faculty. Clinical teaching is based in reality and real-life situations, and research is also grounded in the clinical practice. However, there can be role conflicts and potentially unclear job descriptions.

Of Vermont's five nursing programs, Castleton State College and the University of Vermont have had part-time clinical instructors. Further collaborative effort is necessary to develop more joint clinical appointments as part of the critical effort to increase the educational capacity for nursing in Vermont.



The Jobs and Training System

This is part two of a series of two articles in which Bob Ware, the Director of Jobs and Training at the Department of Employment & Training discusses the changes that have occurred over the last 20 years.

Editor: How has the increased popularity of the Internet affected Vermont's employment system?

Bob: Early on, Vermont recognized the potential of the Internet as a vehicle for the delivery of employment and training services. This past summer, we launched a web-based system known as Vermont Job Link (www.vermontjoblink.com) that gives both employers and job seekers the option of self-service. Employers can list their own openings and search files for qualified workers without using DET staff assistance.

Editor: How does your division deal with the special problems of young people trying to find their first full-time job?

Bob: Youth specialists out posted throughout Vermont face some of the most challenging situations of

DET's case managers. Our staff serve youth in jeopardy of dropping out of high school, school dropouts, youth with substance abuse issues, teen-age pregnancy concerns and youth who are under the supervision of the Department of Corrections. Staff address literacy and numeracy skills, a multitude of social issues while also developing subsidized employment opportunities for the youth. We often find that adult mentoring at the worksite is very effective in helping many at-risk youth become successful.

Editor: If a Vermont employer wants to expand in this state, what can you do to help?

Bob: It is a role that DET plays on a regular basis. When we learn of an employer that is considering expanding or planning to locate in Vermont, DET works to coordinate the efforts of many agencies and organizations. Some organizations can package venture capital or facilities expansions, tax incentives; others might develop high skills education opportunities. DET administers resources such as tax credits, several training programs and free recruitment services that frequently complement the resources of other organizations. DET uses its knowledge of the many resources that are available, coordinates the best mix of services and the employer ends up with truly a "One Stop" service.

Editor: Are there any training programs in particular that are underutilized by employers in Vermont because they may not know about them?

Bob: On-the-Job Training (OJTs) is one of the most effective programs for developing worker skills that is less popular than in years past. Generally, the employer is reimbursed by DET for a portion of new employee's wages if the employer signs an agreement

that outlines the wages to be paid to the trainee and the content of the training. The program may reimburse the employer for up to six months if the trainee is successful in acquiring the necessary skills. Once the trainee completes the process, s/he becomes a permanent employee with a corresponding raise in pay.

Editor: What are the most important services that your division provides to?

Bob:

Employers: Recruitment assistance and workforce skills training programs.

Job Seekers: A full range of services to help individuals prepare to enter the workplace and assistance in landing jobs.

Other Government Partners: Coordination of resources and services. Our partners call upon DET for its connections to the employer community and often depend on us to expedite the placement of clients in long-term work situations.

Editor: What do you see as the biggest challenge for the future of the Vermont employment and training system?

Bob: Funding streams are rapidly diminishing while the demand for employment and training services is expanding. With the exodus of many high paying manufacturing jobs, the role for DET in helping dislocated workers adjust and adapt is enormous. Often our staff spend many hours guiding a dislocated worker through career changes, helping them gain the skills to be competitive in a new occupation. The challenge ahead; how does DET remain viable so that it can continue to provide these essential services?

Economic Spotcheck

Local Unemployment Rates (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Town/City*	Nov. '04	Oct. '04	Nov. '03
Barre City	6.2	5.3	7.6
Barre Town	1.6	1.8	2.8
Bennington Town	3.8	3.8	5.2
Brattleboro Town	2.4	2.7	4.9
Burlington City	2.9	2.9	3.9
Colchester Town	2.1	2.1	3.5
Essex Town	1.9	1.9	3.7
Hartford Town	1.4	1.1	2.0
Middlebury Town	1.9	1.5	3.0
Milton Town	3.1	3.1	5.6
Montpelier City	1.4	1.3	2.5
Rutland City	2.8	2.3	3.6
Shelburne Town	1.8	1.8	2.0
So. Burlington City	1.6	1.5	2.7
Springfield Town	4.8	4.6	6.4
Williston Town	0.9	1.0	1.1

*16 Largest Towns in Vermont

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

	Nov. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2003
All Items Index	191.0	190.9	184.5
Annual Percent Change	3.5	3.2	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 November employment headed in the opposite direction when compared with October, increasing by 1,200 from the previous month with 341,800 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 non-farm jobs fell slightly, dropping by 200 jobs in November, the second straight month of job losses. Manufacturing followed a similar two-month pattern, dipping by 300 jobs. Retail jobs also took a downturn, with 200 fewer jobs than in October. Private Education presented a similar decline. Job gains in other published industries were modest at best, with Professional & Business Services and Health Care & Social Assistance contributing a portion.

The more detailed unadjusted estimates fell by 2,000 from the October estimate. A majority of the decline was seasonal in nature. The major contributor to the loss was Leisure & Hospitality, which was no surprise as many employers consider the early part of November to be between seasons. Also adding to the loss was Construction, which experienced a fairly typical seasonal loss. Real Estate typically tends to dip in November of each year and did so once again this year. Non-Durable Manufacturing fell slightly more than in years past. Retail Trade added jobs in anticipation of the holiday season, but not at quite the pace as in many years.

Health Care & Social Assistance added jobs for the second month in a row.

The preliminary November estimates reflect an annual increase of 0.8%. The annual change in Private Industry was not considered statistically significant. Health Care & Social Assistance, once again, experienced the largest year to year growth. Leisure & Hospitality was up almost 400 from November of last year. Computer & Electrical Equipment Manufacturing has also added almost 400 jobs over the year. Finance & Insurance was the largest contributor in terms of job loss over the year.

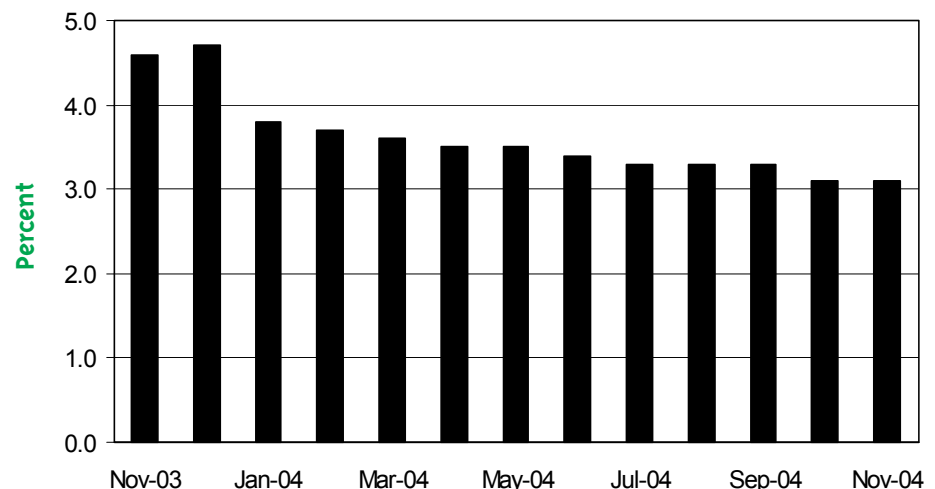
Unemployment Trends

Vermont's seasonally adjusted November unemployment rate was unchanged from the October estimate, remaining at 3.1%. An estimated 11,100 Vermonters were unemployed in November. Vermont and New Hampshire tied for the lowest rate in the nation, while eight additional states recorded rates below 4.0%.

The comparable national unemployment rate was 5.4%, down 0.1% from the previous month. Vermont continues to be well under the national rate.

The number of initial claims for Unemployment Insurance filed in November was up over 1,800 from the previous month. The majority of the increase was found in Construction.

Vermont Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate



Labor Force Estimates *(Seasonally Adjusted)*

Vermont	Changes from:				
	Nov. '04	Oct. '04	Nov. '03	Oct. '04	Nov. '03
TOTAL LABOR FORCE¹	352,900	351,600	350,900	1,300	2,000
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	341,800	340,600	334,600	1,200	7,200
TOTAL UNEMPLOYMENT	11,100	11,000	16,300	100	-5,200
RATE	3.1	3.1	4.6	0.0	-1.5

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

Labor Market Areas *(Not Seasonally Adjusted)*

	Nov. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2003		Nov. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2003
BARRE-MONTPELIER				MORRISTOWN-STOWE			
Labor Force	41,300	40,850	40,900	Labor Force	18,750	18,800	18,950
Unemployment	1,300	1,150	1,800	Unemployment	800	600	1,050
Rate	3.2	2.8	4.4	Rate	4.3	3.2	5.6
Employment	39,950	39,700	39,100	Employment	17,950	18,200	17,900
BENNINGTON-MANCHESTER				NEWPORT			
Labor Force	21,400	21,300	21,550	Labor Force	13,500	13,300	13,750
Unemployment	800	600	1,050	Unemployment	700	500	1,000
Rate	3.7	2.8	4.8	Rate	5.3	3.9	7.2
Employment	20,600	20,700	20,550	Employment	12,750	12,800	12,750
BURLINGTON				RANDOLPH			
Labor Force	110,200	109,750	108,900	Labor Force	6,500	6,550	6,550
Unemployment	2,700	2,600	4,000	Unemployment	200	200	300
Rate	2.4	2.4	3.7	Rate	3.1	3.2	4.5
Employment	107,550	107,150	104,900	Employment	6,300	6,300	6,250
ENOSBURG				RUTLAND			
Labor Force	10,600	10,750	10,800	Labor Force	31,300	30,650	30,700
Unemployment	550	450	800	Unemployment	1,200	1,000	1,700
Rate	5.4	4.3	7.2	Rate	3.8	3.3	5.6
Employment	10,050	10,300	10,000	Employment	30,150	29,650	29,000
HARTFORD-LEBANON,VT-NH LMA (VT PORTION ONLY)				ST. JOHNSBURY			
Labor Force	29,050	28,800	29,300	Labor Force	15,100	15,200	15,350
Unemployment	500	400	650	Unemployment	550	450	850
Rate	1.8	1.4	2.3	Rate	3.7	2.9	5.4
Employment	28,500	28,400	28,650	Employment	14,550	14,750	14,550
KEENE-BRATTLEBORO,NH-VT LMA (ENTIRE AREA)				SPRINGFIELD			
Labor Force	60,650	60,350	57,750	Labor Force	9,800	9,600	9,850
Unemployment	1,450	1,250	1,950	Unemployment	450	350	550
Rate	2.4	2.1	3.4	Rate	4.4	3.6	5.6
Employment	59,250	59,100	55,800	Employment	9,350	9,250	9,300
MIDDLEBURY				STATEWIDE			
Labor Force	20,700	21,200	20,900	Labor Force	353,150	351,500	351,350
Unemployment	550	450	800	Unemployment	11,100	9,400	15,550
Rate	2.8	2.2	3.7	Rate	3.1	2.7	4.4
Employment	20,150	20,750	20,100	Employment	342,100	342,150	335,800

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:	
	Nov. '04	Oct. '04	Nov. '03	Oct. '04	Nov. '03
Total - All Industries	301.5	301.7	298.9	-0.2	2.6
Private Industries	249.1	249.4	246.9	-0.3	2.2
Construction	15.6	15.6	15.6	0.0	0.0
Manufacturing	37.0	37.3	36.9	-0.3	0.1
Retail Trade *	38.9	39.1	38.7	-0.2	0.2
Professional & Business Services	20.8	20.7	20.3	0.1	0.5
Private Ed. Services*	12.5	12.8	12.7	-0.3	-0.2
Health Care & Social Assistance*	41.6	41.5	40.5	0.1	1.1
Leisure & Hospitality*	33.0	33.1	32.8	-0.1	0.2
Total Government	52.4	52.3	52.0	0.1	0.4

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

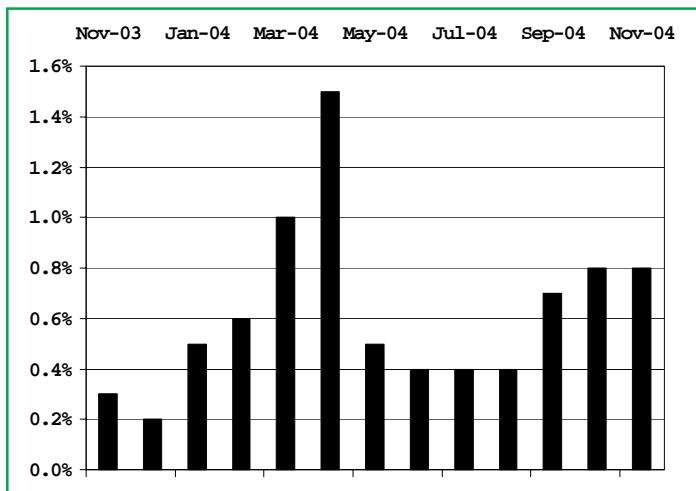
Note: Total - All Industries estimate is seasonally adjusted independently.

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

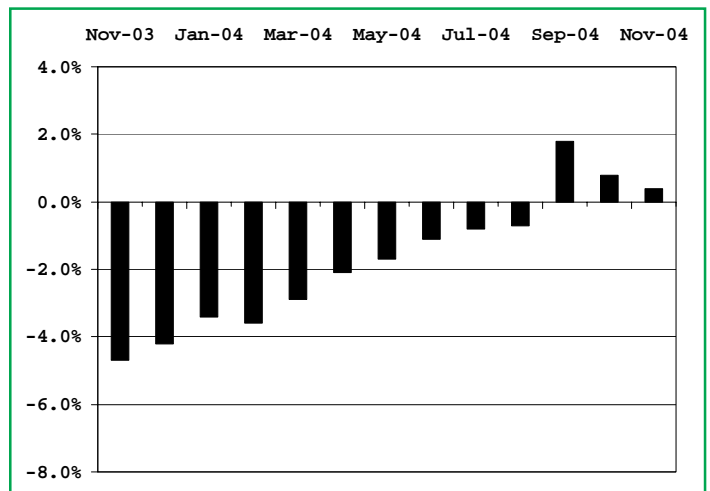
Produced by the Vermont Department of Employment & Training in cooperation with the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, unless otherwise noted.

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:	
	Nov. '04	Oct. '04	Nov. '03	Oct. '04	Nov. '03
TOTAL NONFARM	303,600	305,600	301,200	-2,000	2,400
TOTAL PRIVATE	248,700	250,950	246,400	-2,250	2,300
GOODS PRODUCING	54,600	55,200	54,400	-600	200
MANUFACTURING	37,350	37,500	37,200	-150	150
Durable Goods	26,600	26,500	26,450	100	150
Computer & Electrical Equipment Mfg.	9,450	9,400	9,100	50	350
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	2,950	2,950	2,850	0	100
Machinery Mfg.	3,150	3,200	3,050	-50	100
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	2,400	2,400	2,250	0	150
Furniture & Related Product Mfg.	2,450	2,500	2,450	-50	0
Non-Durable Goods	10,750	11,000	10,750	-250	0
Food Mfg.	3,950	4,000	3,950	-50	0
CONSTRUCTION	16,200	16,650	16,200	-450	0
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	1,050	1,050	1,000	0	50
SERVICE-PROVIDING	249,000	250,400	246,800	-1,400	2,200
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES	59,000	58,450	58,950	550	50
Wholesale Trade	10,250	10,200	10,400	50	-150
Retail Trade	39,800	39,400	39,650	400	150
Food & Beverage Stores	9,450	9,400	9,250	50	200
General Merchandise Store	3,050	3,000	3,100	50	-50
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	8,950	8,850	8,900	100	50
Utilities	1,750	1,750	1,750	0	0
Transportation & Warehousing	7,200	7,100	7,150	100	50
INFORMATION	6,500	6,500	6,500	0	0
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	13,000	13,150	13,100	-150	-100
Finance & Insurance	9,850	9,800	10,150	50	-300
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	3,150	3,350	2,950	-200	200
PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES	20,850	20,950	20,350	-100	500
Professional, Scientific and Technical	11,900	11,850	12,150	50	-250
Administrative, Support and Waste	8,550	8,600	8,500	-50	50
EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH SERVICES	54,900	54,750	53,700	150	1,200
Educational Services	13,300	13,300	13,200	0	100
College, Universities and Professional	7,100	7,100	6,900	0	200
Health Care and Social Assistance	41,600	41,450	40,500	150	1,100
Ambulatory Health Care Services	16,100	16,050	15,700	50	400
Hospitals	10,350	10,350	10,300	0	50
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	6,950	6,850	6,700	100	250
LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	29,850	31,850	29,450	-2,000	400
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3,150	3,750	3,050	-600	100
Accommodation and Food Services	26,700	28,100	26,400	-1,400	300
Accommodations	9,450	10,050	9,400	-600	50
Hotel & Motels	8,750	9,100	8,450	-350	300
Food Services and Drinking Places	17,250	18,050	17,000	-800	250
OTHER SERVICES	10,000	10,100	9,950	-100	50
GOVERNMENT	54,900	54,650	54,800	250	100
Federal Government	6,000	6,050	6,200	-50	-200
State Government Education	9,450	9,100	9,350	350	100
Local Government Education	23,600	23,450	23,650	150	-50
Other State Government	9,050	9,300	8,950	-250	100
Other Local Government	6,800	6,750	6,650	50	150

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:	
	Nov. '04	Oct. '04	Nov. '03	Oct. '04	Nov. '03
TOTAL NONFARM	111,700	112,000	109,750	-300	1,950
TOTAL PRIVATE	92,200	92,850	90,200	-650	2,000
GOODS PRODUCING	20,700	20,850	20,300	-150	400
MANUFACTURING	15,150	15,350	14,850	-200	300
Durable Goods	11,200	11,200	11,300	0	-100
NATURAL RESOURCES, MINING & CONST.	5,550	5,500	5,450	50	100
SERVICE PROVIDING	91,000	91,150	89,450	-150	1,550
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES	21,400	21,400	21,250	0	150
Wholesale Trade	3,750	3,750	3,850	0	-100
Retail Trade	14,550	14,500	14,350	50	200
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	3,100	3,150	3,050	-50	50
INFORMATION	3,350	3,400	3,200	-50	150
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	5,350	5,300	5,300	50	50
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	9,750	9,750	9,650	0	100
Professional Scientific and Technical	6,150	6,100	5,850	50	300
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	18,900	18,900	17,950	0	950
Health Care and Social Assistance	15,250	15,200	14,500	50	750
LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	9,050	9,550	9,000	-500	50
Accommodation and Food Services	7,450	7,600	7,400	-150	50
Food Services and Drinking Places	6,300	6,350	6,200	-50	100
OTHER SERVICES	3,700	3,700	3,550	0	150
GOVERNMENT	19,500	19,150	19,550	350	-50
Federal Government	2,800	2,850	2,900	-50	-100
State Government Education	6,600	6,250	6,650	350	-50
Local Government Education	5,950	5,850	6,050	100	-100
Other State Government	1,700	1,750	1,600	-50	100
Other Local Government	2,450	2,450	2,350	0	100

Barre-Montpelier

TOTAL NONFARM	35,100	35,100	34,700	0	400
TOTAL PRIVATE	26,000	26,150	25,750	-150	250
GOODS PRODUCING	4,750	4,800	4,850	-50	-100
MANUFACTURING	3,000	3,000	3,150	0	-150
NATURAL RESOURCES, MINING & CONST.	1,750	1,800	1,700	-50	50
SERVICE-PROVIDING	30,350	30,300	29,850	50	500
TRADE, TRANSPORTATION AND UTILITIES	6,050	6,050	6,000	0	50
Wholesale Trade	900	900	950	0	-50
Retail Trade	4,350	4,350	4,300	0	50
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	800	800	750	0	50
INFORMATION	700	700	650	0	50
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	2,550	2,550	2,700	0	-150
PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES	2,050	2,100	1,950	-50	100
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	5,500	5,450	5,400	50	100
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,850	3,850	3,750	0	100
LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY	3,050	3,100	2,800	-50	250
Accommodation and Food Services	2,550	2,650	2,450	-100	100
OTHER SERVICES	1,350	1,400	1,400	-50	-50
GOVERNMENT	9,100	8,950	8,950	150	150
Federal Government	350	350	350	0	0
State Government Education	400	400	350	0	50
Local Government Education	2,800	2,750	2,800	50	0
Other State Government	4,800	4,750	4,750	50	50
Other Local Government	750	700	700	50	50

Unemployment Insurance Program Summary

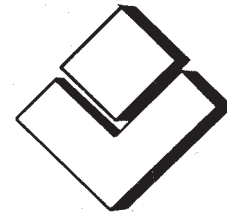
	November 2004	October 2004	November 2003	Percent Change From Last Month Last Year	
UI Trust Fund	\$229,512,630	\$231,059,009	\$251,244,471	-0.7%	-8.6%
UI Reg. Benefit Payments *	\$5,749,300	\$3,446,949	\$5,509,529	66.8%	4.4%
UI Initial Claims	4,971	3,024	4,856	64.4%	2.4%
UI Weeks Claimed	24,720	17,951	32,952	37.7%	-25.0%

*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(\$)		
	Nov. '04 Prelim.	Oct. '04 Revised	Nov. '03 Revised	Nov. '04 Prelim.	Oct. '04 Revised	Nov. '03 Revised	Nov. '04 Prelim.	Oct. '04 Revised	Nov. '03 Revised
GOODS PRODUCING	600.75	600.34	597.65	40.4	40.4	40.3	14.87	14.86	14.83
Natural Resources & Mining	465.06	465.06	465.09	33.7	33.7	33.8	13.80	13.80	13.76
Construction	642.63	642.63	635.09	41.3	41.3	41.0	15.56	15.56	15.49
Manufacturing	586.92	586.52	585.71	40.2	40.2	40.2	14.60	14.59	14.57
Durable Goods	610.09	610.09	609.69	40.7	40.7	40.7	14.99	14.99	14.98
Non-Durable Goods	520.87	519.53	518.93	38.9	38.8	38.9	13.39	13.39	13.34
SERVICE PROVIDING									
Wholesale Trade	647.64	647.64	641.53	36.0	36.0	35.7	17.99	17.99	17.97
Retail Trade	369.56	369.26	368.64	30.9	30.9	30.9	11.96	11.95	11.93
Health Care & Social Assist.	552.06	552.06	549.04	30.4	30.4	30.3	18.16	18.16	18.12
BURLINGTON AREA									
Manufacturing	577.58	577.58	573.79	37.8	37.8	37.7	15.28	15.28	15.22

Vermont Department of Labor & Industry



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Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Administration (VOSHA)

I was recently appointed by Governor Douglas to serve as Commissioner of the Department of Labor & Industry. I am honored by this appointment. I consider it a tremendous opportunity to serve Vermonters and to further safety efforts in the state. I also consider this an opportunity to lead a department and staff for whom I have tremendous respect and affection. I know first hand the tremendous skill and dedication of our staff.

My tenure with the department goes back five years. I started in the department as Director of the Workers' Compensation Division. Two years ago, under newly appointed Commissioner Michael Bertrand, I was appointed his Deputy Commissioner. As deputy, my work duties expanded to include VOSHA, Wage & Hour and Child Labor issues.

I am now eager to lead the department in its mission of providing for the safety, protection and welfare of Vermonters where they work, live and play. I recognize that we face the ongoing challenge of providing critical services throughout the state. We also face new challenges. It is a time of change in Vermont state government, a time to look to providing services in the most efficient and service oriented manner. With this in mind we are working to facilitate transition of many staff to the newly created Fire Bureau. We are also working with the Department of Employment and Training to develop a merged organization that will optimally provide employer and employee services through one department.

As I look ahead I will be looking to our tremendous staff for assistance. I will also be looking to you, the public, for continual input and guidance.



Laura Collins

IMPORTANT REMINDER

On January 1, 2005 Vermont's minimum wage will increase to \$7.00/hour

For employers of tipped employees in the hotel and restaurant industries, the minimum base rate will go to \$3.65/hour and the maximum tip credit will increase to \$3.35/hour on the same date.

PERMISSIBLE FORMS OF WAGE PAYMENT

As regular readers of this column are aware, the Wage/Hour & Child Labor Program administers and enforces requirements regarding minimum wage, tip credits, overtime, timely payment of wages, and deductions from wages, as well as permissible occupations and hours of work for minors.

Another issue this program oversees, and one that has been the subject of considerable inquiry in the past year, is that of **permissible forms of wage payments**. An increasing array of payroll services is available to employers, but not all of them comply with the requirements of Vermont law. In this article, we will review some of the form-of-payment basics, along with the closely related issue of wage statements.

Checks and Cash

Employers may pay their employees' wages by "lawful money or checks." Although most employers no longer choose to pay employees in cash, this option does still exist. A "check" can include a money order, a certified bank check, a check drawn on the employer's own account, or a check issued by the employer's payroll provider.

However the wage payment is made, a wage statement shall accompany it. The wage statement shall include, at a minimum:

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- The hours worked by the employee
- The rate(s) at which the employee is being paid
- The gross wage
- All deductions taken from the gross wage, fully itemized, and
- The resulting net wage

Often, employers provide paper wage statements - what we all typically refer to as a check stub. Wage/Hour Program policy also permits electronic wage statements in lieu of paper statements under certain conditions:

- The statement must be available at the time the wages are paid
- Employees must have free access to a computer terminal to view the statement and to print copies, at no cost to the employee, and
- Each individual employee's privacy (for instance, personal financial information and Social Security number) must be protected and kept confidential

Direct Deposit

Wage payment by electronic funds transfer (direct deposit) can be a permissible form of wage payment, but only under specific circumstances. First, the employee must agree to this form of wage payment. The employer must have the employee's written authorization, and the employee is free to withdraw the authorization at a later time. Second, the funds transfer may only be made to a deposit account maintained by the employee - again, a matter of employee choice.

A wage statement, as described above, should also accompany directly deposited wage payments. Paper statements should be provided to the

employee before or at the time the deposit occurs; electronic statements must be available at the time the fund transfer is made.

Debit Card

There are a number of pros and cons to this form of wage payment. Some states do allow wage payments by debit card, but most that do place restrictions and conditions on the use of this method. The important message for employers doing business in Vermont, however, is that **Vermont law does not permit payment of wages by debit card.**

This program is currently working with one multi-state employer found to be utilizing this unlawful method of wage payment for its Vermont employees. This employer will be required to refund to its employees an amount equal to the fees charged to the employees by the debit card vendor, plus any fees charged to the employees for ATM access to their wages.

In addition to refunding costs incurred by employees, employers that pay wages by debit card could be subject to penalties and fines for violating the form-of-payment requirements of Vermont law. Avoid this unnecessary difficulty for your business by utilizing only the wage payment methods that are permissible. And, as always, please feel free to contact the Wage/Hour & Child Labor Program or visit our web site to discuss any questions you may have or to access the information you need. We may be reached at

<http://www.state.vt.us/labind/wagehr.htm>

by email at:

wagehour@labind.state.vt.us

or by telephone at: (802) 828-2157

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Workplace safety is crucial for the health and well-being of our workforce

and for the vitality and productivity of our businesses. With this in mind, Governor Douglas has made plans to present awards to two Vermont employers who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to protecting the health and safety of their employees.

The Department of Labor & Industry is currently accepting nominations for Outstanding Work Safety. One award is slated for a "smaller" employer, with less than 20 employees. One award is slated for a "larger" employer with 20 or more employees. Please keep in mind that work safety includes work wherever it is performed, not just in our offices and plants but also on our roadways, outdoor locations and temporary sites. Anyone may submit a nomination, a worker, an employer, insurance agent, carrier or anyone else. The nomination must be supported by information that demonstrates outstanding work safety. Relevant nomination criteria includes:

- experience modification of 0.90 or less
- existence of an active safety committee
- a three year history of no work fatalities or catastrophic injuries
- additional evidence of outstanding safety, such as significant number of days without a lost time injury.

Nominations may be submitted in writing to the department or by e-mail to: wpsafety@labind.state.vt.us or by fax to 802-828-0408 attn: Workplace Safety Nominations.

Please take time to consider an employer that you think is outstanding in the area of workplace safety and submit a nomination on their behalf. Highlighting work safety can benefit us all.

Thank you.



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2005 Vermont Employer Outreach Seminars

You are invited to attend any of the one-day Employer Outreach Seminars provided by the Department of Employment & Training and other state and federal agencies at no cost.

This year we will host four seminars throughout the state.

All seminars will be held on Wednesdays, from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm on the following dates:

June 8, 2005 - *Killington*
Cortina Inn & Resort
103 US Route 4

June 22, 2005 - *Burlington*
Sheraton Hotel & Conference Center
870 Williston Rd.

September 14, 2005 - *Springfield*
Howard Dean Center
307 South St.

September 28, 2005 - *Lyndonville*
Charles Carter Business Resource Center
St. Johnsbury/Lyndonville Industrial Park
1713 Industrial Parkway

If you are interested in registering in one of the seminars listed above, please send an e-mail to [kjacob@det.state.vt.us](mailto:kjacobs@det.state.vt.us) with the following information:

1. Location you wish to attend
2. Your name
3. Business name and address
4. Telephone and e-mail
5. Number of attendees

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.
