

Monthly Update—December 2015

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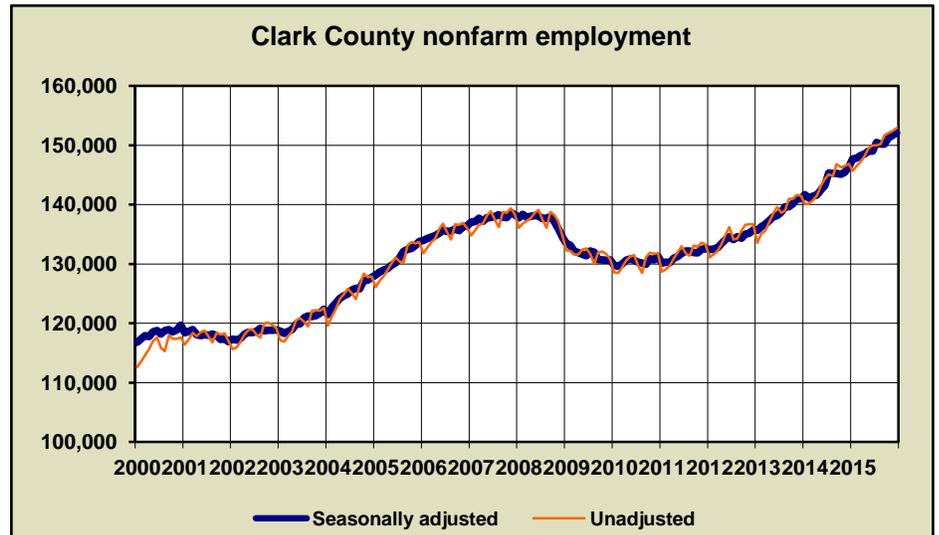
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Clark County

Clark County's labor market had another good month to close out the year. Seasonally-adjusted nonfarm employment rose by 400 jobs. Job growth stood at 4.1 percent over the past twelve months.

Unadjusted employment rose by 500 jobs. Retailers added 200 jobs at the last minute for the holiday shopping season. Construction dipped by 200 jobs, as did business services, both normal seasonal downturns.

Government was up 300 jobs due to small gains at the federal and local levels.



Over the year:

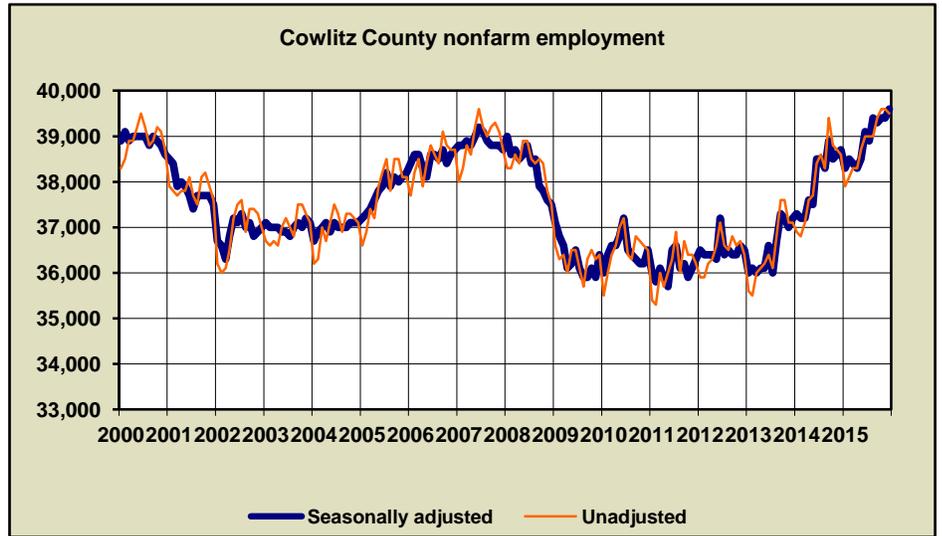
- Job growth over the year was 6,000 jobs, or 4.1 percent. Comparison rates: U. S., 1.9 percent; state of Washington, 2.5 percent; state of Oregon, 3.1 percent; Portland Metro, 3.3 percent.
- Job creation continued to be diversified: trade, transportation & utilities (+1,500 jobs, 5.4 percent), construction & mining (+1,000, 10.1 percent), leisure & hospitality (+800, 6.1 percent), financial services (+600, 8.0 percent), professional & business services (+700 jobs, 4.0 percent), and education & health services (+500 jobs, 2.0 percent). Diversified job creation continued to be the norm.
- Manufacturing employment was unchanged over the year.
- Other than manufacturing, every major sector was up over the year. Information services was again barely above water (+100, 3.2 percent), just behind other services (+200, 3.7 percent). Government payrolls increased by 600 jobs (2.5 percent), buoyed by hiring in K-12 education.

The unemployment rate was estimated at 6.0 percent, more than a point below the 7.3 percent from last December. Both initial and continued unemployment claims remained at very low levels.

Cowlitz County

According to the latest estimates prepared by the federal government, Cowlitz County nonfarm employment totaled 39,500 in December. That was 100 below the revised November estimate.

Trade, transportation & utilities added 200 jobs over the month, including 100 in retail trade. Mining, logging & construction fell by 100 jobs. Government declined by 300 jobs, including 200 at the state level.



Over the past twelve months, payrolls have increased by 900 jobs (2.3 percent). Changes at the industry level include +400 in retail trade, +200 in education & health services, -200 in leisure & hospitality, +300 in state government and +200 in local government. These estimates are all preliminary and subject to revision.

The county unemployment rate was estimated at 7.5 percent, a point lower than last December's 8.5 percent. Around 3,400 county residents were jobless and seeking work, compared with 3,800 a year ago. The number of initial and continued unemployment claims remained at low levels.

Wahkiakum County

Wahkiakum County nonfarm employment was estimated at 720 jobs in December, 10 more than in November. There were small declines in a number of industries. Preliminary estimates show the county losing 30 jobs over the year, with logging and local government agencies each running 20 jobs below last December and K-12 education running 20 jobs ahead.

Unemployment was estimated at 9.0 percent, more than a point below the 10.3 percent from a year earlier. About 125 county residents were jobless and actively seeking work, versus 133 a year ago. Both initial and continued unemployment claims remained at low levels.

