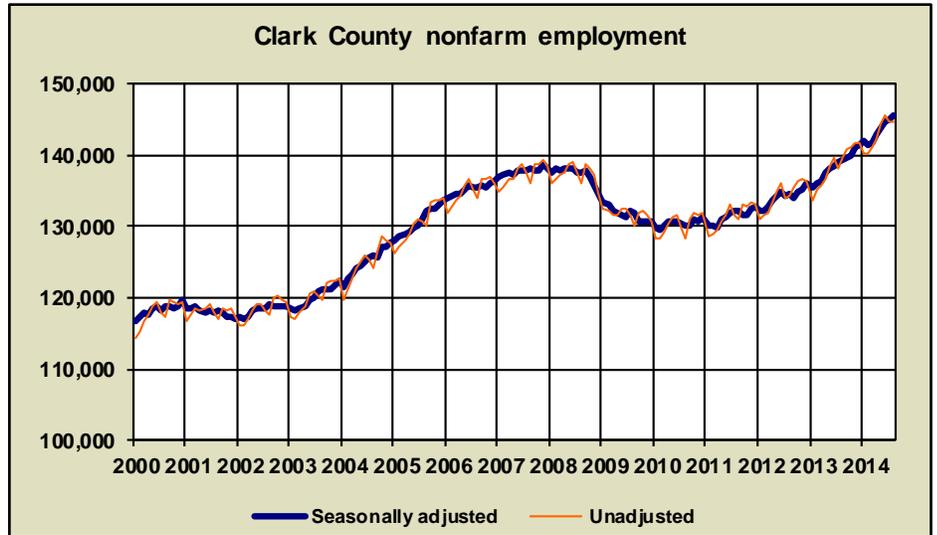


Clark County

Preliminary employment estimates for August showed that Clark County's economy continued to expand. Seasonally-adjusted nonfarm employment rose by 500 jobs over the month.

Unadjusted employment inched up by 100 jobs during the month. Private sector employers added 1,100 to payrolls. Construction (+300), professional & business services (+300) and leisure & hospitality (+400) had the largest gains. Seasonal layoffs due to summer break in schools continued at the K-12 level, with another 1,500 classified employees temporarily cut. State education, which has a different seasonal pattern, added back 500 jobs.



Over the year:

- Job growth over the year was 5,800, or 4.2 percent. Comparison rates: U.S., 1.8 percent; state of Washington, 2.5 percent; state of Oregon, 2.4 percent, Portland Metro, 3.0 percent.
- The big three: trade, transportation & utilities (+1,500 jobs, 5.9 percent), professional & business services (+1,200 jobs, 7.3 percent), and construction (+1,000 jobs, 10.0 percent).
- The miracle of rounding: the official published numbers show manufacturing with no gain over the year. Unrounded numbers show an increase of 451 jobs. Go figure.
- Every major sector was up over the year—once that rounding issue is taken care of.

The preliminary July unemployment rate of 6.3 percent was revised upward by 0.5 points to 6.8 percent. The August preliminary rate of 7.0 percent will likely be revised upward as well by about the same amount.

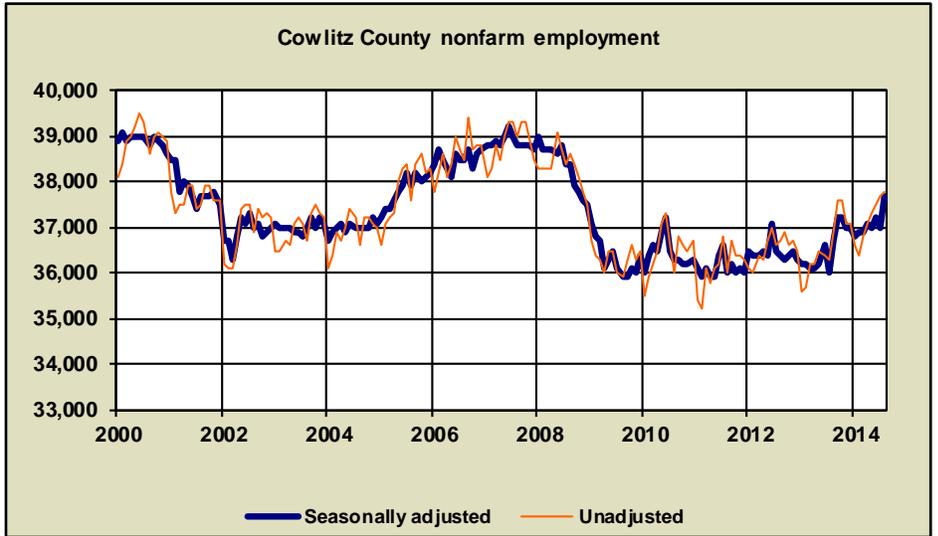
Initial unemployment claims and continued unemployment claims continue to be at low levels.

Cowlitz County

According to the latest estimates prepared by the federal government, Cowlitz County nonfarm employment rose by 100 jobs in August to 37,800. Construction was up 200 jobs, while other industries had only minor changes.

Over the year, employment climbed by 1,000 jobs, for a growth rate of 2.7 percent. Construction has added 400 jobs, while leisure & hospitality and government expanded by 200 jobs each.

The county unemployment rate was estimated at 7.3 percent, little changed from July but a drop of more than two points from a year earlier. According to the estimates, the county labor force hasn't grown an inch all year. However, the number of employed residents was up substantially, with an offsetting drop in the number of unemployed residents. The number of unemployment claims filed by county residents continued to drop. Both initial and continued claims are at very low levels.



Wahkiakum County

The dog days of summer brought little change to the Wahkiakum labor market. Nonfarm employment was estimated at 750 jobs, 20 fewer than July and 10 more than a year earlier.

The official unemployment rate was 7.7 percent, a point lower than last August. Both initial and continued unemployment claims have trended slightly downward over the year.

