

Monthly Update—June 2015

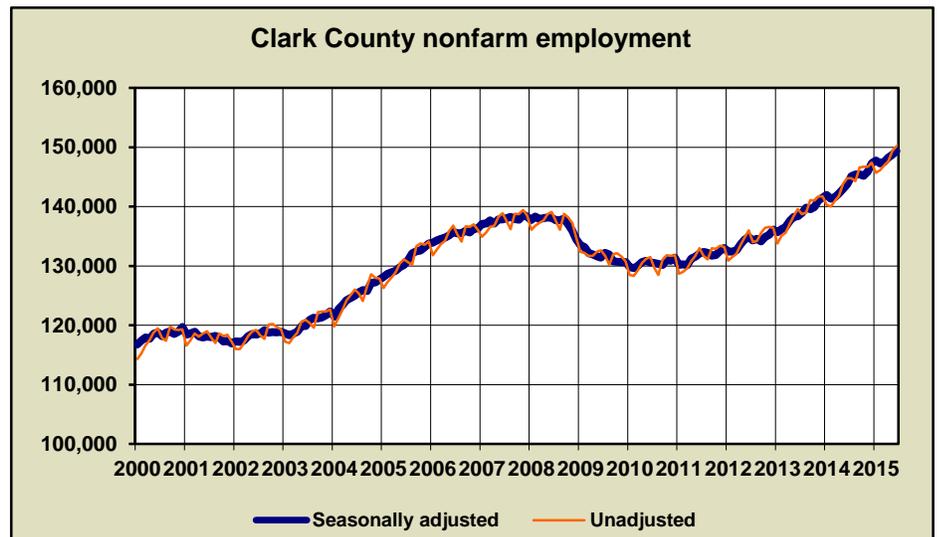
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Clark County

Clark County's job machine continued to crank out new jobs in June. Seasonally-adjusted nonfarm employment rose by 600 jobs. Gains came primarily in manufacturing (+200), retail trade (+100), and leisure & hospitality (+200). Job growth over the past twelve months remained very strong at 3.7 percent.

Unadjusted employment increased by 800 jobs, and the total topped 150,000 jobs for the first time ever at 150,200 (we'll wait for data revisions before popping the cork on the champagne).

Construction was up 200 jobs, manufacturing the same, and trade, transportation & utilities added 400 jobs.



Over the year:

- Job growth over the year was 5,400, or 3.7 percent. Comparison rates: U.S., 2.1 percent; state of Washington, 3.7 percent; state of Oregon, 3.3 percent: Portland Metro, 3.6 percent.
- The big three industries for job creation: trade, transportation & utilities (+900 jobs, 3.4 percent), professional & business services (+1,000 jobs, 5.8 percent), and education & health services (+900, 3.7 percent). Moving up on the leaders: leisure & hospitality (+700, 5.2 percent) and construction & mining (+600, 6.0 percent).
- Manufacturing remained at +100 (0.8 percent), as transportation equipment was down 400 jobs over the year. On the plus side, both fabricated metals and food processing have added 400 jobs over the year.
- Every major sector was once again up over the year, including information services (+100, 3.2 percent), finance (+400, 5.6 percent), other services (+300, 6.6 percent), and government (+400, 1.7 percent).

Unemployment ticked down a tenth of a point in June to 6.5 percent. That was eight tenths of a point lower than last June's 7.3 percent. The labor force was up an estimated 1.1 percent (well below the latest estimates for population growth) and the estimated number of employed residents increased by 2.0 percent (well below growth in nonfarm employment on both sides of the river). The estimated number of unemployed declined by 10 percent over the year. Initial unemployment claims rose for the second straight month, and continued claims ticked up slightly, but both remained at very low levels.

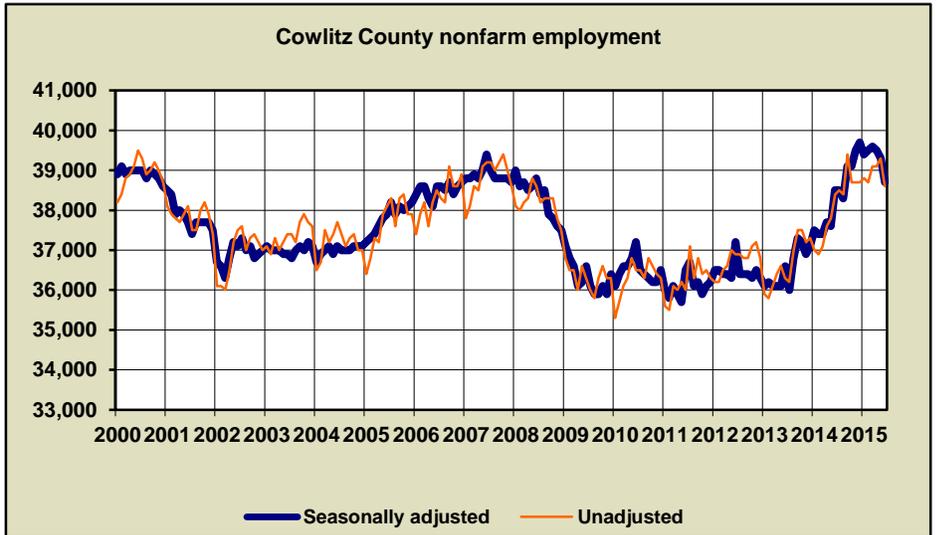
Cowlitz County

Quarterly revisions continue to be delayed for Cowlitz County.

According to the latest estimates prepared by the federal government, Cowlitz County nonfarm employment fell by 700 jobs in June to a total of 38,600 jobs. Construction & natural resources slipped by 100 jobs, trade, transportation & warehousing added 200 jobs, and leisure & hospitality was up 100 jobs. All other services (not shown in the published table of industries) declined by the same amount. Industries that fall into the “all other” category include information services, finance, professional & business services, and other services (which includes repair services, personal services and membership organizations).

The large decline reduced over the year employment growth from 1,500 jobs (4.0 percent) to 200 jobs (0.5 percent). Most industries were showing gains over the year, including in construction & natural resources (+200 jobs), manufacturing (+200 jobs), trade & transportation (+400 jobs), education & health services (+400 jobs), and leisure & hospitality (+100 jobs). The exceptions were government (no change) and all other services (again, not shown in the published table, -1,100 jobs).

The county unemployment rate was estimated at 7.7 percent, the same as last June. According to the estimates, the county labor force has increased over the year by 280 (0.6 percent), while the number of employed residents increased by 290 (0.7 percent), and the number of unemployed residents was lower by 10 (-0.3 percent). The number of initial unemployment claims rose for the second month in a row while continued claims declined slightly—and both remained in the “very low” category.



Wahkiakum County

Wahkiakum County employers added 20 jobs in June, 10 in construction and 10 in logging. That brought total nonfarm employment to 720 jobs, 10 more than last June.

Unemployment was estimated at 8.0 percent, seven tenths of a point lower than a year ago. About 110 county residents were jobless and actively seeking work, 10 fewer than last June. There were 15 initial unemployment claims filed in June, a very low number, but almost double the ridiculously-low May number. Continued claims inched up on a seasonally-adjusted basis but were still at a very low level (26).

