



Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training

MEDIA ADVISORY



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	<u>May 09</u>	<u>Apr 09</u>	<u>May 08</u>
RI Unemployment Rate	12.1%	11.1%	7.4%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	9.4%	8.9%	5.5%
RI Job Count (<i>in thousands</i>)	463.5	464.6	484.2

Highlights:

- The May RI jobless rate climbed one percent to 12.1 percent.
- The number of employed Rhode Islanders in May reached the lowest level since January 1997.

Unemployment Rate Rises to 12.1 Percent

The RI Department of Labor and Training announced today that the state's **seasonally adjusted unemployment rate** for May reached 12.1 percent, an increase of one percent over the April rate of 11.1 percent.

The U.S. unemployment rate rose five-tenths of a percent over the month to reach 9.4 percent in May. Both the RI and U.S. unemployment rates are calculated through an estimating process that compares the number of unemployed residents to the total labor force.

In May, the number of **unemployed RI residents**—those residents classified as available for and actively seeking employment—increased by 5,800 over the month to reach 68,500. From May 2008 to May 2009, the number of unemployed RI residents increased by 26,600.

Due to numerous eligibility requirements, the number of unemployed RI residents differs from the number of **RI Unemployment Insurance recipients**. The average weekly claim load for RI Unemployment Insurance benefits in May was 36,472.

The number of **employed RI residents** totaled 497,600 in May, reflecting a decrease of 3,100 from the previous month. Over the year, the number of employed RI residents fell 28,100.

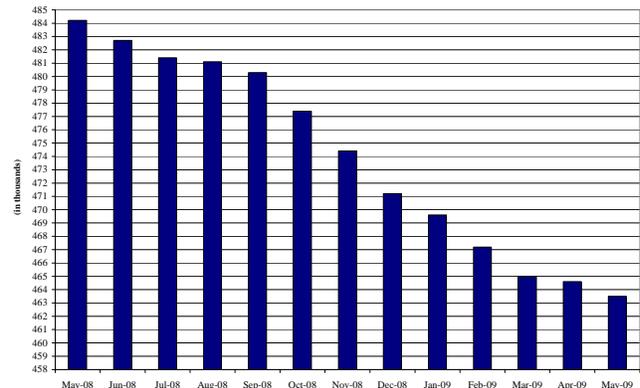
JOBS BASED IN RHODE ISLAND:

In Rhode Island, the May 2009 job count totaled 463,500, a decline of 1,100 jobs from April's revised employment level of 464,600. May's employment level marks the lowest employment level since March 1999 (461,100).

Government employment fell by 600 in May, in part because nearly all of the temporary federal government workers hired in April for the Census 2010 completed the necessary tasks in preparation for the survey. In addition, job declines were noted in Professional & Business Services (-300) and Other Services (-200), and smaller job losses were

(continued)

Rhode Island Seasonally Adjusted Establishment Employment
May 2008 - May 2009





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reported in Health Care & Social Assistance (-100), Wholesale Trade (-100), Manufacturing (-100), Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-100), Transportation & Utilities (-100), Information (-100), Educational Services (-100) and Retail Trade (-100).

Over-the-month job gains were reported in two sectors, Accommodation & Food Services (+500) and Construction (+300), while employment in Financial Activities and Natural Resources & Mining remained unchanged.

From May 2008 to May 2009, RI jobs declined 20,700 (-4.3%). Job declines occurred in nearly all economic sectors, with the most significant annual employment declines reported in Manufacturing (-4,900), Retail Trade (-3,200), Professional & Business Services (-3,000), Construction (-2,500), Government (-2,000) and Financial Activities (-1,200). Smaller over-the-year losses were noted in Arts, Entertainment & Recreation (-800), Other Services (-700), Wholesale Trade (-700), Transportation & Utilities (-500), Information (-500), Accommodation & Food Services (-400) Health Care & Social Assistance (-200) and Natural Resources & Mining (-100).

Educational Services remained unchanged over the year.

MANUFACTURING: In May 2009, production workers in the Manufacturing sector earned \$13.97 per hour. The average hourly production wage was up 19 cents from April 2009 and up four cents from May 2008. Manufacturing employees worked an average of 36.7 hours per week in May, down an hour over the month, and down an hour and eight-tenths over the year.

The unemployment figures are based largely on a survey of households in Rhode Island and measure the unemployment status of people who live in the state. Unemployment rates prior to 1976 are not recognized by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as official since the methodology used at that time is not comparable to today's methods. The establishment employment figures are derived from a survey of businesses in Rhode Island and measure the number of jobs in the state. Rhode Island labor market information is available at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi. The June labor force figures are scheduled to be released on Friday, July 17, 2009.

The RI Department of Labor and Training offers employment services, educational services and economic opportunity to both individuals and employers. DLT protects Rhode Island's workforce by enforcing labor laws, prevailing wage rates and workplace health and safety standards. The department also provides temporary income support to unemployed and temporarily disabled workers. For more information on the programs and services available to all Rhode Islanders, please call the RI Department of Labor and Training at (401) 462-8000 or visit the web site at www.dlt.ri.gov.

SEASONALLY-ADJUSTED NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT IN RHODE ISLAND (in thousands)					
				Net Change From	
	May-09	Apr-09	May-08	Apr-09	May-08
Total Nonfarm	463.5	464.6	484.2	-1.1	-20.7
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	-0.1
Construction	18.1	17.8	20.6	0.3	-2.5
Manufacturing	43.6	43.7	48.5	-0.1	-4.9
Wholesale Trade	16.2	16.3	16.9	-0.1	-0.7
Retail Trade	46.7	46.8	49.9	-0.1	-3.2
Transportation & Utilities	10.5	10.6	11.0	-0.1	-0.5
Information	10.1	10.2	10.6	-0.1	-0.5
Financial Activities	32.2	32.2	33.4	0.0	-1.2
Professional & Business Services	51.8	52.1	54.8	-0.3	-3.0
Educational Services	23.3	23.4	23.3	-0.1	0.0
Health Care & Social Assistance	76.3	76.4	76.5	-0.1	-0.2
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	7.3	7.4	8.1	-0.1	-0.8
Accommodation & Food Services	43.1	42.6	43.5	0.5	-0.4
Other Services	22.1	22.3	22.8	-0.2	-0.7
Government	62.0	62.6	64.0	-0.6	-2.0

