

**WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

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NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Unemployment rate settles at 7.7 percent in Santa Barbara County for February 2013

The unemployment rate for Santa Barbara County decreased to 7.7 percent in February 2013, according to figures released today by the State Employment Development Department (EDD). This is down from a revised 8.4 percent in January 2013, and below the year-ago estimate of 9.1 percent. This is compared to an unadjusted unemployment rate for California of 9.7 percent and 8.1 percent for the nation during the same period.

Industry sectors in the County gained 2, 100 for the month of February. Government led the way adding 1,500 positions this month. Leisure & Hospitality was second with 400, followed by Educational & Health Services which gained 200 jobs. And Construction, Information and Financial Activities all gained 100 jobs. The three sectors that lost jobs in February included: Mining and Logging (100); Trade Transportation & Utilities (300); and Professional & Business Services (100).

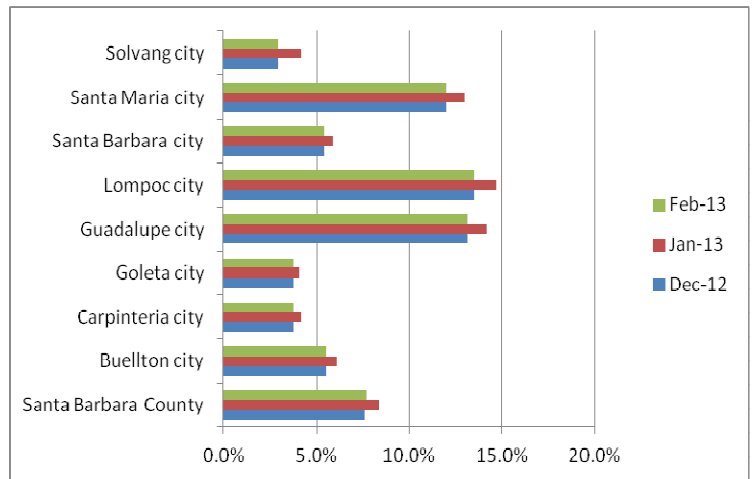
Santa Barbara County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) Executive Director, Raymond L. McDonald noted "the February unemployment numbers appear to have restored the losses that were reported in January—suggesting that January's spike in unemployment was an anomaly. "

"Although Santa Barbara County has a somewhat diversified economy, what continues to be lacking is a well-thought out economic strategy, that will allow business leaders to have a sense of confidence that the community not only understands the growth areas—but has agreed on, as a plan to support these areas."

The cities of Lompoc at 13.5 percent and Guadalupe at 13.1 percent are still holding the highest unemployment rates for the region.

Complete Listing of Unemployment by cities:

| | Dec-12 | Jan-13 | Feb-13 |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|--------------|
| Santa Barbara County | 7.6% | 8.4% | 7.7% |
| Buellton city | 5.5% | 6.1% | 5.5% |
| Carpinteria city | 3.8% | 4.2% | 3.8% |
| Goleta city | 3.8% | 4.1% | 3.8% |
| Guadalupe city | 13.1% | 14.2% | 13.1% |
| Lompoc city | 13.5% | 14.7% | 13.5% |
| Santa Barbara city | 5.4% | 5.9% | 5.4% |
| Santa Maria city | 12.0% | 13.0% | 12.0% |
| Solvang city | 2.9% | 4.2% | 2.9% |



ABOUT THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD OF Santa Barbara COUNTY

The Workforce Investment Board, www.SantaBarbaraCountyWIB.org, is dedicated to serving the workforce needs of businesses, adults, laid-off workers and youth throughout Santa Barbara County. The WIB is a public/private partnership created by the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and is staffed by the County of Santa Barbara.

Job seekers and employers can take advantage of free services at two Workforce Resource Centers (“One-Stops”) to help find work or new employees. Programs include employment services for job seekers, the latest labor market information and regional workforce research for businesses, as well as training that specialize in helping people gain the skills and confidence necessary to find and obtain a job. The One-Stop Shops are at 1410 S. Broadway in Santa Maria, (805) 614-1550, and 130 E. Ortega Street in Santa Barbara, (805) 568-1296. Online information is available at www.workforceresource.com.

Santa Barbara County Industry Clusters of Opportunity (designated by WIB):

- Healthcare
- Energy and Environment
- Building and Design
- Technology and Innovation
- Business Support Services
- Agriculture, Tourism, and Wineries

For more information please go to: www.SantaBarbaraCountyWIB.org or to www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov for the full statewide unemployment figures.

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