

## Region job growth 1 percent in September

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**MANKATO** — A jump in government jobs boosted the region's job numbers by 1 percent in September. Job numbers were up 2.5 percent over the same month last year.

The growth comes as the number of jobs in the state fell 7,400 in September, according to figures from the state Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Blue Earth and Nicollet counties combined added 534 jobs for a total of 52,435 non-farm jobs. That's the highest September jobs number in the past three years, but still below the 53,786 jobs in September 2008, just as the recession was beginning.

In the past year, the two

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counties have added 1,270 jobs or 2.8 percent.

"The good news is that year over year job numbers continue to grow over previous years," said Jonathan Zierdt, president and CEO of Greater Mankato Growth. "Month over month numbers continue to follow a normal trend line."

The government sector accounted for virtually all the growth in jobs, rising 10 percent in September, after months of decline. There are still slightly fewer government jobs than a year ago. Most of the government job growth is tied to education hiring.

The local private sector overall lost 0.6 percent for September with only the service sector providing any private job growth.

Although statewide job numbers fell for the month, the state has added 27,700 jobs in the past year, representing a growth rate of 1 percent.

And the state's unemployment rate fell 0.3 percent to 6.9 percent in September.

“Minnesota is slowly pulling out of the recession, gaining 53,600 jobs over the past two years,” said Mark Phillips, commissioner of DEED. “Declining requests for new unemployment insurance claims, strength in the temp help sector and other positive data are hopeful signs that the recovery will continue.”

Statewide, government led all sectors, adding 7,000. Other sectors that added jobs were “other services” (up 1,600), financial services (up 1,300), and mining and logging (up 100).

Job losses in the state hit the trade, transportation and utilities sector (down 4,800), leisure and hospitality (down 3,800), manufacturing (down 3,700), education and health services (down 2,300), construction (down 1,900), and professional and business services (down 900).

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