Louisiana jobless rate climbs to 13.4% in November

By ALLAN PURSNEIL
Capitol news bureau

Louisiana remained the state with the highest unemployment in the nation as the state's jobless rate climbed to 13.4% in November, state Labor Department officials said Monday in statistics released for the month of November.

Unemployment in Baton Rouge went from 10.4% in October to 10.7% in November, the statistics showed. The four-parish Baton Rouge labor market area includes the parishes of East Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston and West Baton Rouge.

For the four-parish Baton Rouge labor market area, non-agricultural employment, at 214,000 during November, was up 200 over October. Manufacturing was up 100 and non-manufacturing was up 100, statistics show.

Employment in manufacturing for the Baton Rouge area, at 20,000 in November, also was unchanged from the previous month. Non-durable goods were up due to seasonal increases in sugar and confectionery products, the statistical labor report showed.

Total non-manufacturing was up 200 during the current period. Mining, which includes oil and gas well drilling, showed no change.

Construction in the Baton Rouge labor market area was up 200 due to more business in general contractors' high-rise commercial, institutional buildings, in heavy construction (except highway and street construction) and in painting, paper hanging and wallboard. The report for the Baton Rouge labor market area said.

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1,200 jobs in November, compared to the previous month, and is down 18,200 jobs from the same period a year ago, the statistics show.

Manufacturing employment dropped 100 jobs from October and is down 7,000 jobs from November 1985.

Six parishes reported unemployment rates of more than 20 percent. They were Assumption, 24.6 percent; St. Mary, 23.7; Catahoula, 23.6; West Carroll, 23.8; Vermilion, 21.3; and St. Landry, 20.4 percent.

The lowest unemployment in the state was in Lincoln Parish in northeast Louisiana with an unemployment rate of 6.4 percent.

Louisiana's unemployment rate should be lower in next month's report, which will reflect holiday shopping activity, the Labor Department report said.

Unemployment rates for the major market areas were Alexandria, 10.9 percent for November, up from 10.5 percent; Baton Rouge, 10.7, up from 10.4; Houma-Thibodaux, 19.3, up from 19; Lafayette, 15.5, up from 15.3; Lake Charles, 14.7, up from 14.0; Monroe, 10.8 percent, up from 10.2; New Orleans, 11.1, unchanged from October; Shreveport, 12.9, up from 11.8.

Statewide employment in the durable goods segment of manufacturing, estimated at 72,100 for November, was 200 higher than October but 4,800 lower than November 1985. Electrical and electronic equipment payrolls were down for November. Transportation equipment payrolls were up because of more business in the state's shipyards.

Non-durable goods employment, at 95,600, was 300 below last month's figure and 2,200 lower than November of last year. A seasonal decline in the production of fats and oils was a primary factor in the drop of employment in the food industry.

Here is a list of the latest unemployment rates, by labor market areas, designated by the principal town and its parish.

Crowley (Acadia parish), 18.9 percent; Oakdale (Allen), 17.4; Napoleonville (Assumption), 24.6; Bunkie (Avoyelles), 18.0; DeRidder (Beauregard), 13.2; Arcadia (Bienville), 13.7; Columbia (Calhoun), 18.2; Cameron (Cameron) 11.8; Jonesboro (Catahoula), 23.6; Homer (Claiborne), 11.8; Ferriday (Concordia), 18.9; Mansfield (DeSoto), 16.0; Lake Providence (East Carroll), 17.9; Clinton (East Feliciana), 12.2; Ville Platte (Evangel), 18.8; Winnsboro (Franklin), 19.7; Colfax (Grant), 14.4; New Iberia (Iberia), 19.7; Plaquemine (Iberville), 16.7; Jonesboro (Jackson), 10.2; Jennings (Jefferson Davis), 18.2; Jena (LaSalle), 15.3; Ruston (Lincoln), 6.4.

Tallulah (Madison), 16.2; Bastrop (Morehouse), 15.9; Natchitoches (Natchitoches), 11.9; Point-A-La-Hache (Plaquemines), 13.5; New Roads (Pointe Coupee), 19.4; Coushatta (Red River), 11.3; Rayville (Richland), 16.5; Many, (Sabine), 14.1; Greensburg (St. Helena), 15.7; Lutcher (St. James), 15.9; Opelousas (St. Landry), 20.4; Morgan City (St. Mary), 23.7; Hammond, (Tangipahoa), 14.8; St. Joseph (Tensas), 14.2; Farmerville (Union), 13.6; Abbeville (Vermilion), 21.3; Leesville (Vernon), 9.6; Bogalusa (Washington), 13.3; Minden (Webster), 15.6; Oak Grove (West Carroll), 23.8; St. Francisville (West Feliciana), 11.5; Winnfield (Winn), 12.4.