Unemployment in Lafayette's labor market area last month peaked at a record high of 15.5 percent, moving up from October's rate of 15.3 percent, said a spokesman with the state Department of Labor.

That area includes Lafayette and St. Martin Parishes.

Meanwhile, Louisiana is still No. 1 in the nation with people out of work, with a jobless rate for November at 13.4 percent, up from 13 percent in October, said DOL spokesman Tom Bourg.

The state's record high was in June, when unemployment reached 13.8 percent.

Second in the nation is Mississippi, with 11.5 percent unemployed.

The U.S. unemployment rates remained steady at 6.6 percent in November and October, with the November rate a marked improvement over last year's 11.3 percent.

In Louisiana, some $478 million in unemployment benefits have been paid by the state from January to October of 1986, Bourg said.

While nearly all the state's major metropolitan areas showed increases in unemployment from October to November, Bourg said the state's Secretary of Labor Dudley J. Patin Jr. predicts lower figures for December due to retailers hiring holiday workers.

The November statistics showed that across the state, 1,703,900 persons had work in November, while 264,700 were on the unemployment lines, Bourg said.

Louisiana oil and gas extraction jobs dropped 100 from October and 22,300 since November of 1985, Bourg said.

Other sectors of the economy Bourg listed showing job losses included construction, down 1,900 from October and 15,500 from November, 1985; transportation and public utilities, down 1,200 from October and 13,200 from November, 1985; and, manufacturing, down 100 down from October and 7,000 since November, 1985.

Six parishes, including three in the Acadiana area, showed unemployment rates of more than 20 percent in November, Bourg noted.

They are: Vermilion, 21.3 percent, St. Landry, 20.4 percent; St. Mary.
23.7 percent; Assumption, 24.6 percent, Catahoula, 23.6 percent, and West Carroll, 23.8 percent.

The lowest rate was in Lincoln Parish, with 6.4 percent.

For the state's other major labor market areas, the statistics showed:

Alexandria, 10.9 percent, up from 10.5 percent in October; Baton Rouge, 10.7 percent, up from 10.4; Houma/Thibodaux, 19.3 percent up from 19; Lake Charles, 14.7 percent, up from 14; Monroe, 10.8 percent, up from 10.2; New Orleans, 11.1, showing no change from October; and Shreveport, 12.9 percent, up from 11.8 in October.
11.3 percent in Alexandria, which had 10.7 percent in May;
11.4 percent in Baton Rouge, which previously had 11 percent;
10.6 percent, up from 10.1, in Monroe; and
11.3 percent, up from 11.1 percent, in New Orleans.

Houma-Thibodaux’s all-time high of 18.1 percent in June compared to a 17.3 figure for that area in May.

Lake Charles’ May figure was 15.2 percent.