



News Release

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EMPLOYMENT RATE DROP A 'MAJOR CONCERN'

BRANTFORD (Oct. 10, 2014) – Although Canada's jobless rate fell in September, it wasn't such good news here in the Brantford area.

September's local seasonally adjusted jobless rate jumped half a percentage point to 6.7%, according to Statistics Canada figures released Friday.

Also troubling is that Brantford's employment rate - the percentage of the population working - fell to 61%, down from 61.5% in August. A year ago in September 2013, the employment rate was 62.9%.

"Our falling employment rate is a major concern," said Jill Halyk, executive director of the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie. "We're seeing a trend of less people being active in the labour force and less people working. At the same time, however, we know there are local employers looking to add staff, so there are opportunities for people who want to work and have the right skills."

Brantford's jobless rate of 6.7% is still below the national average of 6.8%, which fell after 74,000 jobs were added across Canada. Employment also grew in Ontario, which has a jobless rate of 7.1%.

Halyk said more work needs to be done to upgrade the skills and training of residents to meet the needs of local employers. "This is a central theme for the communities of Brantford, Brant, Six Nations, New Credit, Haldimand and Norfolk moving forward," she said.

Halyk added that the new Canada-Ontario Job Grant, which provides money to employers to train existing staff and new employees, should help boost the skill level of our workforce. Applications are now being accepted for the program, which also requires a contribution from employers.

One clear indication that employers in the Brantford area are looking to hire workers is a Community Job Fair taking place on Oct. 30, Halyk said. More than 30 employers will be there to talk to jobseekers or accept resumes. The Job Fair is organized by local employment agencies.

Another sign employers are looking for staff: BrantJobs posted 487 jobs in September, up from 431 in August, and up 80 from September 2013.

[BrantJobs](#) is a service of the City of Brantford and County of Brant, providing a broad range of employment solutions to local employers and job seekers. The [Workforce Planning Board](#) is one of 25 non-profit organizations in Ontario that play a leadership role in labour force planning.