



# Annapolis Valley NS Labour Market Monitor

~January 2011~



This is an overview of the Annapolis Valley Region which includes Hants, Kings and Annapolis Counties. The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report focusing on Labour Market Information.

## Labour Force Trends:

Employment fell by 1,600 in the Valley from January 2010 to January 2011, reflecting a decrease in full time employment of 3,200 which was only partially offset by an increase in part time work. With the labour force being stable on a year over year basis, the level of unemployment rose by 1,600 and the unemployment rate increased by 2.7 percentage points from 8.8 percent in January 2010 to 11.5% in January 2011.

For more information, please visit the Statistics Canada website at:  
<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/lfss05b-eng.htm>

## Labour Market News by Industry

### Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting

A new direction taken four years ago has brought an Annapolis Valley pork producer through some challenging industry times. **Beck Farm**, near Kingston, started selling pigs just weaned from sows to operators in Ontario. They currently ship 1,200-1,300 of the 21-day-old pigs every four weeks and are one of four Valley farmers marketing pigs in this manner and together they produce 110,000 pigs per year. Local producers saw the writing on the wall for the Larsen plant in Berwick and started to look at marketing alternatives for their product outside the local area in order to improve cash flow.

Chronicle Herald - January 10, 2011

### Mining and Oil and Gas Extraction

The Canadian Gypsum Company's (CGC) announced on January 21, 2011 that it will be closing its **Fundy Gypsum** operation near Windsor at the end of February. The closure will result in 45 employees being laid off and will leave the plant with only a small staff of maintenance and security workers. According to the company, the closure is due to the continuing recession in the North American construction markets. Fundy Gypsum first opened in 1934 and employed more than 200 people in its peak. The company ships all of its product to the US where housing construction has been in a slump for the past two years. The initial slowdown in construction had resulted in earlier layoffs of 46 workers at the end of 2008 and approximately 30 workers in March 2010. The company remains optimistic that there is going to be a recovery in the construction markets which could result in the reopening of the facilities. Fundy Gypsum has a number of quarries in the area, in addition to running the gypsum plant and the shipping and loading facility in Hantsport. All of these activities will cease operations as part of the announcement. Fundy Gypsum is also the largest customer of the Windsor & Hantsport Railway Company. The latest layoffs will have a large impact on the local economy with a loss of over \$3M in payroll in addition to tax revenue.

Various Newspapers - January 2011

Valley	Jan	
	2010	2011
Region: 230		
Labour Force (000)	61.1	61.1
Employed (000)	55.6	54.0
Full Time	44.3	41.1
Part Time	11.3	13.0
Unemployed (000)	5.4	7.0
Participation Rate (%)	61.0	61.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.8	11.5

Data is 3 month moving average from the Labour Force Survey - Statistics Canada



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## Construction

**Mountain Lea Lodge** (MLL) in Bridgetown has recently completed \$700,000 in infrastructure enhancements which began in the late summer. Annapolis County Spectator - *January 27, 2011*

Two projects have been identified by Kings County for funding extension requests as part of the Federal government's recent announcement to extend the **Economic Stimulus Program** to Oct. 31, 2011 for projects that might not be completed by the original March 31, 2011 deadline. They include HVAC (Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning) upgrades (\$890K) as part of the Greening the Municipal Complex project, and the sewer forcemain replacement project (\$220K). Kings County Advertiser - *January 18, 2011*

Kingsport residents hooked up to a municipal water supply. The **Kingsport central water project** has been in the works for a number of years. A lot of infrastructure work was required in Canning prior to the Kingsport system coming on line. The project cost approximately \$2,450,000. Kings County Advertiser - *January 18, 2011*

## Manufacturing

**Scotian Gold Co-operative Ltd.** will complete a major expansion of its Coldbrook operation with a \$250,000 Federal loan to help the co-operative increase its production and packaging capacity. A \$1-million contribution to the project is also coming from the provincial Agriculture Department. Chronicle Herald - *January 12, 2011*

**Holmestead Cheese Sales Inc.** of Aylesford, Kings County, is set to become an even bigger cheese manufacturer with \$275,000 in funding from the federal and provincial governments. Holmestead, established in 1985, is the largest independent cheese processor in Nova Scotia and one of Canada's largest feta cheese makers. The company, which had 10 employees, sells its products across Canada through wholesalers and through major food retailers like Loblaws. The \$500,000 expansion which will increase its production and packaging capacity and its cold storage space, is almost complete and current plans include hiring 3-4 additional employees to handle its increased production capacity. Chronicle Herald - *January 18, 2011*

The **Larsens** pork processing plant in Berwick (owned by **Maple Leaf**), scheduled to close this spring, could be used to process poultry instead. Last summer, the Nova Scotia poultry industry's strategic planning committee and **Maple Lodge Holdings Corporation** of Ontario announced a

new chicken and turkey processing initiative, with plans to build in the Kentville Industrial Park. But with the announcement in November of the upcoming closure of the pork facility, representatives of the poultry group started talking to Maple Leaf Foods about the Berwick plant. The pending closure of the Berwick facility provides another option for the location of the proposed poultry processing plant. A final decision is expected in 4-6 weeks. The new modern and efficient plant is expected to be operational by the summer of 2012 and will employ approx. 200 workers and process over 40 million kilograms of poultry each year from farmers in NS and PEI. Chronicle Herald - *January 13, 2011*

**Michelin**, which operates three Nova Scotia plants, hired almost 400 people in the province in 2010 according to the Human Resources Director with Michelin Canada - the largest recruiting year in recent memory. Michelin Canada employs 3,500 people in plants in Granton, Bridgewater and Waterville that produce 25,000 car, truck and heavy equipment tires daily. The unusually high number of people hired in 2010 was largely the result of attrition, as many company employees with 30 years of service opted to retire. Michelin hired production workers, maintenance technicians, engineers and managers in 2010 adding that the company has no plans to expand its workforce in 2011 in terms of new hiring beyond meeting immediate needs. Michelin's X One truck tire, produced at the Waterville plant, is generating fairly significant demand in the United States and the company has positive expectations for the Waterville truck tire plant, which opened in 1982. Chronicle Herald - *January 12, 2011*

## Trade

The pending demise of the **Zellers Inc.** retail nameplate across Canada has implications for hundreds of workers at 13 stores across Nova Scotia. Monster retailer Target Corp. recently announced it will pay \$1.8B to purchase leasehold interests in up to 220 retail locations operated by Zellers, a subsidiary of Hudson's Bay Co. The purchase allows Target to begin opening its first stores in Canada beginning in 2013. Zellers currently operates 279 locations in Canada: with 10,000 full-time employees and up to 18,000 part-time workers. It is still too early to speculate which stores will be affected. Hudson's Bay Co. put out a news release confirming Zellers will sublease the properties back from Target after the deal closes and will continue to operate them as Zellers stores for an unspecified period of time. Chronicle Herald - *January 14, 2011*

### Transportation and Warehousing

The Municipality of Digby plans to meet soon with **Kings Transit** to discuss the closure of Convergys in Cornwallis Park and its effects on the bus system. Convergys upcoming closure in March is expected to have a definite impact on ridership which was also impacted over the last number of months due to the work at home program offered by the call centre. Kings Transit said the closure of Convergys would not result in an end to bus service in this area.

Daily Business Buzz - January 11, 2011

### Information and Cultural

There was more bad news at **Convergys** recently when employees learned that their option to work from home is no longer available. The municipality of the County of Annapolis has recently been made aware that the work-at-home program Convergys representatives said would still be an option for some local Convergys employees will be discontinued effective April 15. Convergys explained that latest news by saying that because of the realignment of one of the company's client programs, a number of work-at-home agents were affected across the US and Canada. The Annapolis Digby Economic Development Agency's focus will be on getting a quick hit as the Convergys closure date is rapidly approaching and has already made inquires related to several national customers service centres, back-office financial services companies, and other IT sector firms as possible replacements.

Annapolis County Spectator - January 27, 2011

### Finance and Insurance

**Credit unions in Atlantic Canada** are now operating under one Halifax-based umbrella organization, **Atlantic Central**. The new organization will provide banking, treasury and related services to 61 member-owned credit unions and to more than 340,000 credit union members in Atlantic Canada, while giving them a stronger national presence. The merger will also allow regional credit unions to streamline management costs, develop more specific expertise in areas such as commercial lending and broaden their combined cash resources base.

Chronicle Herald - January 5, 2011

### Education

The **Annapolis Valley Regional School Board** currently has an accumulated surplus of \$4.5 million, with \$1.5 million of that available for board use. Vic Fleury, president of the Nova Scotia

School boards Association, said the surpluses could help ease the government's cost-cutting. Student enrolment is projected to decline by another 7,000 over the next three years, which would amount to a 23% drop since 2000-01. Chronicle Herald - January 27, 2011

Teacher retirements will help **cut costs in the education system**, the province's new education minister Ramona Jennex said on January 17. Approximately 1,000 teachers will retire over the next three years, while the number of students is expected to drop 7,000 during that time. The government is emphasizing that boards should make their first cuts in the area of administration. The number of administrators, including principals, vice-principals, system consultants, supervisors and others, has risen 19% in the last decade, the department says, while student enrolment has gone down by more than 28,000. Administrators' salaries in 2009-10 cost more than \$81M (based on a median salary of \$90,000) while in 2000-01 the cost was \$49M (median salary of \$65,000). The number of full-time **consultants at provincial schools boards** grew by almost five times in a recent nine-year stretch and accounted for most of the overall growth in administrators since 2000-01. Chronicle Herald - January 21, 2011

### Arts, Entertainment and Recreation

Andy Maclean, operations manager at Ski Martock, reports that the \$4.2 million in upgrades at **Ski Martock** are ready as the ski and snowboard destination get set to host portions of the 2011 Canada Winter Games in February.

[www.martock.com](http://www.martock.com)

Kings County Advertiser - January 4, 2011

Things are looking up for the **Hockey Heritage Centre** in Windsor. Nova Scotia's Minister of Economic and Rural Development and Tourism met with Hants West MLA Chuck Porter, Windsor Mayor Paul Beazley, West Hants Warden Richard Dauphinee, and the treasurer for the Windsor Hockey Heritage Society (WHHS), Jennifer Fisher, on January 18 to talk about the future of the Gerrish Street tourist attraction that recently succumbed to overwhelming debt and the lack of a fundraising committee and closed its doors in January. Representatives from the WHHS are scheduled to stand before members of the Windsor, West Hants and Hantsport municipal councils at a joint meeting in Windsor today to discuss the future of the society and to ask for their continued support. Hants Journal - January 27, 2011

### **Accommodation and Food Service**

The **Saltspray Cafe** recently opened at 9414 Highway 10 in Nictaux in the former restaurant space at the Mid Valley Hotel.  
Annapolis County Spectator - *January 20, 2011.*

**Saraj Bakery** and **Pizzazz Bistro** is nearing the end of a long wait for a New Minas expansion and its current Crescent Drive bakery location will add a cafe with its upcoming February move to the former Innovative Cafe (previously Pizza Delight).  
Kings County Register - *January 27, 2011*

**Jimjer Investments Ltd.**, headed by Gerald Bonang of Newport Corner, Hants County, recently bought the **Kingsway Gardens** for \$850,000 on December 29<sup>th</sup> after it sustained heavy damage from the December 14<sup>th</sup> windstorm. The property will be upgraded as part of an insurance claim and Bonang also plans to invest about \$150,000 in the seniors complex through renovating a pub which is named **Puggy's Pub and Eatery**. The pub will seat 110 people and is expected to open within a few months. Kingsway Gardens currently has about 15 residents, with another 10 rooms open for new customers.  
Chronicle Herald - *January 5, 2011*

**The Annapolis Basin Conference Centre** at Cornwallis Park will soon see some major renovations and will embark on marketing initiative thanks to almost \$1 million in funding from Ottawa. The funding will help the ABCC update its accommodation and hospitality facilities, acquire new equipment, enhance staff training, complete landscaping at the facility, and increase its marketing activities. The ABCC is operated by the Cornwallis Park Development Association (CPDA). The Association is investing a further \$220,750 in the project.  
Annapolis County Spectator - *January 27, 2011*

### **Miscellaneous**

**PeopleWorx** has just opened **The Opportunity Centre** – the new \$2.4M one-stop destination for employment-related programs. Located on Opportunity Lane in Coldbrook it offers a one-stop destination for employment-related programs, including the Annapolis Valley Work Centre, The Career Resource Centre, Kings Employment Counselling, Job Finding Club, Youth Works, Kings Canadian Mental Health Association and the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers and Continuing Care Assistant programs. It replaces the former location in downtown Kentville.  
Kings County Advertiser - *January 18, 2011*

Applications for programs to help older workers re-enter the workforce are being accepted through the province's **Age Advantage Plus** program until February 21. Age Advantage Plus is funded through the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers, a federal-provincial partnership developed to aid unemployed older workers in communities affected by significant workforce downsizing or workplace closures. Age Advantage Plus targets people aged 55-64, and prepares older workers for employment in their communities. The Department of Labour and Advanced Education works with community-based organizations to develop and deliver Age Advantage Plus programs.

Daily Business Buzz - *January 19, 2011*

**Note:** *In preparing this bulletin, Service Canada has taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since the bulletin was published. Readers are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this bulletin does not necessarily reflect official policies of Service Canada.*

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