

Tuesday » December  
5 » 2006

## Saskatchewan job numbers jump

### Increase means largest Nov. workforce in history

**Dan Yates**

Saskatchewan News Network; with files from The StarPhoenix

*Saturday, December 02, 2006*

REGINA -- The number of people working in Saskatchewan in November 2006 beat the total from November 2005, a Statistics Canada labour force survey shows.

According to the survey, there were 497,900 people employed in the province during November. That's down from October, but up 18,800 from November 2005.

"October was a really good month for Saskatchewan -- we broke records in terms of employment growth," said Doug Elliott, publisher of the Sask Trends Monitor newsletter.

"The November numbers are good, but they're not as good as October -- but then again we didn't expect them to be." Eric Cline, minister of industry and resources, said the results are encouraging, adding the 497,900 people represents the largest workforce for a November in the province's history.

Most of those new jobs, 18,700 in fact, come from non-agricultural employment.

Cline said the numbers are indicative of a strong and diverse economy, which goes beyond the resource industry. He pointed to steady growth in construction, trade, finance, insurance, real estate, leasing and the service sector, which Elliott explained is bouncing back from a bad year after last year's smoking ban.

Even agriculture employment, although down 3,100 jobs from October, was still up 100 from the November 2005 level of 44,500.

Despite the increases over November last year, Saskatchewan Party industry and resources critic Lyle Stewart focused on the overall decrease from October.

"It's probably another symptom of the underlying issue in this province that although employment has generally been somewhat stronger lately, we continue to lose people and people in their prime earning years and also people in their prime spending years," said Stewart.

The Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce says the labour force growth experienced in Saskatoon in the past year has finally hit the target number needed to retain the city's youth.

For the past several years, the chamber has maintained that Saskatoon's labour force had to grow by at least 8,000 new jobs each year in order to match the number of graduates produced each year in the city and area's high schools and post-secondary institutes.

The chamber calculates the province needs 19,000 jobs as a whole to match jobs with provincial graduates.

"In 2006, Saskatchewan appears to have reached this target for the first time in 15

years," states chamber executive director Kent Smith-Windsor.

He says the rate of job creation in Saskatoon so far this year is second only to Calgary.

According to the chamber analysis of the city numbers contained within Statistics Canada's survey, Saskatoon-area companies and institutions created 8,200 net new jobs from November 2005 to November 2006.

"These results prove our chamber's contention that if governments can improve the business climate through better policies, we can create more opportunities for our young people," stated Coni Evans, the Saskatoon chamber president.

Evans credits the provincial government's decision to shelve the "available hours" legislation in early 2005, plus the government's adoption of most of the business tax review recommendations, as a signal for the business community to "regain the confidence necessary to take the risks required to create these new jobs."

© The StarPhoenix (Saskatoon) 2006

**CLOSE WINDOW**

---

Copyright © 2006 CanWest Interactive, a division of [CanWest MediaWorks Publications, Inc.](#) All rights reserved.