

EMPLOYMENT

Importance	The relationship between unemployment and adverse health outcomes is complex, partly because of the bidirectional nature, meaning that unemployment contributes to ill health and ill health contributes to unemployment. Reviews of the literature provide evidence that unemployment has a direct effect on health, as well as the expected impacts on socioeconomic status, poverty, risk factors, and prior ill health. ¹
Definitions	<p><u>Labor Force</u>: Individuals age 16 and older who are able, available, and actively looking for work. This does not include the jobless who are not seeking work (such as full-time students, homemakers, retirees, and those who have given up on finding work).</p> <p><u>Unemployment Rate</u>: Percentage of unemployed individuals out of the total labor force.</p>

UNEMPLOYMENT

In July 2012, Santa Cruz County had an unemployment rate of 9.7% (an estimated 15,300 people), compared to 10.9% statewide and 8.3% nationwide.^{2,3} Over the past four years, the highest monthly rate was in February 2010, with a rate of 15.5% (see Figure 1).

At the sub-county level, unemployment rates in cities and Census Designated Places (CDP) vary greatly, with five areas having unemployment rates higher than 10% in July 2012: Watsonville, Interlaken, Amesti, Freedom and Boulder Creek (see Table 1). These five areas total an estimated 7,100 unemployed persons which is nearly half of the unemployed population in Santa Cruz County.² The lowest unemployment rates were in Felton, Corralitos, Aptos, and Aptos Hills/Larkin Valley, all with rates below 4% in July 2012.²

It is worth noting that a significant portion of the labor market in Santa Cruz County is agricultural and thus prone to seasonal fluctuations, as can be seen in Figure 1.

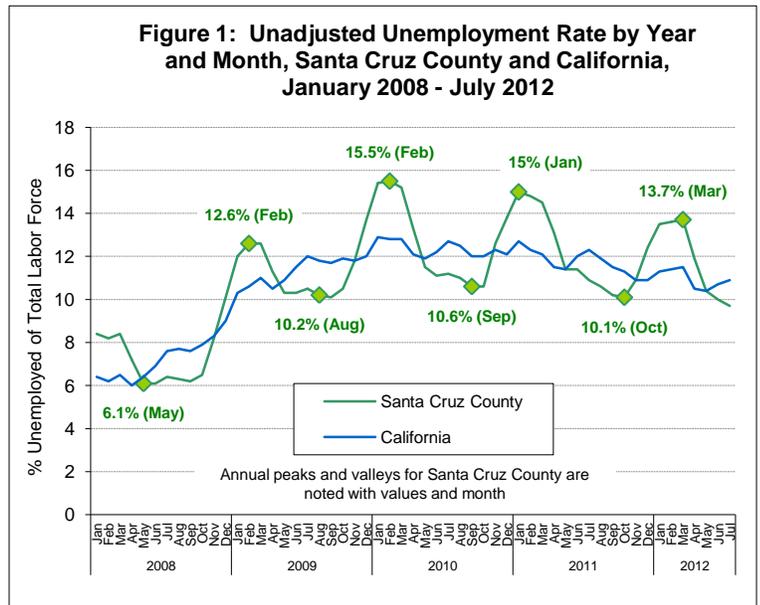


Table 1: Top 5 Cities or Census Designated Places (CDP) with the Highest Unemployment Rates, Santa Cruz County, July 2012

City / CDP	Unemployed Persons	Rate
Watsonville City	5,000	20.5%
Interlaken	900	20.5%
Amesti	300	17.6%
Freedom	600	17.5%
Boulder Creek	300	11.2%

Helpful Websites	California Employment Development Department (EDD)	http://www.edd.ca.gov/
	U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics	http://www.bls.gov/
Sources	<p>(1) Mathers CD and Schofield, DJ (1998). "The health consequences of unemployment: the evidence." <i>The Medical Journal of Australia</i>, 168:178-182. http://www.mja.com.au/public/issues/feb16/mathers/mathers.html (subscription only).</p> <p>(2) State of California. Employment Development Department (EDD). http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov.</p> <p>(3) U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Historical Data. A-1. "Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over, 1977 to date." http://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cpseea01.pdf.</p>	