



Minidoka County

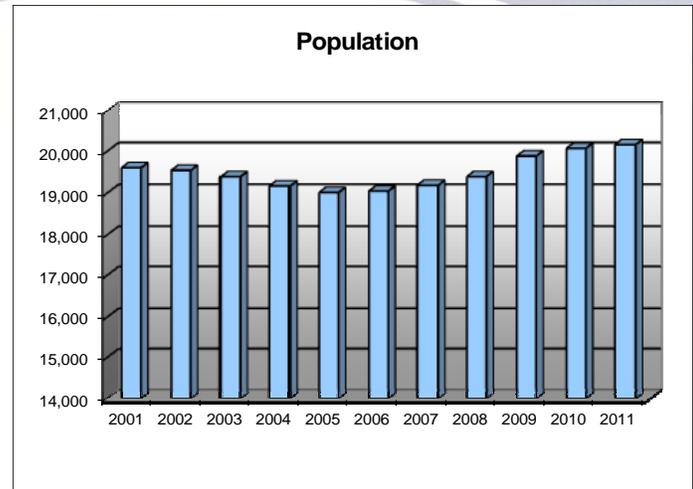
August 2012

Work Force Trends

Population

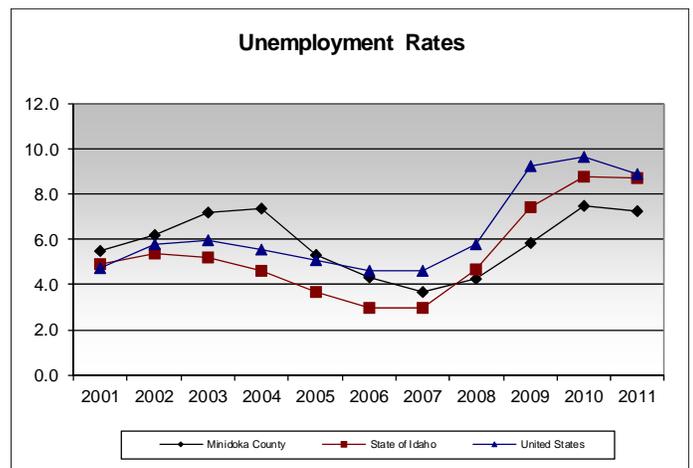
The population of Minidoka County had been slipping over the last decade despite incremental increases in the last five years. But the erosion seems to have stopped. The population rose 0.4 percent over the decade to 20,155 in 2011. Rupert, the county seat, has a population of 5,578. The downtown core has retained its historic buildings including the iconic Wilson Theatre, and the downtown plaza is one of the few remaining in Idaho and the centerpiece of the community.

Still heavily dependent on agriculture and food processing, the county economy has diversified to include durable manufacturing along with wholesale and retail trade tied to agriculture. Wages tend toward the low end – a challenge in attracting and retaining workers but appealing to new businesses. New employers have been willing to pay higher wages but still below competing states although the jobs provide health benefits. Renewed economic vitality, the area's scenic beauty and the lure of nearby recreation are drawing new residents.



Labor Force & Employment

Minidoka County is commonly joined to Cassia County and referred to as the Mini-Cassia area. Employment in Minidoka County has traditionally been seasonal. The city of Burley lies in both counties and is divided by the Snake River, and both counties are linked economically, politically and socially. The area offers a labor pool with a strong work ethic and a strategic location logistically with convenient access to commercial rail and Interstate 84. The unemployment rate peaked at 8.1 percent in 1998 and fell to a record low 3.7 percent in 2007. In the past, many workers relied on fresh pack potato operations, farm jobs, sugar processing and potato processing for employment. In 2003, the J.R. Simplot Co. closed its Heyburn plant, idling 600 workers and causing a spike in the unemployment rate to 7.5 percent in 2004. After closure, the company donated the plant along the Snake River to the city of Burley for an industrial park, which



Labor Force	July 11	July 12
Civilian Labor Force	10,406	10,363
Total Employment	9,615	9,673
Unemployed	791	690
% of Labor Force Unemployed	7.6	6.7
State of Idaho % Unemployed	8.9	7.5
U.S. % Unemployed	9.1	8.3

now houses a retail outlet, a restaurant associated with the cheese plant and Gem State Processing, a potato dehydrating operation. A previous tenant, Renova Ethanol, lost its half-built plant in bankruptcy proceedings, and another company is expected to use what has been constructed up to this point. Continued interest in the area by prospective employers and expansions by existing businesses are anticipated as the economy returns to full steam.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Civilian Labor Force	9,870	9,815	9,365	9,355	9,340	9,680	10,027	10,128	9,440	10,216	10,538
Unemployment	541	609	671	689	496	417	366	431	553	762	764
% of Labor Force Unemployed	5.5	6.2	7.2	7.4	5.3	4.3	3.7	4.3	5.9	7.5	7.3
Employment	9,329	9,206	8,694	8,666	8,845	9,263	9,660	9,697	8,886	9,454	9,773

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Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2011



Wages & Income

Minidoka County ranks 28th among Idaho's 44 counties in per capita income, falling in its standing from last year's ranking of 24th. Per capita income grew at a rate of 46 percent since 2001, driven by activity at the Heyburn Industrial Park and new job opportunities in the Mini-Cassia area. Covered average employment increased 3.5 percent from 2010 to 2011, with construction up 2.4 percent and manufacturing rising 7.7 percent. Construction experienced a 16 percent spike in wages. Kraft sold its operation to Brewster Dairy, a Swiss cheese manufacturer, and Gossner Cheese continues its processing operations and adjacent retail outlet on the Snake River. The cluster of dairy product manufacturing throughout the region is sure to spur more growth in milk production and value-added manufacturing.

Major Employers

Amalgamated Sugar
Barclay Mechanical Services
Budget Motor
Brewster Dairy
Gossner Foods
Jentzsch-Kearl Farms
Mart Produce
Minidoka Memorial County Hospital
Sun Valley Potatoes
Whitesides Dairy

Occupational Wages*

Average Wage

Teachers	\$50,000.00
Registered Nurses	\$25.00
Certified Nurses Aides	\$9.00
Receptionists	\$10.00
Bank Tellers	\$11.00
Cashiers	\$8.50
Retail Sales	\$8.00
Medical Housekeeping	\$8.00
Landscapers	\$10.00
Construction Labor	\$11.00
Food Processors	\$11.00
Cheese Processors	\$10.00
Milkers	\$11.00
Farm Labor	\$10.41

* Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor website at lmi.idaho.gov.

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2001, 2010 & 2011	2001		2010		2011	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	7,580	\$23,105	6,419	\$29,924	6,639	\$31,117
Agriculture	1,133	\$18,086	1,157	\$27,907	1,273	\$28,208
Mining	*	*	*	*	*	*
Construction	229	\$22,969	318	\$29,052	325	\$33,684
Manufacturing	1,850	\$33,380	925	\$49,499	997	\$51,701
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	1,629	\$21,782	1,258	\$32,023	1,256	\$33,685
Information	152	\$21,692	110	\$31,809	136	\$31,826
Financial Activities	91	\$20,607	136	\$29,404	131	\$29,988
Professional and Business Services	172	\$20,280	130	\$24,776	140	\$23,863
Educational and Health Services	275	\$15,800	282	\$21,510	311	\$21,877
Leisure and Hospitality	481	\$9,057	506	\$11,316	527	\$11,397
Other Services	142	\$14,565	143	\$20,318	143	\$22,114
Government	1,426	\$22,944	1,453	\$26,869	1,402	\$27,355

Per Capita Income	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Minidoka County	\$19,384	\$20,495	\$19,150	\$21,276	\$21,969	\$23,974	\$26,922	\$29,670	\$28,449	\$28,376
State of Idaho	\$25,665	\$26,042	\$26,452	\$28,412	\$29,544	\$31,493	\$32,607	\$33,110	\$30,997	\$31,897
United States	\$31,157	\$31,481	\$32,295	\$33,909	\$35,452	\$37,725	\$39,506	\$40,947	\$38,846	\$39,937

Information provided by Bureau of Economic Analysis



This county is served by the office listed below:
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labor.idaho.gov