

Communities Count 2008

Data Updates For May 2010

- **Food Banks**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Family Friendly Employment Benefits**
- **Bankruptcies**
- **Home Foreclosures**
- **Unemployment**

www.communitiescount.org

Communities Count reports on a set of social and health indicators every three years. **Communities Count 2008** is the fourth such report. One strength of the report is that it contains a stable set of indicators that can show trends over time. Generally, a three year cycle for updating the report has been an efficient approach to making information available for planning, decision-making and guiding action/advocacy. However, the current economic recession, which began in December 2007, has undoubtedly had an impact on many of the indicators reported in **Communities Count 2008**. Even as it went to print, conditions in our communities were changing.

In response to the many requests we have received for more timely information and new information related to the economic downturn, we will be updating our indicators as new data become available. In addition, we will add supplemental data likely to be related to the impact of this recession. Previous data reports, along with the full 2008 report, is available online at www.communitiescount.org.

I. Updates to Communities Count 2008 Indicators

BASIC NEEDS AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Adequate Food

Last updated: 05/20/2010; Updated Quarterly

	Households Served (unduplicated)			Persons Served (unduplicated)			Total Person Visits		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Jan* - Mar	31,122	58,375	54,401	97,037	132,959	133,926	450,869	510,604	557,088
Apr - June	21,802	24,960		50,702	56,541		482,790	518,850	
July - Sept	29,580	26,594		64,189	72,309		465,883	504,050	
Oct - Dec	25,135	23,166		62,324	57,203		514,398	609,546	
Total	107,639	133,095		274,252	319,012		1,913,940	2,143,050	

- King County food banks experienced a 13% increase in visits in the first quarter of 2010 over the previous year's first quarter.
- The number of persons served in the first quarter increased over the previous year's first quarter. The increase was among children under 19 (1.5% increase) and adults over 54 (9% increase).

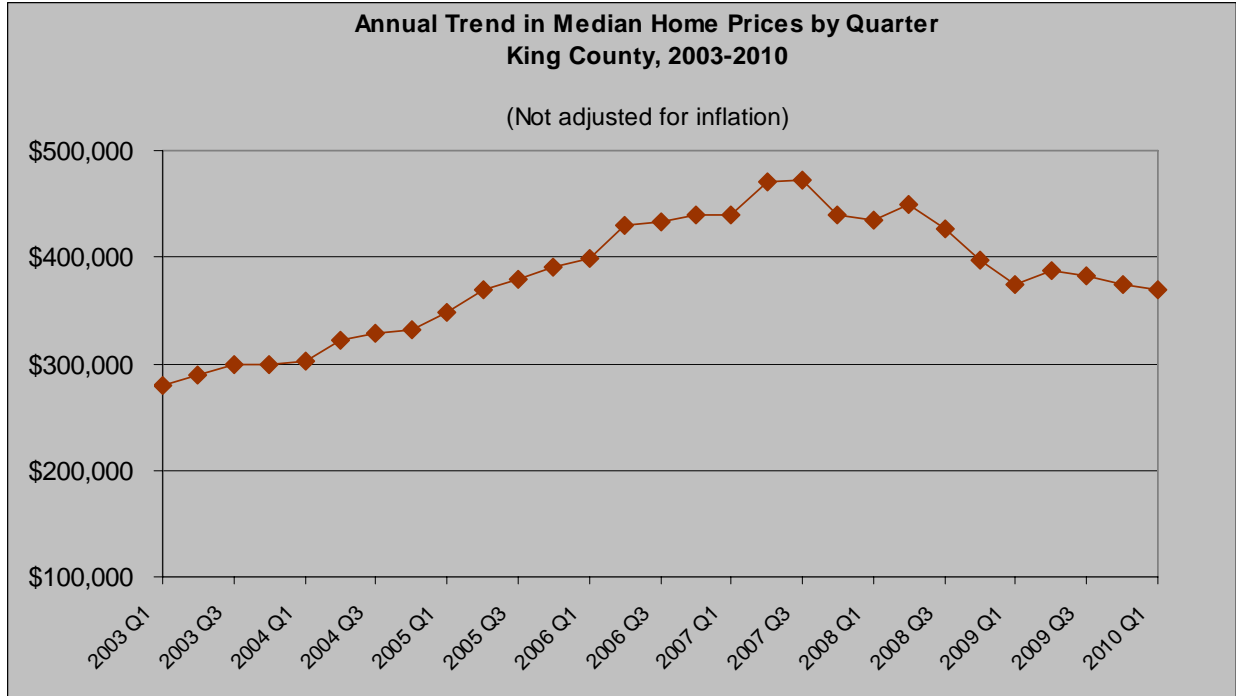
** In January, most King County food banks begin their user count. Although a person may have used the food bank in previous year/s, all persons and households are counted as new on their first visit in 2009.*

Sources: Data on King County food bank usage was provided by Susan Eichrodt, Program Manager of the Washington State Emergency Food Assistance Program. Data on Food Stamp usage is based on information from state agencies

Affordable Housing

Last updated: 05/25/2010

Next update: Monthly home/condo prices by month for previous month; Aug 2010 for 2nd Quarter home prices; Nov 2010 for rental prices.



- Home values in King County peaked sometime in the third quarter 2007 and then dropped to a low point in early 2009. The median home price has declined slightly since that time.
- In April 2010, the median price was \$375,000. This was down 1.3% from a year ago.
- The median price for a condominium fell by 2.8% from one year ago to \$243,000 in April 2010.

Apartment Vacancy Rates and Rents Year-Over-Year Comparison						
	March 2008		March 2009		March 2010	
	Rate	Rent	Rate	Rent	Rate	Rent
King County	4.1%	\$1026	6.8%	\$1065	6.0%	\$1,017
Washington State	4.1%	\$897	6.3%	\$930	6.1%	\$899
U.S.	-	-	10.7%	-	12.1%	-

- The Washington Center for Real Estate Research surveys apartment managers in March and September on rental costs and vacancies. The vacancy rate in King County rose by almost 3 percentage points from March 2008 to March 2009 but declined in 2010.
- Almost 50% of rental units in King County are studios and one bedroom apartments. In March 2009, the average rent for a one bedroom, one bathroom apartment was \$1003. This declined to \$917 in March 2010.
- Developments in the housing market are reflected in the availability and cost of apartments. In 2009, many rental prospects were purchasing or renting homes rather than renting apartments, resulting in a decrease in the average apartment rental price. Due to the economic recession, house prices were declining, some homeowners were better off renting their properties than selling at distressed prices and the government was providing a first-time home buyers tax credit. However, as new homeowners began defaulting on mortgage loans, banks became illiquid, unable to finance additional loans, resulting in many bank failures. Inability to receive additional financing from banks has resulted in numerous foreclosures throughout the country. Decreased apartment rental prices and inability to obtain additional financing for home ownership has encouraged real estate market participants to start renting apartment units instead of trying to purchase new homes, which has caused a decrease in average vacancies.

Sources: Apartment data and quarterly figures for home prices from Washington Center for Real Estate Research. Monthly home and condominium prices come from NW Multiple Listing Service.

POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH LIFE STAGES

Family-Friendly Employment Benefits

Last updated: April 2010 for year 2009. Updated annually.



- The number of Washington State employers offering paid leave to full time employees remained fairly steady through 2007 then dropped in 2008. Little gain was made in 2009. Those that offered paid sick leave dropped from 46% in 2004 to 41% in 2009, while companies that offered paid vacation leave dropped from 73% in 2004 to 65% in 2009. Paid holiday leave dropped from 65% in 2004 to 63% in 2009.
- The percentage of employers that offered medical insurance to full-time employees has declined steadily over the past 5 years to 55% in 2009. Fewer firms offered medical coverage to part-time employees as well, slipping from 15% in 2004 to 9% in 2009.

Percent of Firms in Washington State Offering Health Insurance to Employees, by Year						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Full-time Employees	68%	67%	66%	66%	57%	55%
Part-time Employees	15%	15%	14%	11%	10%	9%

- In 2009, 42% of Washington's employers offered some type of retirement plan with 38% offering defined-contribution plans (where an employee's retirement benefits are based upon the amount contributed throughout his or her time of employment) and 4% offering defined-benefit plans (where the benefit-amount received upon retirement is guaranteed). Some employers offer both types of retirement plan. By comparison, in 2007, 44% of Washington's employers offered some type of retirement plans, with 39% offering defined-contribution plans and 7% offering defined-benefit plans.
- While some employers offer the same benefits to their part-time workers, the reality is that those working less than full time were far less likely to have any pension benefits.

Percent of Employers in Washington State Offering Retirement Plans By Plan Type and Year			
Full-time Employees	2007	2008	2009
Defined Contribution Plans	39%	35%	38%
Defined Benefit Plans	7%	6%	4%
None Offered	56%	62%	58%
Part-time Employees			
Defined Contribution Plans	16%	13%	16%
Defined Benefit Plans	2%	2%	1%
None Offered	77%	84%	83%

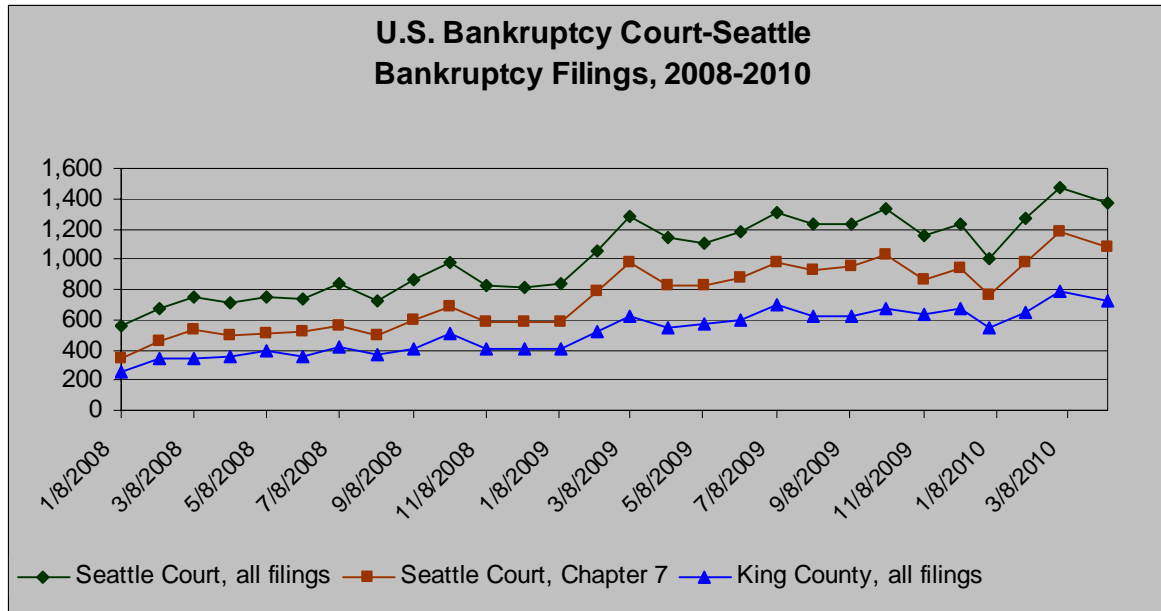
The 2010 Employee Benefits Report is available from the Washington State Employment Security Department.

II. Supplemental Data

Bankruptcies

Last updated: 05/18/2010

Next scheduled update: Monthly for previous month.



- In April 2010, 1,375 bankruptcy petitions (all types) were filed in the Seattle court. The total number of filings this year (5,127) is up 18.9% compared to the same time period in 2009. Of the petitions filed in April 2010, 1,078 were personal (Chapter 7) filings. Personal bankruptcies were up by 26.1% in 2010, compared to the same period in 2009.
- 723 cases were filed from King County in April 2010. Year-to-date, filings in King County increased by 28.8% over the same period in 2009.
- Business bankruptcies rose by 120% from April 2008 to April 2010 in the Western Washington District (Seattle and Tacoma courts).

Bankruptcy Overview:

Bankruptcies in King County are generally handled through the Federal Bankruptcy Court in Seattle. Individuals can file under either Chapter 7 or Chapter 13. Businesses usually file under Chapter 11.

Chapter 7, entitled Liquidation, contemplates an orderly, court-supervised procedure by which a trustee takes over the assets of the debtor's estate, reduces them to cash, and makes distributions to creditors, subject to the debtor's right to retain certain exempt property and the rights of secured creditors. Because there is usually little or no nonexempt property in most chapter 7 cases, there may not be an actual liquidation of the debtor's assets. These cases are called "no-asset cases." If such a debtor's income is in excess of certain thresholds, the debtor may not be eligible for chapter 7 relief.

Chapter 13, entitled Adjustment of Debts of an Individual With Regular Income, is designed for an individual debtor who has a regular source of income. Chapter 13 enables the debtor to keep a valuable asset, such as a house, and to propose a "plan" to repay creditors over time – usually three to five years. Chapter 13 is also used by consumer debtors who do not qualify for chapter 7 relief under the means test.

Chapter 11, entitled Reorganization, ordinarily is used by commercial enterprises that desire to continue operating a business and repay creditors concurrently through a court-approved plan of reorganization. The debtor normally goes through a period of consolidation and emerges with a reduced debt load and a reorganized business.

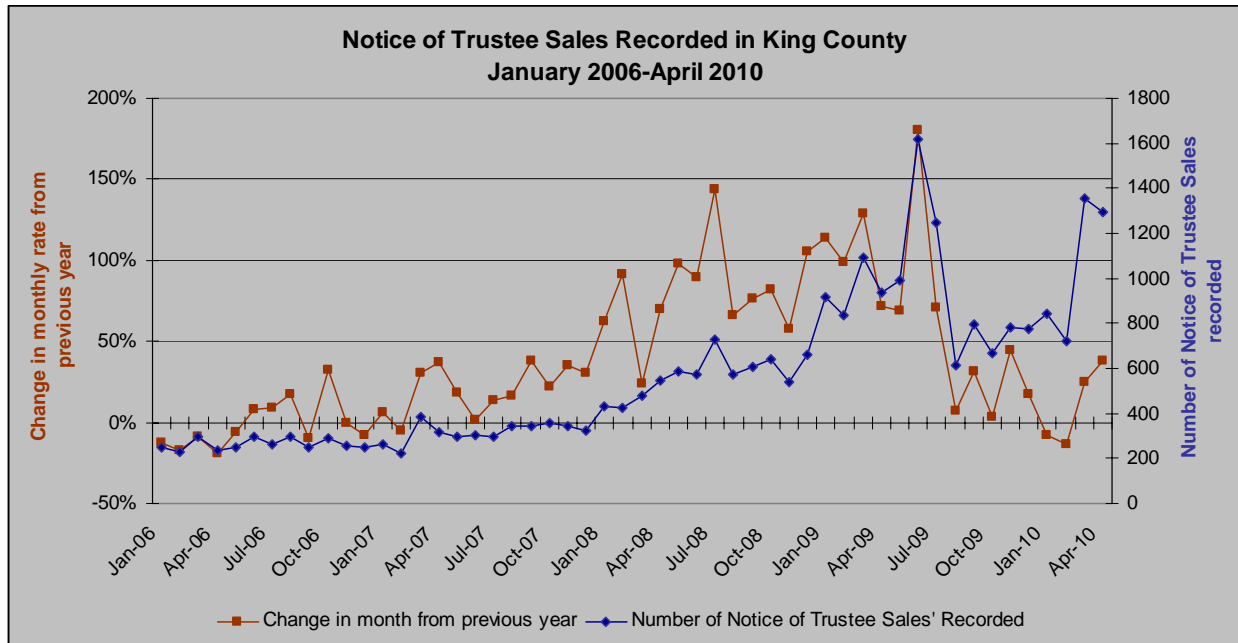
Additional information on bankruptcies in Western Washington is available on the U.S. courts website. Bankruptcy statistics can be found at <http://www.wawb.uscourts.gov/posts.htm?f=3>

Home Foreclosures

Last updated: 05/18/2010

Next scheduled update: Monthly for previous month.

Updated Foreclosure maps will appear in the May 2010 update.



- Home foreclosures, represented by Notice of Trustee Sales, spiked in March and April 2010, although they remain below the high in June 2009. The year-over-year increase in April was 37.8%.

Source: King County recorder: <http://146.129.54.93:8193/search.asp?cabinet=opr> Data were queried monthly by 'Notice of Trustee Sale'.

Foreclosure Overview & Foreclosure Process

What is Foreclosure?

Foreclosure is a process that allows a lender to recover the amount owed on a defaulted loan by selling or taking ownership (repossession) of the property securing the loan. The foreclosure process begins when a borrower/owner defaults on loan payments (usually mortgage payments) and the lender files a public default notice, called a Notice of Default. The foreclosure process can end one of four ways:

1. The borrower/owner reinstates the loan by paying off the default amount during a grace period determined by state law. This grace period is also known as pre-foreclosure.
2. The borrower/owner sells the property to a third party during the pre-foreclosure period. The sale allows the borrower/owner to pay off the loan and avoid having a foreclosure on his or her credit history.
3. A third party buys the property at a public auction at the end of the pre-foreclosure period.
4. The lender takes ownership of the property, usually with the intent to re-sell it on the open market. Properties repossessed by the lender are also known as bank-owned or REO properties (Real Estate Owned by the lender).

Major Elements of Washington Foreclosure Include:

1. Mailing and posting the Notice of Default (at least 30 days after default occurs).
2. Setting the Trustee's Sale that includes recording mailing and posting of the Notice of Trustee's Sale (must be done more than 90 days before sale date).
3. Publication - 2 times at specific intervals in the last month before sale.
4. Holding the Sale (Must be at least 190 days after date of first default, 90 days after NTS is posted)
5. Sales can be continued up to 120 days at the will of the lender.

Measuring/Indicating Foreclosure

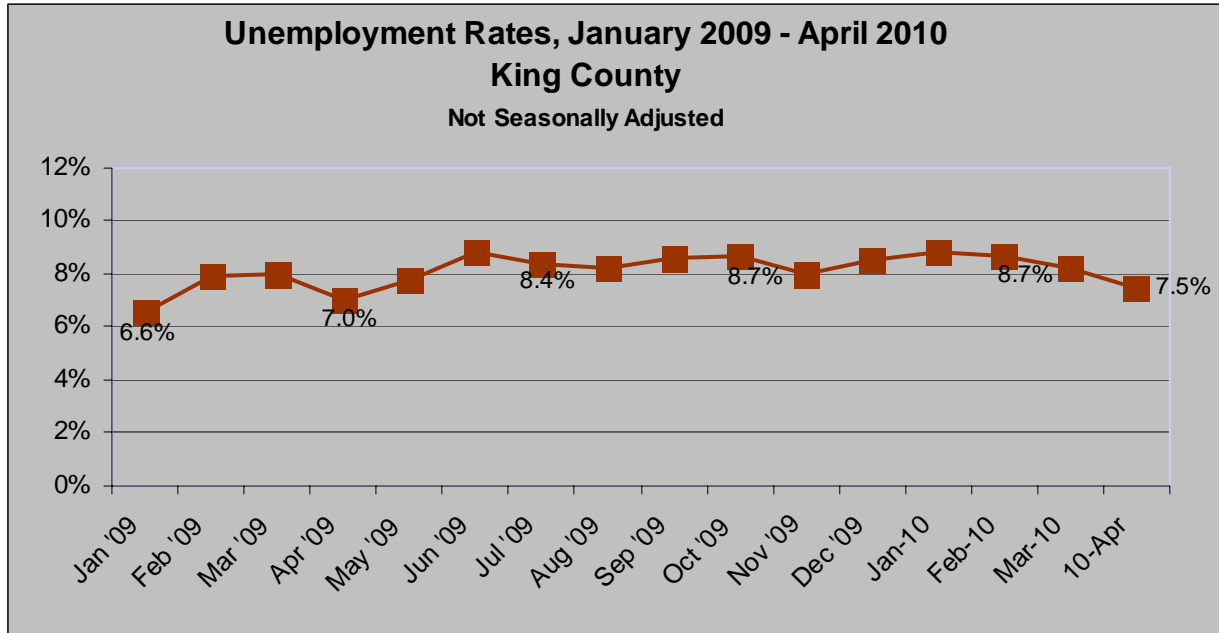
The Notice of Trustee Sale (NTS) is filed at least 30 days after the notice of default. There is no single point in the process that the experts call "a foreclosure". All NTS must be recorded with the King County Recorder's Office, but preliminary steps don't have to be. NTS means a property will be lost to foreclosure in 120 days without substantial intervention, so it is used as an indicator of serious foreclosure risk: it indicates a default that will turn into loss of the property unless something big and costly happens.

Source: <http://www.realtytrac.com/foreclosure/overview.html>

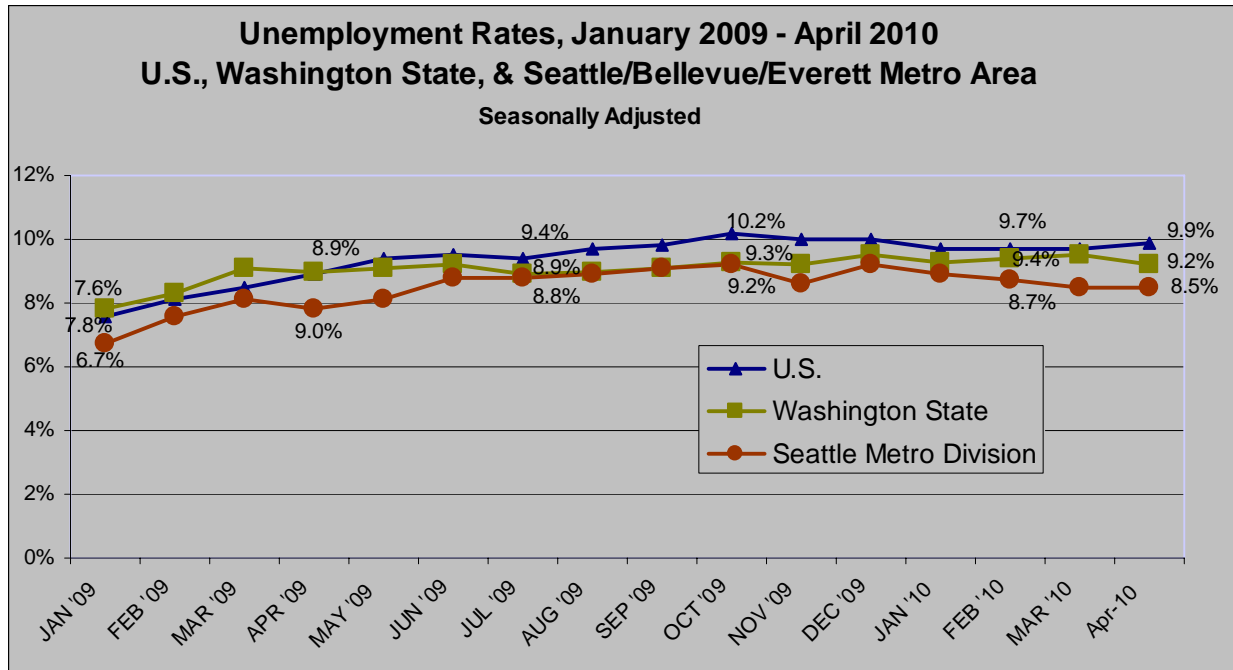
Unemployment

Last updated 05/18/2010

Next scheduled update: Monthly for previous month



- The employment picture for King County continued to improve slightly from March to April 2010. The unemployment rate moved from 8.2% to 7.5%. The number of persons unemployed dropped by 8,100 while employment increased by 9,400.



- The nation's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose slightly to 9.9% in April. This is below a high of 10.0% in December 2009. The increase is likely due to discouraged workers beginning to reenter the labor force. Washington's unemployment rate dropped slightly to 9.2%. The Seattle/Bellevue/Everett metropolitan area unemployment rate remained at 8.5% in March and April, down from a high of 9.2% in December 2009.

What does SEASONALLY ADJUSTED mean?

Over the course of a year, the size of the state's labor force and the levels of employment and unemployment undergo sharp fluctuations due to such seasonal events as changes in weather, reduced or expanded production, harvests, major holidays, and the opening and closing of schools. The effect of such seasonal variation can be very large; seasonal fluctuations may account for as much as 95 percent of the month-to-month changes in unemployment at the national level.

Because these seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on statistical trends can be eliminated by adjusting the statistics from month to month. These adjustments make non-seasonal developments, such as declines in economic activity, easier to spot. For example, the large number of youth entering the labor force each June is likely to obscure any other changes that have taken place relative to May, making it difficult to determine if the level of economic activity has risen or declined. However, because the effect of students finishing school in previous years is known, the statistics for the current year can be adjusted to allow for a comparable change. The adjusted figure provides a more useful tool with which to analyze changes in economic activity.

*Note: Rates are adjusted for previous months when revised figures become available.
 Source: Washington State Employment Security Department, Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch.*

Websites and Reports with Recession-relevant Data and Analysis

United Way of King County Community Assessment: Basic Needs

<http://www.uwkc.org/kcca/BasicNeeds/BasicNeeds.asp>

Examining the Health Consequences of the 2008-09 Recession

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/about/rapidresponse/Recession.cfm>

PolicyLink

[Reclaiming Foreclosed Properties for Community Benefit](#) highlights promising practices that are already underway for localities looking to stabilize their local housing market and prevent blight from spreading.

Demos and the Center for Responsible Lending

The Plastic Safety Net: The Reality Behind Debt in America, Tamara Draut, October 2005, http://www.demos.org/pubs/psn_7_28_09.pdf

Have you ever wondered why Communities Count reports data by educational level and what this means for health outcomes? To learn more about how education and health are linked, see this report from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation:

Issue Brief 6: Education and Health, Education Matters for Health

<http://www.commissiononhealth.org/>

Look for other briefs on housing, work, the economy and other topics in this RWJ series: **What Drives Health?**

<http://www.commissiononhealth.org/WhatDrivesHealth.aspx>