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Unemployment in Dufferin and rural areas on the rise

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A new report released by the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin last week is indicating rising numbers of unemployment in rural areas.

According to the organization's labour market specialists, the rural unemployment rate has risen to over six per cent with unemployment numbers from October showing approximately 2,000 more people being unemployed in the rural regions of Dufferin County, Wellington County, and Simcoe.

The report also said there is a rising number of people leaving the labour market as an extra 2,300 people are no longer seeking work.

?The rural workforce who lost or left employment seems equally divided with some continuing to be optimistic and job searching and some deciding that they are done actively looking for work,? said Charlene Hofbauer, executive director of the Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin.

The second quarter of the year, which consists of April, May, and June, saw an increase in almost 10,000 job vacancies for a total of 26,890 in the economic region. In the first quarter of the year job vacancies sat at 17,555 in the region.

Hofbauer said she doesn't expect another 10,000 jump in the third quarter, but that the region may hit 30,000 job vacancies.

She added, employers will find it challenging to find really specialized skilled workers in the current labour market.

?The available pool of people who are looking is very small. When we start looking at a very small labour pool we are going to have challenged finding those really specialized skills like personal support worker, truck driver, software developer, or a skilled trade's person,? said Hofbauer. ?It's going to be much harder because those are not skill sets that sit in the general population.?

Dufferin County via FindYourJob.ca saw 1,057 job posting in September. The top ten posted jobs included; material handlers; retail salespersons; home support workers, housekeepers, related occupations; labourers in processing, manufacturing, utilities; cooks; customer and service representatives; food counter attendants, kitchen helpers; retail and whole sale trade managers; construction trade helpers and labourers; and light duty cleaners.