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**Inside this issue:**

page 1

Important Notice about the Business Facts Distribution

Residents Travel to DC to Promote River Crossing Legislation

page 2

UWRF Executive-in-Residence Dale Lindquist Speaks on Entrepreneurial Principles

Nominations Accepted for Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year Award

page 3

October 20th Presentation will Address the America Invents Act

COWS Releases August 2011 Job Watch

page 4

OEM Fabricators Celebrates 25 Years

page 5

"Breakfast with Bakke Norman" Set for Nov. 8th

Interfacial Solutions Announces R&D Collaboration

page 6

Senator Kohl's Regional Representative Holds Office Hours in Roberts on Oct. 6th

Key Manufacturing Initiative Funded at \$120 million

Beekeepers Monthly Meeting on October 13th

page 7

Supervisory Management Workshops Offered

45th Parallel Holds Open House on October 8th

St. Croix County's Unemployment Rate

## Important Notice about the Business Facts Distribution

St. Croix EDC is converting to a new email distribution service (MailChimp) and the next issue of the *Business Facts* will be distributed using the new service. The EDC would appreciate your assistance with updating your subscription preferences to ensure that you receive the next issue of the *Business Facts*.

Please use this link to update your subscription preferences. <http://leepurl.com/fR-O9>

Many *Business Facts* recipients have already been added to the new system and they may receive an email to that effect. Please continue the subscription process and update your preferences.

Updating your preferences allows you to select what types of news and information you receive from St. Croix EDC. This process will include some follow-up confirmation emails. This is to ensure that you are safely subscribed.

You can select any or all of the following types of communications:

- The Chronicle is a quarterly newsletter containing business news and information;
- The Business Facts is a monthly newsletter on economic development issues;
- Business Seminars and Workshops Notices;
- Business Events & Meetings Notices;
- Business of the Year Banquet Invitation & Notices; and
- General Business Announcements

Readers of the Chronicle newsletter may have already received subscription verification or preference update emails from MailChimp. We apologize for any duplicate notices; please bear with us as the EDC transitions into this new service.

Please feel free to contact Jacki Bradham at [jacki@stcroixedc.com](mailto:jacki@stcroixedc.com) or 715-381-4383 with any questions or comments.

## Residents Travel to DC to Promote River Crossing Legislation

St. Croix County residents, including locally-elected officials and business people, traveled to Washington, D.C. for meetings with U.S. Senators and Representatives as a way to encourage their support for federal legislation aimed at making a modern river crossing over the St. Croix a reality.



*New Richmond, Wisconsin residents were in Washington, D.C. from September 20-22 to advocate for a new river crossing over the St. Croix, including (l to r) Kirk Van Blaircom, Alderperson; Fred Horne, Mayor; Jane Hansen, Alderperson; Tini Soderberg; John D. Soderberg, First National Community Bank and co-chair of the St. Croix River Crossing Coalition; and Russ Korpela, New Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce.*

Bills have been introduced in the House and Senate that will grant Congressional approval of the decades-delayed St. Croix River Crossing project, designed as a regional transportation project

that will connect the Town of St. Joseph (St. Croix County, Wisconsin) and Oak Park Heights (Washington County, Minnesota).

County board chair Daryl Standafer was among the trip's participants. In an update to the St. Croix EDC board of directors Chair Standafer wrote:

"The meetings were very positive, and the congressional offices were impressed with the diversity of the group. Wisconsin and Minnesota Members of Congress are working on bipartisan legislation in both the Senate and the House to request the needed exemption. While there are no certainties of timing, the impression conveyed was that action and success was likely this fall."

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## UWRF Executive-in-Residence Dale Lindquist Speaks on Entrepreneurial Principles

As part of the Executive-in-Residence event, Dale Lindquist, President and CEO of Fiberstar, Inc. in River Falls will speak from 2 - 3 p.m. on Thursday, October 27th in the UWRF Riverview Ballroom in the University Center. He will show how applying entrepreneurial principles to both your business and personal life can lead to success in achieving all of your life dreams. The event is free and open to the public.

Dale's lecture is titled *Reflections, Contemporary Venture and Vision of an Entrepreneur* and he has provided a summary of his talk, "Ever thought of yourself as an entrepreneur? Your life presents awesome entrepreneurial opportunities. You are the executive in residence; the entrepreneur in charge. Learning to apply entrepreneurial principles to both your business and personal life can lead to success in achieving all of your life dreams."



Dale Lindquist,  
President & CEO,  
Fiberstar, Inc.

Fiberstar Inc. of River Falls, Wisconsin has been ranked number 1437 on the 5000 fastest-growing private businesses in the United States by Inc. Magazine; with an average annual growth of 61% from 2007 through 2010. Fiberstar, Inc. was ranked the 39th fastest-growing private manufacturing company in the U.S. and ranked 19th among the companies in the 13-county Twin Cities metro area to make the 2011 list.

The Executive-in-Residence program is sponsored by the College of Business and Economics and the WESTconsin Credit Union.

For further information contact the College of Business and Economics, 715-425-3335 or [www.uwrf.edu/cbe](http://www.uwrf.edu/cbe).

**About Fiberstar:** Fiberstar is an emerging global leader in creating and marketing innovative bio-ingredients derived from plant cell wall materials. Fiberstar holds an exclusive worldwide license for the manufacture, distribution and sale of two branded and globally sold, all-natural patented functional ingredients manufactured from citrus pulp: Citri-Fi®, a food ingredient, and Imulsi-Fi™, a cosmetic ingredient. Both are used to improve the cost, quality, nutrition or label declarations of a wide range of food and cosmetic products, respectively. Citri-Fi and Imulsi-Fi products are currently produced at Fiberstar's manufacturing facility located near Clewiston, Florida and sold in 65 countries throughout the world.

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## Nominations Accepted for Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year Award

Nominations are being accepted for the 2011 Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year award program.

Now in its 24th year, the Manufacturer of the Year program recognizes a diverse array of manufacturers of all sizes and specialties. Nominated companies are placed into one of four size categories as well as the Sustainability Grand Award, which highlights environmentally sustainable practices.

The deadline for nominations is Thursday, December 1, 2011. Self-nominations are encouraged. Nomination forms and additional information can be found at [www.wimoty.com](http://www.wimoty.com) or by calling (800) 362-7301.

Sponsors of the Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year program include the business association Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce, the law firm of Michael Best & Friedrich LLP and the accounting and advisory firm of Baker Tilly Virchow Krause, LLP. Winners will be honored at a ceremony on February 23, 2012 at The Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee.

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## October 20th Presentation will Address the America Invents Act

St. Croix EDC will host a Fall Business Forum on the America Invents Act (AIA) on Thursday, October 20 in the lower level training room of the River Falls City Hall, 222 Lewis Street, River Falls, Wisconsin from 7:30 a.m. (registration and networking) through 9:00 a.m. The program begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Brian E. Szymanski, a patent attorney and Chief Legal Officer at Interfacial Solutions, LLC, will lead the presentation.

Many key industries in the U.S., including biotechnology, medical devices, and advanced manufacturing, depend on a strong intellectual property system. On September 16th President Barack Obama signed the America Invents Act. AIA is hailed as historic patent reform legislation, designed to help American entrepreneurs and businesses bring their inventions to market sooner, thereby creating new businesses and jobs.

AIA was passed with bipartisan support after nearly a decade of legislative effort. AIA represents the most significant reform of the Patent Act since 1952. Although some provisions are not effective immediately, inventors and companies both need to be aware of the changes and consider the impact on their business.

The presentation will address some of the substantial changes to the U.S. Patent system under AIA, including:

- Increased funding for the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office
- Patent litigation reform
- Procedural reviews aimed at enhancing patent quality
- The establishment of a first-to-file regime for determining inventorship

About Brian E. Szymanski: Brian E. Szymanski is the Chief Legal Officer and a Member of Interfacial Solutions, LLC. He is also Chief Executive Officer of Interfacial Solutions IP, LLC, an intellectual property licensing entity. Brian has more than 26 years of experience in the chemical industry with a significant amount of time spent on patent procurement, intellectual property licensing and litigation.

RSVP: This event is free and open to the public, but RSVPs are appreciated. Please RSVP to Jacki Bradham of St. Croix EDC, at [jacki@stcroixedc.com](mailto:jacki@stcroixedc.com) or (715) 381-4383.

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## Center on Wisconsin Strategy Releases August 2011 Job Watch August Marks Second Consecutive Month of Job Losses in State

In early September the Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) released its monthly snapshot of the state's job picture and key economic trends. The summary represents data for August 2011.

COWS says the Wisconsin economy lost an estimated 2,300 jobs in August, marking the second consecutive month of bad news for Wisconsin jobs. This news stands in stark contrast to the consistent job gains posted in the state over the first half of 2011. Wisconsin has an estimated 121,800 fewer jobs than in December 2007, which is month economists say marked the start of the recession.

COWS is also reporting the state's job deficit — the difference between the number of jobs Wisconsin has and the number it needs to regain from its pre-recession employment rate — is 183,100. This estimate includes the 121,800 jobs Wisconsin employers shed plus the 61,300 jobs that are needed to keep up with the state's two percent (2%) population growth experienced over the last 44 months (December 2007–August 2011) .

Both the construction and manufacturing sectors have been hit hard in this recession. Wisconsin's manufacturing sector added 1,200 jobs added in August 2011. The current employment estimate for Wisconsin's manufacturing sector is 450,000 jobs, which is 9.7% below the December 2007 estimate. The construction sector lost 3,000 jobs in August, leaving it 29.6% below the December 2007 estimate.

Information provided in the Jobs Watch report is based on federal Bureau of Labor data compiled by the Economic Policy Institute. Additional information is available at <http://www.cows.org>.

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## OEM Fabricators Celebrates 25 Years

### Expansions Include Plans to Hire 100

At its 25th anniversary party in Woodville on September 10th, OEM Fabricators Inc. had many reasons to celebrate, including record growth, a 12,000-square-foot expansion in Woodville, Wisconsin growing operations in Neillsville, plus plans for a satellite operation in Prentice, and a goal to hire more than 100 new team members.

An estimated 700 people attended the festivities held in Woodville and 250 attended an open house at the Neillsville facility the previous day.

“We’re growing by leaps and bounds,” says Jim Hauschild, co-founder of the company who returned from retirement to assist in the operations ramp-up and oversee the addition of machine shop space in Woodville. “We’ll be putting about \$3.5 million into new equipment and have added a fourth shift. We are continually looking for good team members, who are the lifeblood of our company.”

Hauschild and Mark Tyler, OEM president and co-founder, were honored by team members at the Woodville party with a plaque that read, “Presented to co-founders Mark Tyler and Jim Hauschild celebrating 25 years of building a business based on integrity, respect, and honoring relationships with Team Members, their families, business partners, and the community.”

OEM’s team members are the reason for the company success, said Tyler, who spoke of how the company chose to locate Woodville back in 1986 because of the strong community support and enthusiasm. “Throughout our history, the company has always been about family and community. When times were tough, and we’ve had to go borrow money, sometimes more than we were worth, it has been our families and our team members that gave us the confidence to move forward. We’ve been blessed by the people who have joined our company — we have 370 team members and currently have 30 open positions. We have always shared with new team members that we expect them to make a positive difference in our company and in our communities, and they have never let us down,” he said.

For the past several years, OEM has continued a pattern of strong growth with its diversified approach to serving customers and its one-stop shop for design, fabrication, manufacturing and finishing, says Tyler, who is also president of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board and a University of Wisconsin Regent. “OEM’s growth depends on our ability to find and recruit talented team members, that’s why we’ve always maintained close relationships with higher education in Wisconsin,” said Tyler.

OEM has celebrated several positive measures in recent years and months. Revenues are nearly double from last year and expectations are very good for next year, said Tyler. OEM’s fledgling micro division is gaining steam as well adding many new customers including some in aerospace, medical devices, precision optics, and musical instrument components. To help drive growth and capabilities in its manufacturing operations, Kathleen Skarvan joined OEM as vice president of operations in August. Previously, Skarvan was the president of a division of Hutchinson Technologies.

To support operations in Neillsville, OEM is leasing a facility in Prentice, Wis., to establish a remote welding cell employing 10 additional team members to support growing business volume. The Prentice facility is set to open in October. Plans are in place to add a plant manager at both the Neillsville and Woodville facilities.

**About OEM:** Named the Wisconsin Manufacturer of the Year, Medium Category, in 2007, OEM Fabricators Inc. is an ISO-certified one-stop job shop with facilities in Woodville and Neillsville that design, build and finish medium- to heavy-gauge components plus subassemblies and turnkey products. It offers design, fabrication, welding, machining, shot blast, painting and assembly, serving original equipment manufacturers in agriculture, construction, energy, mining, military, transportation and other industries. OEM Micro offers services in micro-fabrication, micromachining and high-end microscopy, inspection and methods. For more information visit: [www.oemfab.com](http://www.oemfab.com).



*(l to r) OEM Fabricators co-owners S. Mark Tyler and James Hauschild received a plaque to commemorate the company's 25th anniversary.*

## **“Breakfast with Bakke Norman” Set for November 8th**

### ***Focuses on the Future of the Construction Industry in Western Wisconsin***

The November 2011 installment of “Breakfast with Bakke Norman” is set for Tuesday, November 8 at the Cashman Conference Center of WITC (New Richmond Campus), starting with registration at 7:30 a.m. and a panel discussion from 8-10 a.m.

The panel will share their insights and experience on the current state of, and outlook for, the construction industry in western Wisconsin. Panelists include:

**Brad Boycks**, Chief Lobbyist/Director of Government and Political Affairs of the Wisconsin Builders Association (discussing the regional industry outlook, emerging legislation, and lobbying efforts)

**Mary Bauer**, OSHA representative (discussing the construction industry regulatory environment)

**Tobias C. Madden**, Regional economist from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis (discussing the regional economic conditions)

**Jule Dodge**, Senior Vice President at First National Community Bank (discussing the state of housing, finance, and construction markets)

Attendees will also be able to ask questions of the panelists. Coffee and other refreshments will be provided.

Space is limited. RSVP by Friday, October 21 by emailing Janet King at [jking@bakkenorman.com](mailto:jking@bakkenorman.com).

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## **Interfacial Solutions Announces R&D Collaboration**

On September 20, Interfacial Solutions of River Falls, Wisconsin announced a research and development collaboration with NWP and their affiliate Saco Polymers to advance the performance of polymer composites and compounds. The research agreement will focus on developing innovative new products with a strong focus on meeting the emergent needs of the automotive industry.

“Interfacial Solutions is very pleased to be working with NWP and their affiliate Saco Polymers,” said Dr. Gregg Bennett, chief executive officer of Interfacial Solutions. “We firmly believe that Interfacial Solutions’ broad range of expertise in polymers and natural fillers will enable NWP and Saco Polymers to continue to be innovative industry leaders.”

**About Interfacial Solutions LLC:** Interfacial Solutions is a privately held technology development company with a proven track record of providing timely material science innovations to innovators. The company is located in a 40,000 square foot facility in River Falls, Wisconsin. Interfacial Solutions has a creative team of scientists possessing more than 50 patents and is equipped with state-of-the-art polymer testing equipment, compound and processing equipment, and production capabilities to meet a broad range of plastic industry challenges.

**About Saco Polymers:** Saco Polymers is a world class manufacturer of moisture-crosslinkable polyethylene serving water pipe and wire and cable markets with high performance compounds. Saco Polymers manufactures a number of flame retardant and zero halogen compounds for the wire and cable markets designed to fulfill the most stringent expectations.

**About NWP:** NWP, located in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, was founded in 1996 as a compounder of wood fiber and mineral composites for molding and extrusion applications. In 2001, the company introduced XR Sheet, and extruded wood filled plastic sheet to serve a growing need in automotive interior applications. NWP is ISO 9001:2000 certified and dedicated to developing innovative compounded products that solve customer needs.

St. Croix EDC honored Interfacial Solutions as the 2006 Emerging Business of the Year in St. Croix County. Interfacial was named to the inaugural list of Wisconsin Companies to Watch in 2010, and in August 2010 Inc. Magazine ranked Interfacial #304 on its list of the 500 fastest-growing private companies in the United States.

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## Senator Kohl's Regional Representative to Hold Office Hours in Roberts on October 6th

Marjorie Bunce, a regional representative in west central and northwest Wisconsin for U.S. Senator Herb Kohl, will be at the Roberts Village Hall on Thursday, October 6th from 2-3 p.m. to meet with constituents. The Roberts Village Hall is located at 107 East Maple Street. No appointment is necessary.

"If you are having a problem with a federal program or agency, or have an opinion on an issue before Congress, please let me know by meeting with my regional representative, Marjorie Bunce," said Senator Kohl.

Bunce can also be contacted at Senator Kohl's regional office, located at 402 Graham Avenue, Suite 206, Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Her telephone number is (715) 832-8424 and her email address is [marjorie\\_bunce@kohl.senate.gov](mailto:marjorie_bunce@kohl.senate.gov).

Although Senator Kohl welcomes local reporters to stop in, out of respect for constituent's privacy issues related to potentially sensitive casework, this meeting is not designed to be open to the media.

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## Key Manufacturing Initiative Funded at \$120 million

### Last Year MEP Created or Retained Over 1,300 Wisconsin Jobs

On September 14th, U.S. Senator Herb Kohl announced the Senate's version of the Fiscal Year 2012 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations Bill provides \$120 million for the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program.

MEP enables Wisconsin manufacturers to remain competitive, cut production costs, and retain and create jobs.

In June, Senator Kohl led a bipartisan effort to continue funding for the MEP program in the Fiscal Year 2012 CJS Appropriations bill. A total of 32 senators signed Kohl's letter to the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee supporting the MEP program. MEP centers help employers upgrade their technology, streamline production processes, eliminate cost inefficiencies and train workers to adapt to evolving technologies. Senator Kohl was joined by Senators Joseph Lieberman (ID-CT) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) in the effort.



U.S. Senator  
Herb Kohl

"To get our fiscal house in order, we have to make tough decisions on federal spending, said Senator Kohl. "Considering that environment, I'm pleased that the Subcommittee has made manufacturing a priority. The MEP is a smart investment that continues to create good paying jobs, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to keep this vital program as a part of our overall jobs strategy."

Senator Kohl has long-championed the MEP program for its success in ensuring major Wisconsin employers can remain competitive. Wisconsin is home to two MEP Centers, the Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center (NWMOC) at UW-Stout and the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership in Madison. NWMOC has strategic office relationships with many of the technical college campuses in west central and northwest Wisconsin.

The most-recent data from the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership show that companies that worked with the two centers during the twelve month period ending in June 2011 were able to save or create more than 1,300 jobs, generate \$102 million in sales, make \$37 million in new investments, and produce more than \$20 million in cost savings.

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## Beekeepers Monthly Meeting on October 13th

The St. Croix County Beekeepers Meeting is set for Thursday, October 13th at 7 p.m. (on the second Thursday of each month) at Peace Lutheran Church, 2084 County Rd N, Baldwin WI. This month's meeting will include speaker Bob Sitko; preparing hives for winter; honey and wellness from bee products; and voting.

The meetings are open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend.

For questions contact Paul VanDenMeerendonk at 715-781-0640 or email [vanden@baldwin-telecom.net](mailto:vanden@baldwin-telecom.net).

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## Supervisory Management Workshops Offered in Hudson

This fall, UW-Eau Claire Center for Business Solutions, in collaboration with the UW-River Falls, will present three workshops from the popular Supervisory Management Certificate Program in Hudson, Wisconsin. Designed for managers, supervisors and business owners, these highly-focused and practical workshops may be taken individually or as part of the certificate program requirements. Programs will meet from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Citizens State Bank, 375 Stageline Road.

Specific program details and on-line registration for the four sessions can be found at the following web links:

October 13 & 14, 2011: Supervisory Management Two – <http://www.uwec.edu/CE/programs/supman2Hudson.htm>

November 3 & 4, 2011: Developing Change Resilience – <http://www.uwec.edu/CE/programs/change.htm>

November 17 & 18, 2011: Supervisory Management Three – <http://www.uwec.edu/CE/programs/supman3Hudson.htm>

To register or obtain more information, including program fees and content, contact Steve Isaacson at 715-836-5811 or 800-582-5182, use the Wisconsin Relay System (711).

For additional information visit UW-Eau Claire's Continuing Education Supervisory Management home page at <http://www.uwec.edu/CE/programs/business/smcp.htm>.

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## 45th Parallel Holds 2nd Annual Open House on October 8th

45th Parallel's 2nd Annual Open House is set for Saturday, October 8th from 1-6 p.m. at 1570 Madison Avenue, New Richmond, WI. Free tours of the facility and distilling process will be offered every half hour starting at 1:00 p.m. through 5:30 p.m. The Open House will feature the release of our Madison Avenue Liquor Limoncello.

The event includes free live music provided by Ten Mile Creek and food will be available for purchase from Ready Randy's Catering and Douville Bakery. There will be samples of 45th Parallel's spirits offered during the tours and a cash bar on-site.

45th Parallel produces vodka, gin, whiskey and now limoncello. Over the winter we they will be expansionin of its facility to help increase productive capacity and allow the development of more brands, therefore, this will be the last event in this facility as it is originally constructed.

For more information, visit the website at [www.45thparallelspirits.com](http://www.45thparallelspirits.com), or email at [info@45thparallelspirits.com](mailto:info@45thparallelspirits.com), or 715-246-0565.

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## St. Croix County's Unemployment Rate for August is 5.8%

### Only 7 Counties Have Lower Unemployment Rates than St. Croix

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Scott Baumbach announced the preliminary August unemployment rates for Wisconsin's 72 counties on September 21st. St. Croix County's rate was estimated at 5.8% which is down from the July rate of 6.3% and June's rate of 6.5%. One year ago, the county's unemployment rate was estimated at 6.4%.

DWD said 68 of the state's 72 counties had lower unemployment rates or in August compared to July, and two counties reported no change. Secretary Baumbach reminded job seekers of the online openings at [www.JobCenterWisconsin.com](http://www.JobCenterWisconsin.com) and said, "With a national economic slowdown that is creating challenges for Wisconsin, we remain keenly focused on advancing job creation strategies that will grow the economy."

Only seven counties had unemployment rates lower than St. Croix in August. Dane County recorded the lowest rate at 5.1% (down from 5.4% in July), followed by Iowa at 5.2% (down from 5.5% in July), Buffalo at 5.7% (down from 6.0%), and Pepin also at 5.7%

(down from 6.0%). Menominee County had the highest rate in August at 21.9% (up from 20.2%), followed Rusk at 10.0%, Lincoln at 9.5%, and Kenosha at 9.3%.

Wisconsin's St. Croix Valley is comprised of Polk, St. Croix, and Pierce counties. August's unemployment rate for Pierce was 5.9% (down from 6.5% in July). Polk County's rate was at 7.8% (down from 8.5% in July). The 13-county Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington MN-WI metro area reported an unemployment rate of 6.7% in August compared to 7.5% in July and 6.9% in June. The preliminary (seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate for Wisconsin in August was estimated at 7.9% which is up from July's rate of 7.8% and June's rate of 7.6%. The state's seasonally adjusted rate was 8.2% one year ago.

The preliminary unemployment rate in the U.S. in August was estimated at 9.1%, which is the same rate as July, and down slightly from June's rate of 9.2%. One year ago the U.S. rate was estimated at 9.6%.

August's estimates are preliminary and are subject to revision within the next few weeks.

County	August 2011 Unemployment Rate	Rank	Rate One Year Ago	County	August 2011 Unemployment Rate	Rank	Rate One Year Ago
Barron	7.5%	36	7.4%	Pierce	5.9%	64	6.5%
Chippewa	7.0%	45	6.8%	Polk	7.8%	27	8.3%
Clark	7.7%	34	8.8%	Rusk	10.0%	2	10.7%
Dunn	6.4%	58	6.7%	St. Croix	5.8%	65	6.4%
Eau Claire	6.5%	56	6.8%	Wisconsin	7.9%	---	8.2%
Pepin	5.7%	69	6.1%	Twin Cities	6.7%	---	7.1%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; St. Croix Economic Development Corp.

Note: The 10 counties of western, west central, & northwest Wisconsin comprise Momentum West, a regional economic development & marketing organization; The Twin Cities Metro Area is comprised of 13 counties (11 in Minnesota and St. Croix and Pierce in Wisconsin)

## Remember to Update Your Subscription Preferences

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Please use this link to update your subscription preferences. <http://leepurl.com/fr-09>