Another flood casualty: Vermont jobs

Last month’s devastating floods washed away jobs along with homes, cars, crops, office equipment, and documents. Job Centers serving areas hit hard by the floods saw a jump in regular jobless insurance claims. At the Barre area office, which also serves Montpelier, the number of people receiving benefits nearly doubled from early July through the week that ended Aug. 12. The Newport area saw a similar rise.

Nine counties—Caledonia, Chittenden, Lamoille, Rutland, Orange, Orleans, Washington, Windham, and Windsor—have qualified for federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). This assistance is available only to people who are ineligible for regular jobless benefits, such as self-employed workers. An applicant must first file a regular unemployment insurance claim, and be rejected, before being considered for the federal assistance. No data are available yet on DUA claims, and the deadline for filing has been extended until the end of September. More information can be found at the Vermont Department of Labor.

**THIS MONTH**

Statistics for August, which will come out next month, could provide more clues to how last month’s flooding affected Vermont jobs and employment. July data, which was released late last week, showed employers added almost 3,000 jobs, following declines in May and June. Meanwhile, unemployment dropped to 1.8 percent in July, the second-lowest rate in the nation.)