

# News Release

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## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASED FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE MONTH

**Walkerton, ON** (December 1, 2017) – The unemployment rate for the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula economic region was up 0.3% to 4.3% in November, the fourth consecutive monthly increase since the record low in July. Over the same period, the unemployment rate in Ontario fell by 0.5% points to 5.2%. The local labour pool grew by 3,000 people in November.

“This is good news for our local employers as we have been experiencing a tight labour market over the last several months. More people engaged in workforce activities could mean more jobs being filled.” says Gemma Mendez-Smith, Executive Director of Four County Labour Market Planning Board.

The economic region saw net new jobs of 2,500 in November, continuing an upward trend that began in May of 2017. Nearly all of the increase was in full-time work (+2,200).

In November, the Goods-producing sector increased by 1,900. The largest gains were in Agriculture (+2,000) and Construction (+500), whereas Manufacturing saw the biggest losses (-700).

Employment in the Services-producing sector saw a small increase of 600 in November 2017. More people were working in Transportation and warehousing (+900), Wholesale and retail trade (+700), as well as Education services (+500). At the same time, employment fell in Business, building and other support services (-1,000) and Accommodation and food services (-400).

On a positive note for the area, the Bluewater District School Board hired 22 elementary school teachers and four early childhood educators owing to an increase in enrollment. Abraflex held its grand opening in Paisley and estimates there is room for 200 employees and will hire as demand grows.

SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. opened an office in Port Elgin in anticipation of Bruce Power’s life extension project scheduled to begin in 2020. The location is expected to employ around 35 people.

Meanwhile, the Alexandra Marine and General Hospital recruited six new physicians to Goderich. Blyth Part II Bistro restaurant will open a location in Goderich. Mudtown Station brewpub is slated to open in March 2018 in Owen Sound.

Employers in Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth counties can help us continue to understand their workforce needs by completing the EmployerOne survey, available between January 1-31, 2018. Through these data many local initiatives were implemented based on the needs of employers.