

# Seasonal Jobless

THE UNEMPLOYMENT rate in Santa Cruz County increased .6 percent from September's low of 7 percent.

"The rate is always lowest in September when students leave the workforce and go back to school," said Jeanette Miller, Santa Cruz County labor market analyst. By October, when many of the agriculture jobs are ending, the rate goes back up, according to Miller.

Despite the increase, Santa Cruz County's 7.6 percent rate was still below the California rate of 8.4 percent and the national rate of 8.8 percent.

And even with the unemployment increase, October's rate represented a "dramatic" 9.1 percent decline since the county's worst period of unemployment in February. At that time, 16.7 percent of

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the workforce was unemployed, according to Miller.

Miller said if employment follows traditional patterns, the jobless rate will continue to rise until March when tourism and agriculture again begin creating more jobs. •