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## Ohio joblessness rose during June

### Manufacturing sector lagging

By John Byczkowski  
Enquirer staff writer

Ohio's unemployment rate rose in June as losses in manufacturing mounted and more people came into the work force, the state reported Friday.

The state unemployment rate rose to 5.8 percent in June, seasonally adjusted, up from 5.6 percent in May, and higher than the national rate of 5.6 percent. The number of unemployed across the U.S. grew by 10,000, to 339,000 in June, compared to May.

The number of jobs in the state fell by 14,300 from May to June. Manufacturing lost 3,400 jobs from May to June, bringing jobs lost in that sector to 208,000 since its employment numbers peaked in February 2000.

Among Ohio's 11 metro areas, only three reported increases in the number of jobs compared to a year earlier. Cincinnati gained the most - 1,900 jobs.

Cleveland and Lima posted small increases. The biggest declines were in Toledo, Dayton, Canton and Mansfield.

June typically sees an influx of college students into the work force, but this year there aren't as many jobs waiting, said Dennis Evans, spokesman for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

"There's more people out looking than there are jobs being created," he said.

Ohio's overall work force, however, is shrinking. Compared to June 2003, last month there were 30,000 fewer unemployed but also 42,000 fewer people working. Evans attributed the decline in the work force to the fact that "people are still watching and waiting" for the economy to improve.

Gov. Bob Taft "is concerned we're not bouncing out of this national recession fast enough," said spokesman Orest Holubec.

"Altogether it's not really an encouraging report," said Zach Schiller, senior researcher for Policy Matters Ohio, a nonprofit think tank in Cleveland. As of December, Ohio had lost 281,100 jobs from its peak of 5.6 million in June 2000. Since

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then, Ohio has gained just 17,600 jobs. At that rate, Schiller said, it would take Ohio six years to gain back all the jobs lost during the recession.

In Cincinnati, the unemployment rate fell to 5.3 percent in June, not seasonally adjusted, compared to 5.5 percent a year ago. The region lost 3,000 manufacturing jobs compared to June a year ago but posted gains in health care, leisure, retailing and trade, transportation and utilities.

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