

Wyoming Unemployment Insurance Claims Report

March 2019

Information for Wyoming by Industry and
County of Residence of Claimant

by: Sherry Wen, Principal Economist, Chris McGrath, Senior Statistician, and Michael Moore, Editor
Research & Planning, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

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“Your Source for Wyoming Labor Market Information”

Who We Are

Research & Planning (R&P) functions as an exclusively statistical entity within the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. R&P collects, analyzes, and publishes timely and accurate labor market information (LMI) meeting established statistical standards. We work to make the labor market more efficient by providing the public and the public’s representatives with the information needed for evidence-based, informed decision making.



Wyoming Unemployment Insurance Claims Report, March 2019

Initial Claims Reach Historical Low

by: Michael Moore, Editor, and Sherry Wen, Principal Economist

The 1,389 initial Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims in Wyoming in March 2019 represented the fewest new UI claims in the month of March dating back to at least 1997, the earliest year for which data are available (see Figure A).

Initial claims increased during Wyoming's most recent period of economic downturn, which lasted from second quarter 2015 to fourth quarter 2016 (2015Q2 to 2016Q4¹). However, initial claims have been on a downward trend since September 2016. During 2018 and the first part of 2019, initial claims reached a low level last seen in Wyoming in 2006 and 2007, during the state's most recent period of rapid economic expansion (see Figure B, page 4).

Rapid job growth kept unemployment down during the mid-2000s. From 2004Q1 to 2008Q4, Wyoming's average monthly employment increased at an average rate of 3.5% from prior-year levels during each quarter (Toups, 2019). The current low number of initial claims, however, has less to do with economic growth: from 2017Q3 to 2018Q3, total covered employment increased at an average rate of just 0.5%.

Several factors contribute to the current low level of initial claims. Wyoming's population has dropped each year since 2015 (Liu, 2018), and the state's resident labor force (the number of employed persons plus the number of unemployed persons actively seeking work) has declined from prior-year levels during each month dating back to September 2012 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019).

The concurrent decline in initial UI claims and persons working is likely due in part to people leaving Wyoming's workforce

¹ The Research & Planning (R&P) section of the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services has defined an economic downturn as a period of at least two consecutive quarters of over-the-year decrease in average monthly employment and total wages based on data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

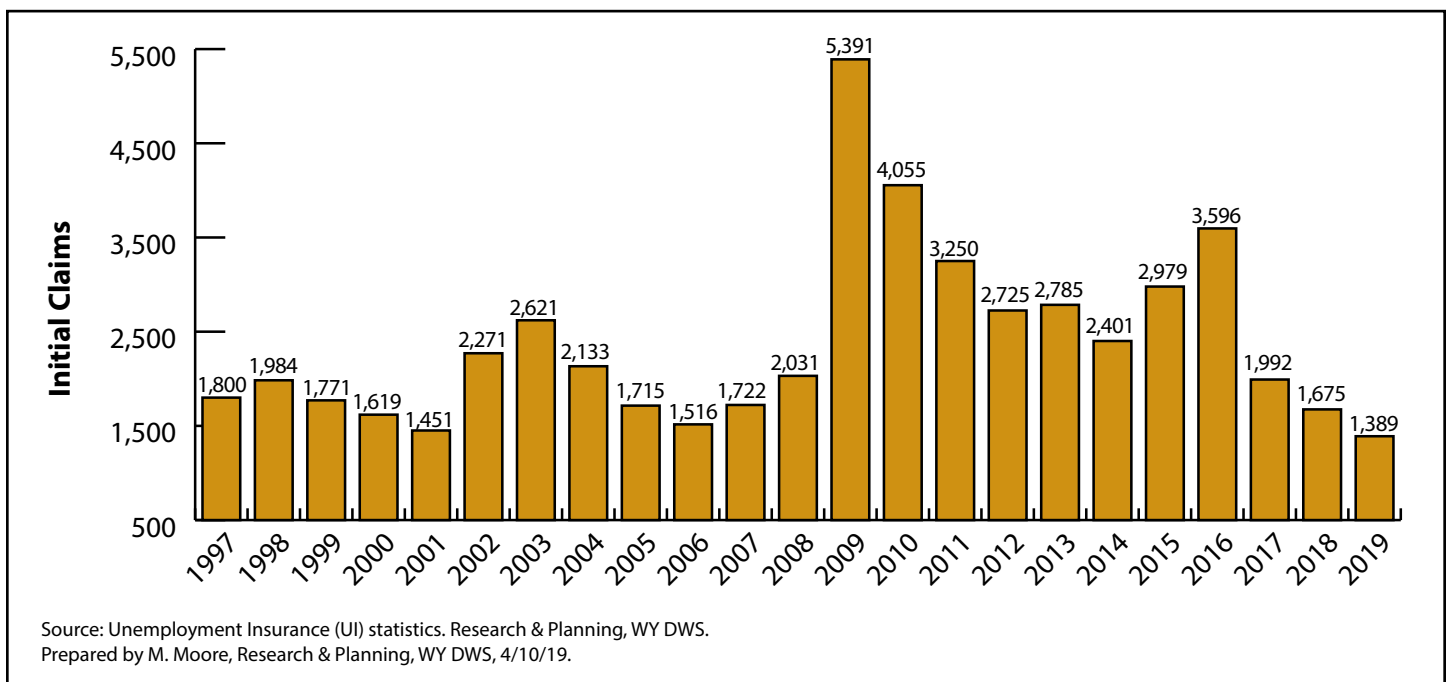


Figure A: Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims for the Month of March, 1997-2019

and quickly finding jobs in other states, and therefore not filing a claim for UI benefits. During Wyoming's most recent economic downturn, surrounding states experienced consistent economic growth (Moore, in press), making it easier for jobseekers to find work elsewhere.

Figure C (see page 5) shows that annual benefit exhaustion rates (number of recipients who exhausted their claims divided by total claimants) were similar in 2017 (23.6%) and 2018 (23.4%). As noted by Wen (in press):

“Fewer UI recipients could be an indication that fewer people lost jobs in 2018 and needed to collect UI benefits as their temporary financial support. But the similar benefit exhaustion rate ... may indicate that job opportunities did not improve much from 2017 to 2018.”

Annual UI claims data are available at <https://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/ui.htm>.

Initial Claims

Table 1 (see page 6) shows that total initial claims decreased from 1,674 in March 2018 to 1,389 in March 2019 (-285, or -17.0%). Most industries experienced a decrease in initial claims over the year (see Figure 1, page 7). The largest decreases were seen in leisure & hospitality (-84, or -25.3%), construction (-68, or -18.0%), and trade, transportation, warehousing, & utilities (-50, or -21.0%). Manufacturing showed the greatest increase in initial claims (29, or 31.2%).

Most counties saw an over-the-year decrease in initial claims, led by Laramie (-47, or -21.3%), Campbell (-39, or -28.8%), and Sweetwater (-23, or -22.6%) counties (see Figure 2, page 7). The number of out-of-state claimants decreased by 102 (-30.6%). Crook County showed the greatest over-the-year increase (23, or 150.0%).

Continued Claims

Statewide continued claims decreased

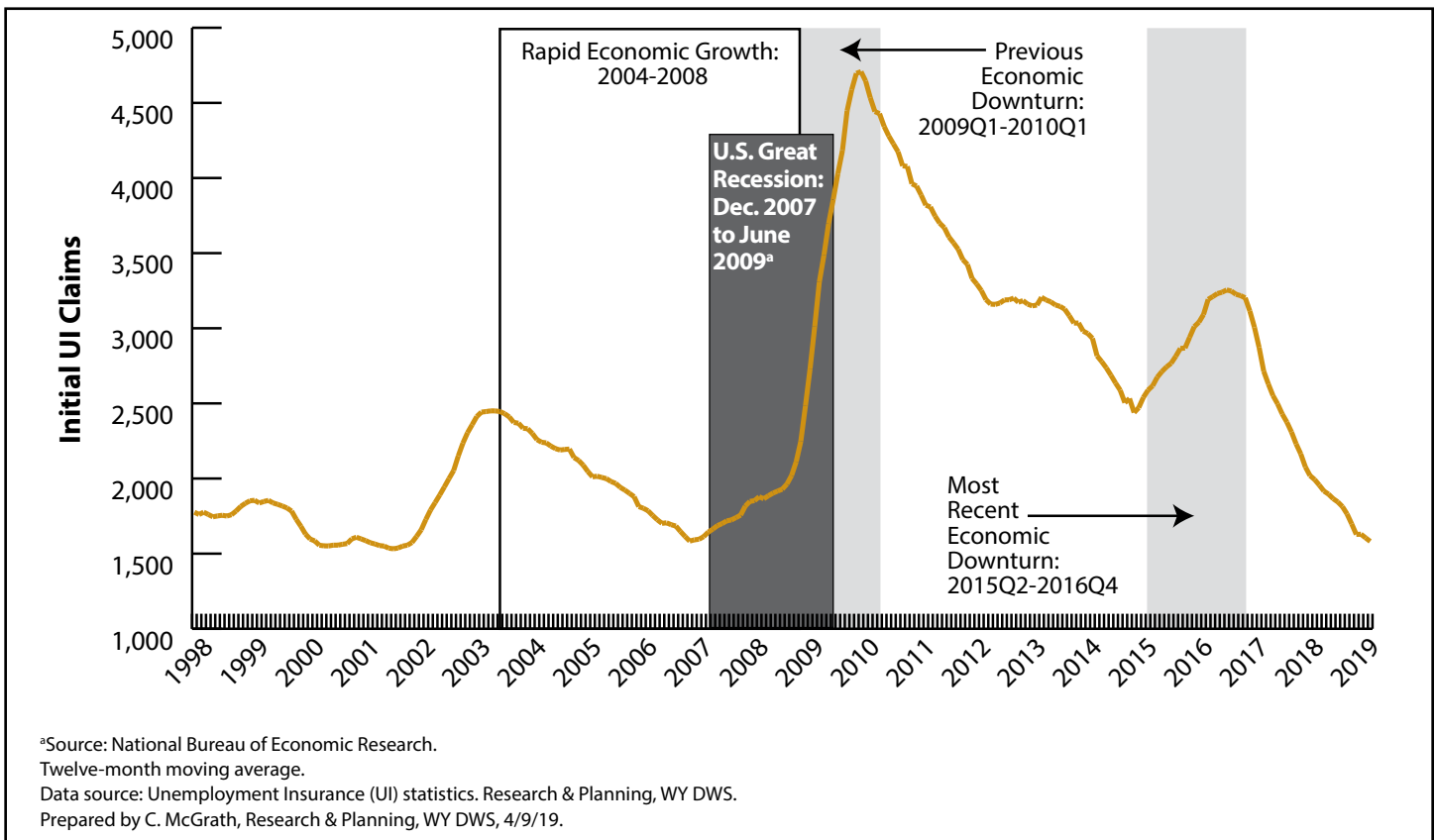


Figure B: Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims in Wyoming, January 1998 to March 2019

by 20.6% (3,761 continued weeks claimed) over the year, and total unique claimants decreased by 17.9% (973 fewer individuals; see Table 2, page 8). The benefit exhaustion rate increased from 6.6% to 12.4%.

Most industries showed noticeable decreases in continued claims, including construction (-1,442, or -23.1%) and leisure & hospitality (-494, or -25.6%). Although mining overall experienced a 13.1% decrease, the oil & gas extraction subsector saw a 128.9% increase (49 weeks) in continued weeks claimed. Continued weeks claimed also increased in information (50, or 44.6%).

Most counties showed substantial decreases in continued weeks claimed, including Laramie (-709, or -28.6%), Natrona (-514, or -29.9%), and Sheridan (-447, or -34.8%) counties (see Figure 4, page 9, and Table 3, page 10). Increases were seen in Goshen (77, or 48.3%) and Weston (11, or 8.8%) counties.

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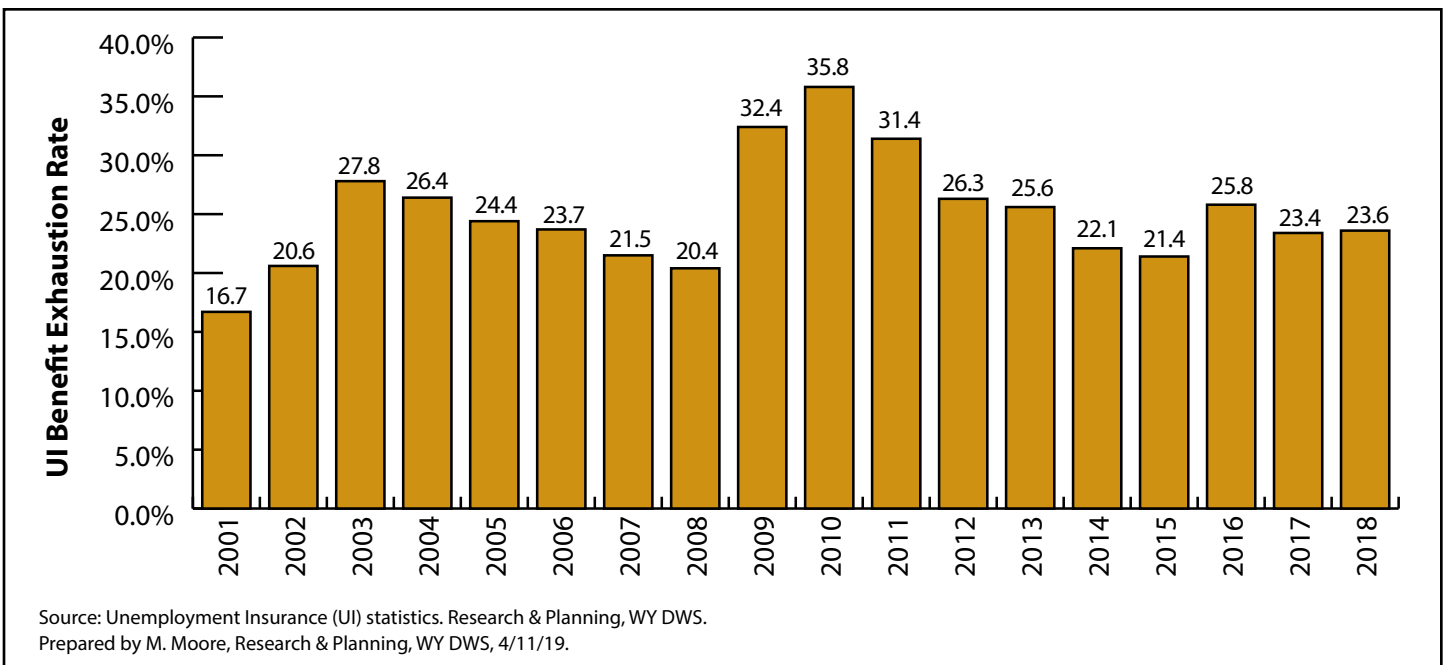


Figure C: Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims for the Month of March, 1997-2019

Table 1: Wyoming Normalized Unemployment Insurance Statistics: Initial Claims

	Claims Filed			Percent Change Claims Filed		Difference
	Mar-19	Feb-19	Mar-18	Mar-19 Feb-19	Mar-19 Mar-18	Mar-19 Mar-18
<u>Wyoming Statewide</u>						
Total Claims Filed	1,389	1,577	1,674	-11.9	-17.0	-285
Goods-Producing	531	792	576	-33.0	-7.8	-45
Natural Resources and Mining (11,21)	99	110	105	-10.0	-5.7	-6
Mining (21)	84	96	95	-12.5	-11.6	-11
Oil & Gas Extraction (211)	5	10	3	-50.0	66.7	2
Construction (23)	309	570	377	-45.8	-18.0	-68
Manufacturing (31 - 33)	122	111	93	9.9	31.2	29
Service-Providing	648	568	837	14.1	-22.6	-189
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (22,42,44-45,48-49)	188	208	238	-9.6	-21.0	-50
Wholesale Trade (42)	36	31	32	16.1	12.5	4
Retail Trade (44 - 45)	102	110	110	-7.3	-7.3	-8
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities (22,48 - 49)	50	67	96	-25.4	-47.9	-46
Information (51)	14	14	10	0.0	40.0	4
Financial Activities (52, 53)	21	31	39	-32.3	-46.2	-18
Professional and Business Services (54 - 56)	89	112	107	-20.5	-16.8	-18
Educational and Health Services (61 - 62)	69	57	75	21.1	-8.0	-6
Leisure and Hospitality (71 - 72)	248	111	332	123.4	-25.3	-84
Other Services, except Public Admin. (81)	12	30	30	-60.0	-60.0	-18
Government	73	94	146	-22.3	-50.0	-73
Federal Government	24	31	72	-22.6	-66.7	-48
State Government	7	12	14	-41.7	-50.0	-7
Local Government	41	49	59	-16.3	-30.5	-18
Local Education	8	16	19	-50.0	-57.9	-11
Unclassified	136	122	113	11.5	20.4	23
<u>Laramie County (Place of Residence)</u>						
Total Claims Filed	172	206	218	-16.5	-21.1	-46
Goods-Producing	66	107	76	-38.3	-13.2	-10
Construction	59	100	71	-41.0	-16.9	-12
Service-Providing	76	77	117	-1.3	-35.0	-41
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (22,42,44-45,48-49)	24	24	51	0.0	-52.9	-27
Financial Activities (52, 53)	3	3	8	0.0	-62.5	-5
Professional and Business Services (54 - 56)	17	23	23	-26.1	-26.1	-6
Educational and Health Services (61 - 62)	12	12	11	0.0	9.1	1
Leisure and Hospitality (71 - 72)	12	6	16	100.0	-25.0	-4
Government	8	8	14	0.0	-42.9	-6
Unclassified	20	12	9	66.7	122.2	11
<u>Natrona County (Place of Residence)</u>						
Total Claims Filed	215	253	230	-15.0	-6.5	-15
Goods-Producing	92	135	94	-31.9	-2.1	-2
Construction	64	107	72	-40.2	-11.1	-8
Service-Providing	109	107	126	1.9	-13.5	-17
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (22,42,44-45,48-49)	40	36	39	11.1	2.6	1
Financial Activities (52, 53)	3	7	9	-57.1	-66.7	-6
Professional and Business Services (54 - 56)	18	15	30	20.0	-40.0	-12
Educational and Health Services (61 - 62)	16	10	17	60.0	-5.9	-1
Leisure and Hospitality (71 - 72)	22	24	21	-8.3	4.8	1
Government	5	5	5	0.0	0.0	0
Unclassified	8	5	4	60.0	100.0	4

Figure 1: Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims by Major Industry, March 2019

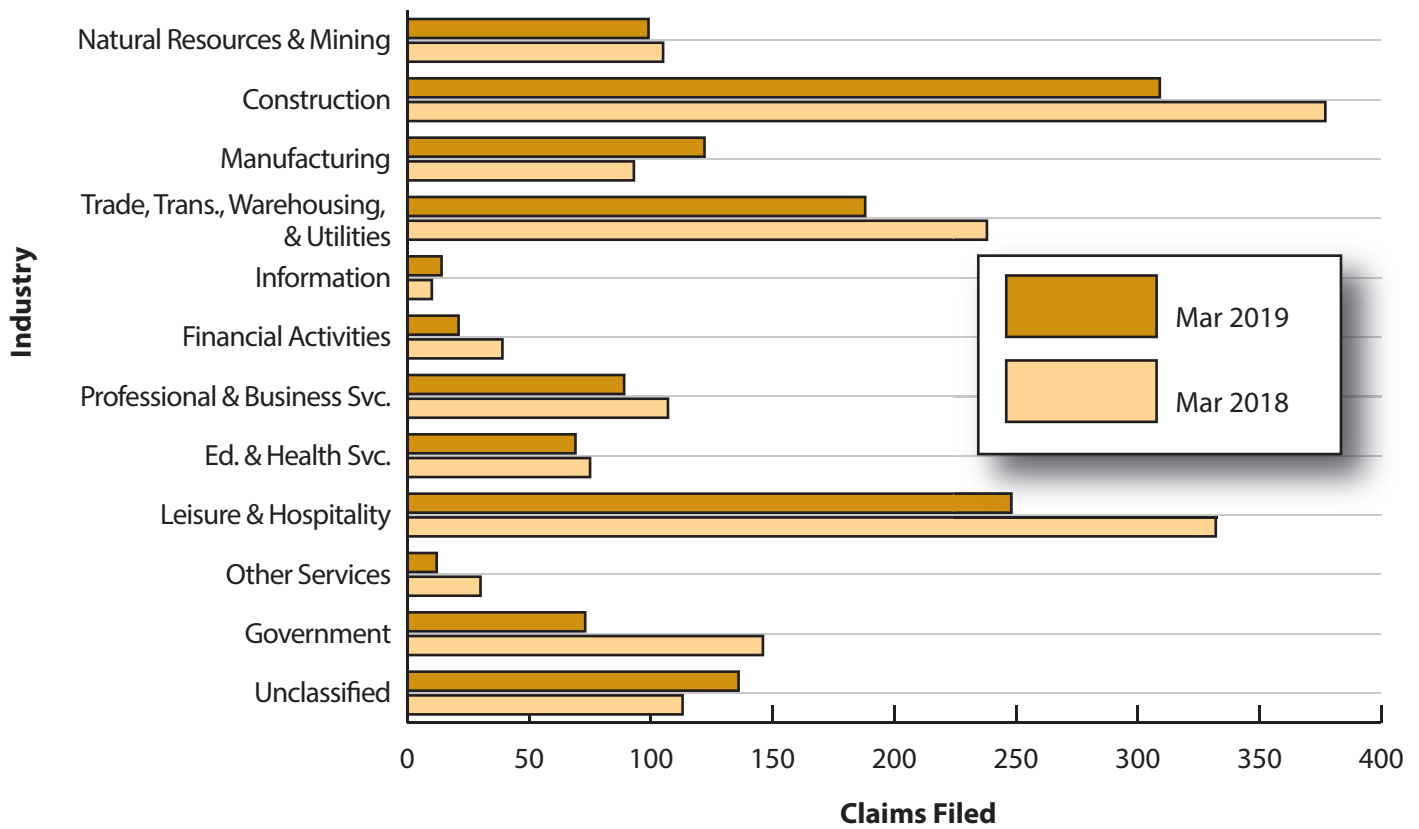
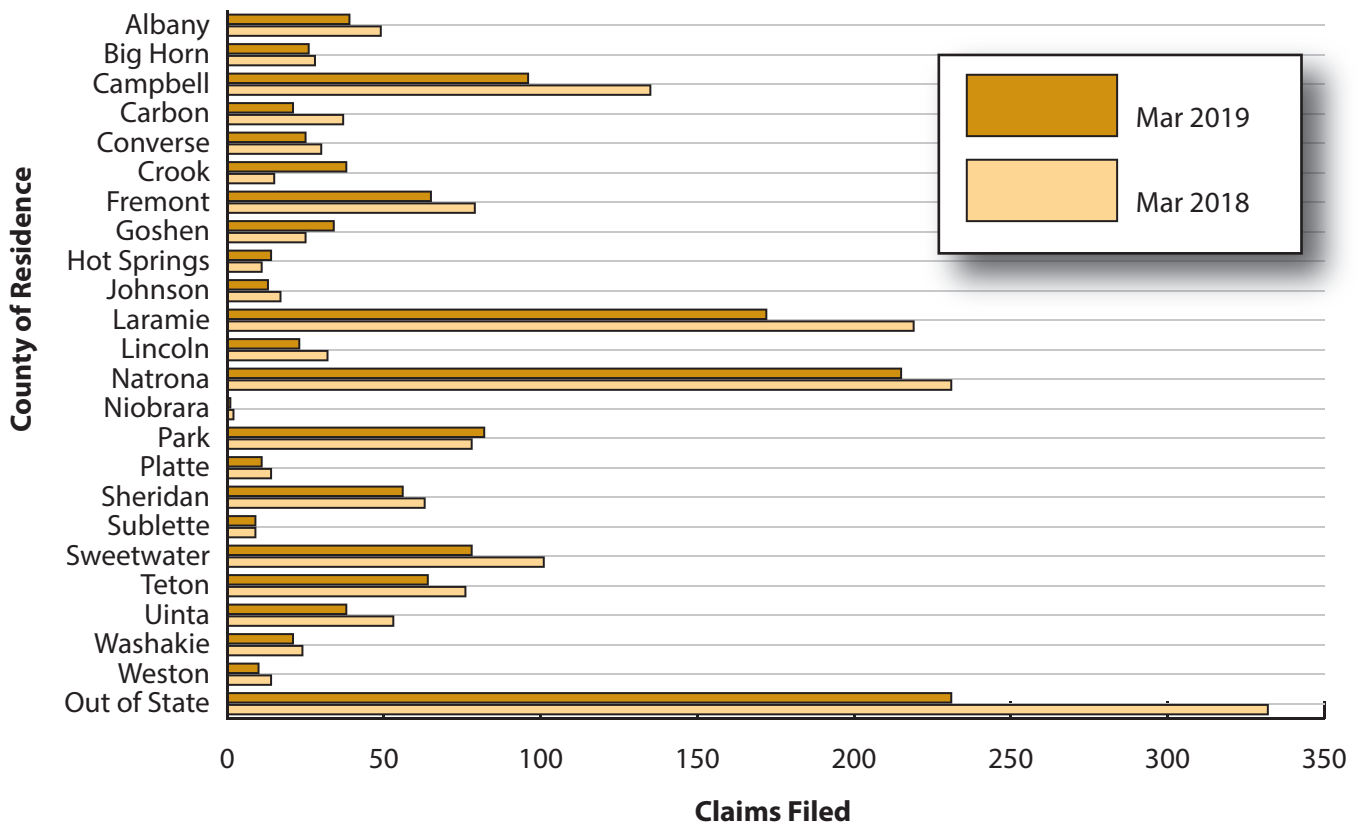


Figure 2: Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims by County of Residence, March 2019



Source: Research & Planning, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. Retrieved from <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/ui.htm>.

Table 2: Wyoming Normalized Unemployment Insurance Statistics: Continued Claims

	Claims Filed			Percent Change Claims		Difference
	Mar-19	Feb-19	Mar-18	Mar-19 Feb-19	Mar-19 Mar-18	Mar-19 Mar-18
Wyoming Statewide						
Total Continued Weeks Claimed	14,463	15,795	18,224	-8.4	-20.6	-3,761
Total Unique Claimants	4,458	4,627	5,431	-3.7	-17.9	-973
Benefit Exhaustions	553	492	357	12.4	54.9	196
Benefit Exhaustion Rates	12.4%	10.6%	6.6%	1.8%	5.8%	
Goods-Producing	6,368	6,934	8,028	-8.2	-20.7	-1,660
Natural Resources and Mining (11,21)	757	821	944	-7.8	-19.8	-187
Mining (21)	624	658	718	-5.2	-13.1	-94
Oil & Gas Extraction (211)	87	79	38	10.1	128.9	49
Construction (23)	4,801	5,411	6,243	-11.3	-23.1	-1,442
Manufacturing (31 - 33)	808	701	840	15.3	-3.8	-32
Service-Providing	5,757	6,190	7,316	-7.0	-21.3	-1,559
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (22,42,44-45,48-49)	1,590	1,697	1,992	-6.3	-20.2	-402
Wholesale Trade (42)	244	233	326	4.7	-25.2	-82
Retail Trade (44 - 45)	875	891	1,096	-1.8	-20.2	-221
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities (22,48 - 49)	471	573	570	-17.8	-17.4	-99
Information (51)	162	166	112	-2.4	44.6	50
Financial Activities (52, 53)	220	218	431	0.9	-49.0	-211
Professional and Business Services (54 - 56)	1,559	1,828	1,845	-14.7	-15.5	-286
Educational and Health Services (61 - 62)	532	535	740	-0.6	-28.1	-208
Leisure and Hospitality (71 - 72)	1,433	1,496	1,927	-4.2	-25.6	-494
Other Services, except Public Admin. (81)	254	241	261	5.4	-2.7	-7
Government	1,379	1,583	1,802	-12.9	-23.5	-423
Federal Government	724	836	872	-13.4	-17.0	-148
State Government	107	124	231	-13.7	-53.7	-124
Local Government	547	622	698	-12.1	-21.6	-151
Local Education	88	88	155	0.0	-43.2	-67
Unclassified	958	1,086	1,077	-11.8	-11.0	-119
Laramie County (Place of Residence)						
Total Continued Weeks Claimed	1,767	1,958	2,476	-9.8	-28.6	-709
Total Unique Claimants	541	583	748	-7.2	-27.7	-207
Goods-Producing	844	942	1,187	-10.4	-28.9	-343
Construction	803	906	1,027	-11.4	-21.8	-224
Service-Providing	718	797	1,067	-9.9	-32.7	-349
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (22,42,44-45,48-49)	182	238	362	-23.5	-49.7	-180
Financial Activities (52, 53)	26	27	97	-3.7	-73.2	-71
Professional and Business Services (54 - 56)	240	276	311	-13.0	-22.8	-71
Educational and Health Services (61 - 62)	117	102	150	14.7	-22.0	-33
Leisure and Hospitality (71 - 72)	56	61	95	-8.2	-41.1	-39
Government	106	116	127	-8.6	-16.5	-21
Unclassified	98	100	94	-2.0	4.3	4
Natrona County (Place of Residence)						
Total Continued Weeks Claimed	1,951	2,113	2,465	-7.7	-20.9	-514
Total Unique Claimants	614	645	755	-4.8	-18.7	-141
Goods-Producing	833	890	1,121	-6.4	-25.7	-288
Construction	676	730	922	-7.4	-26.7	-246
Service-Providing	1,021	1,096	1,226	-6.8	-16.7	-205
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (22,42,44-45,48-49)	330	312	338	5.8	-2.4	-8
Financial Activities (52, 53)	59	65	93	-9.2	-36.6	-34
Professional and Business Services (54 - 56)	255	321	348	-20.6	-26.7	-93
Educational and Health Services (61 - 62)	135	127	175	6.3	-22.9	-40
Leisure and Hospitality (71 - 72)	154	166	192	-7.2	-19.8	-38
Government	45	49	86	-8.2	-47.7	-41
Unclassified	50	75	31	-33.3	61.3	19

Figure 3: Continued Unemployment Insurance Claims by Major Industry, March 2019

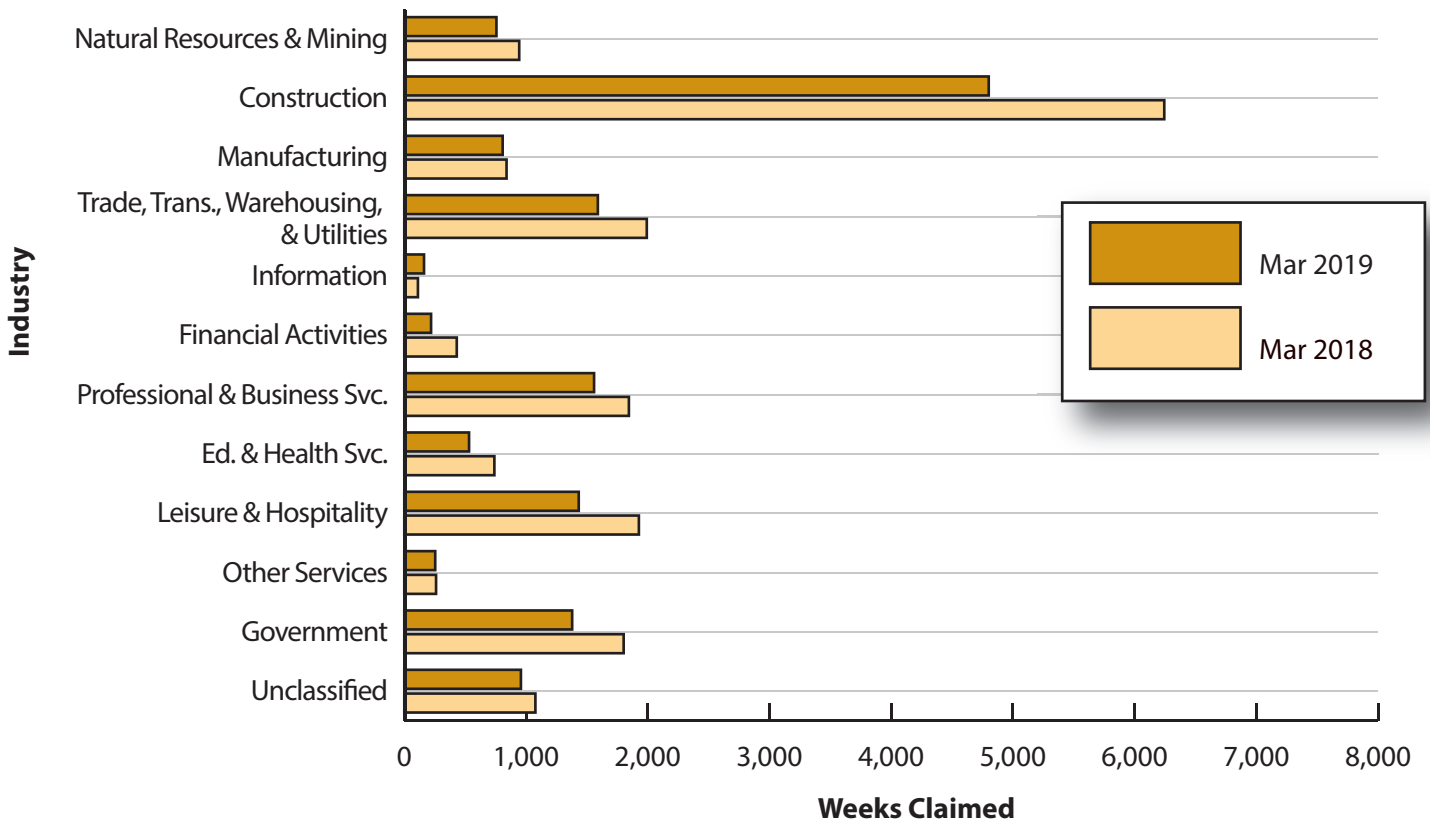
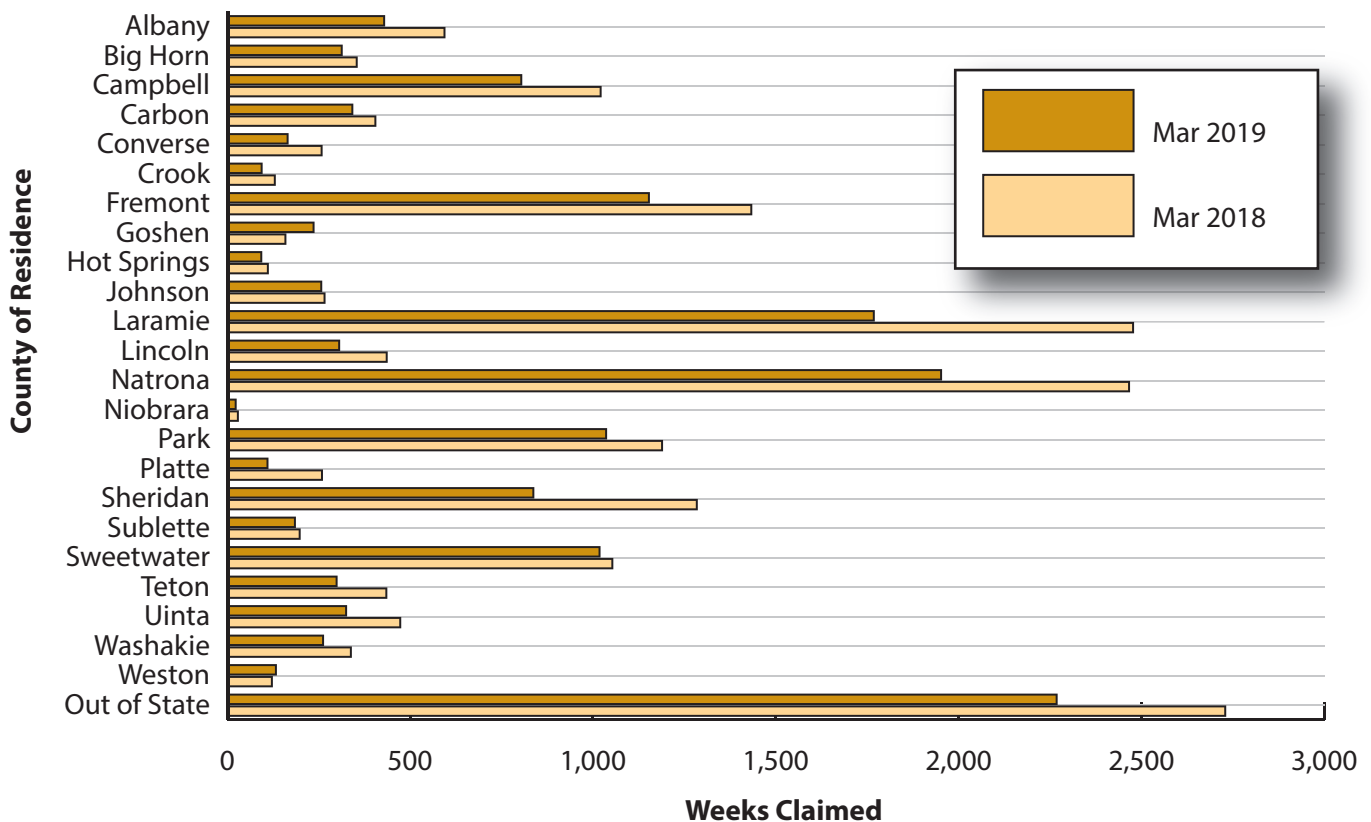


Figure 4: Continued Unemployment Insurance Claims by County of Residence, March 2019



Source: Research & Planning, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. Retrieved from <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/ui.htm>.

**Table 3: Wyoming Normalized^a Unemployment Statistics:
Continued Claims by County of Residence, March 2019**

County	Mar 19	Mar 18	Over-the-Year Change	
			N	%
Albany	429	594	-166	-27.9
Big Horn	313	354	-41	-11.6
Campbell	804	1,021	-217	-21.2
Carbon	342	405	-63	-15.5
Converse	165	258	-93	-36.1
Crook	94	130	-36	-27.5
Fremont	1,153	1,433	-280	-19.6
Goshen	236	159	77	48.3
Hot Springs	93	111	-18	-16.5
Johnson	257	266	-10	-3.7
Laramie	1,768	2,477	-709	-28.6
Lincoln	306	436	-130	-29.8
Natrona	1,952	2,466	-514	-20.9
Niobrara	23	29	-6	-22.2
Park	1,036	1,189	-153	-12.8
Platte	110	259	-148	-57.3
Sheridan	837	1,284	-447	-34.8
Sublette	185	198	-13	-6.6
Sweetwater	1,018	1,053	-36	-3.4
Teton	299	435	-136	-31.3
Uinta	325	473	-148	-31.4
Washakie	262	338	-76	-22.4
Weston	133	122	11	8.8
Unknown	57	5	52	960.0
Out of State	2,268	2,729	-461	-16.9
Normalized Total^a	14,463	18,225	-3,762	-20.6
Real Total^b	13,361	16,836	-3,475	-20.6

^aAn average month is considered 4.33 weeks. If a month has four weeks, the normalization factor is 1.0825. If the month has five weeks, the normalization factor is 0.866. The number of raw claims is multiplied by the normalization factor to achieve the normalized claims counts.

^bRaw claims data that have not been multiplied by the normalization factor.
N/D = Not discloseable due to confidentiality.

All totals are subject to rounding error and may not add to the sum of their respective components.

The table above conforms to Wyoming Employment Security Law - Wyoming Statute 27-3-603 regarding confidentiality.

Source: Research & Planning, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services. Retrieved from <http://doe.state.wy.us/LMI/ui.htm>