

Unemployment rate for electrical engineers soars to new record

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The unemployment rate for U.S. electrical and electronics engineers (EEs) hit a new record in the second quarter, while the rate for all engineers increased for a second straight quarter, according to data released last week by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

"Technology drives our economy, which means engineering unemployment is a bellwether for recovery and job creation," IEEE-USA President Gordon Day said. "These new data suggest we've got a long way to go as the United States attempts to regain its economic footing."

The news for EEs was particularly bad as the jobless rate more than doubled from 4.1 percent in the first quarter to a record-high 8.6 percent in the second. The previous quarterly record was 7 percent, in the first quarter of 2003.

For all engineers, the unemployment rate jumped from 3.9 percent in the first quarter to 5.5 percent in the second quarter. The rate for computer professionals steadied at 5.4 percent, after a significant jump in the first quarter. The second-quarter [unemployment rate](#) for all professional workers showed a modest uptick, from 3.7 percent to 4.3 percent.

The BLS reports that 29,000 EEs were unemployed in the second quarter, up from the first-quarter figure of 13,000. On a small positive note, the number of employed EEs seems to have stabilized, actually

rising 2.3 percent quarter-to-quarter, but at levels well below those of the past decade.

"Taken together, these data may suggest that engineers laid off last year and early this year are having trouble securing the new engineering jobs being created," Day said.

Source: IEEE

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