

## MCKENZIE COUNTY'S ECONOMY AT A GLANCE

If it seems like the economy is growing in McKenzie County, that's because it is. Now it's more than just a visual impression; the county has the numbers to show its growth. Daniel Stenberg, the McKenzie County Economic Development Coordinator is releasing monthly "Economy at a Glance" stats for the county and he said the numbers are encouraging. "It's a precise and easy way for people to see what is happening."

### EMPLOYMENT

Among the highlights in this first report is the unemployment rate of 2.2%. That's the lowest it's been for many months and indicates it is a tight job market. Stenberg said to help relieve the pressure to connect workers with open jobs, the county is hosting its first ever job fair June 14th. "We've got a lot of construction jobs that are open," Stenberg said. "Now oil companies are looking for experienced workers. Before they were hiring any warm body, now they want experience."

### YOUNG FAMILIES

Stenberg said the call for workers is expected to continue. In Watford City, two new "dollar stores," a new Hardee's Restaurant, a new bank and an expanded nursing home will need employees. The growth of jobs in the oil and the service industries has been good for the housing market. "Families are moving here, not just single guys," Stenberg said.

The median age of the county has dropped from 38 to 30.6. The growing number of young families in the region has kept school enrollment numbers growing. Stenberg said there are plenty of apartments and he's looking for more single-family homes to be built. Infrastructure needs in the county have largely been met. A couple smaller projects may be done yet this year, but overall, the county and especially Watford City have built up enough to handle growth.

### TOURISM

Tourism is picking up in Watford City. Regional and statewide conferences are scheduled for the city and its new Rough Rider Center. A renewed effort to energize the Maah Daah Hey trail and its mountain bike opportunities is bringing in people from across the United States. At least seven mountain bike races are planned for this year.

