

SLUMPING  
ECONOMYAlberta  
EI claims  
increase  
by 55%

The number of Albertans claiming employment insurance benefits grew again in September, and is now 55 per cent higher than a year earlier, Statistics Canada said Wednesday.

More than 90,300 unemployed workers in the province collected regular benefits — three times the rate of 2014 — as the weak economy produced more layoffs. In Calgary, almost 30,000 people collected jobless benefits in September, up 59 per cent from a year earlier.

In a research note on Wednesday, ATB Financial said the rising September numbers don't include the thousands of Albertans no longer collecting cheques after exhausting their eligible weeks of benefits.

"Despite the federal government extending the period of eligibility for Alberta and other areas hard hit by the oil downturn, eventually the benefits do run out," the bank said.



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The federal government in July extended the number of weeks that recipients in southern Alberta could collect benefits.

The number of EI beneficiaries nationally in September rose 5.1 per cent from a year earlier to 571,800.

By occupation, the largest number of September claimants' last job was in trades, transport or equipment operators, at 200,700.

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