

The N.C. Department of Transportation is improving safety at intersections when a traffic signal malfunctions and defaults into a flashing mode. The department has begun modifying its traffic signals so they will revert to a flashing red in every direction whenever there is a problem, such as an equipment failure or a perceived error, that disrupts their normal operation. Drivers should treat this kind of flashing mode like a conventional all-way stop. "We are making this change to improve the safety of our intersections and provide a consistent display when the signal is not operating normally," said Nick Zinser, NCDOT's Western Region Signals Engineer based in Garner. "If a signal is in flashing mode or dark due to power loss, it becomes an all-way stop condition for vehicles and pedestrians." Previously, the department used a yellow-red flashing mode when a signal malfunctioned. In this case, the main corridor with the heavier traffic received a flashing yellow for drivers to cautiously proceed, while the side-street drivers received a flashing red instructing them to come to a complete stop and wait until there was a safe gap in traffic. NCDOT has more than 9,000 signalized intersections across the state, including those operated by municipal agreements in several cities. The department will phase in this change over the next year as part of the preventative maintenance it already conducts on traffic signals.

Anson County's March Unemployment Rate

Anson County Anson County's unemployment rate for March was 4.0%, the third month in a row at that rate. Anson County ranked #66 of the 100 counties statewide (low to high). The February rate was also 4.0%. Anson's total labor force in March was 10,496, with 10,071 employed and 425 unemployed. In February the total labor force was 10,315, with 9,900 employed and 415 unemployed. Here are other past rates in Anson County: **2024:** January 4.0%. **2023:** December 3.8%; November 4.1%; October 4%; September 3.8%; August 4.2%; July 4.2%; June 4.2%; May 4.0%; April 3.6%; March 3.9%; February 4%; January 4.3%. **2022:** December 4.0%; November 4.6%; October 4.9%; September 4.2%; August 4.9%; July 4.7%; June 5.3%; May 4.7%; April 4.6%; March 4.9%; February 5.1%; January 5.1%. **2021:** December 4.4%; November 4.7%; October 5.2%; September 4.9%; August 5.8%; July 6.5%; June 6.1%; May 5.5%; April 5.4%; March 5.9%; February 7.5%; January 7.7%. The **2020** rates were: December 7.1%; November 7.2%; October 7.2%; September 8.5%; August 8%; July 10%; June 7.9%; May 10.1%; and April 8.2%. In March 2020 the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%, just before it was affected by the pandemic.

Statewide Statewide the unemployment rate for March was 3.7%. In February it was also 3.7%. Here are other statewide past rates: **2024:** January 3.6%. **2023:** December 3.2%; November 3.4%; October 3.3%; September 3.2%; August 3.6%; July 3.6%; June 3.6%; May 3.4%; April 3.1%; March 3.5%; February 3.6%; January 3.7%. **2022:** December 3.2%; November 3.8%; October 3.9%; September 3.3%; August 3.9%; July 3.7%; June 4.1%; May 3.6%; April 3.4%; March 3.6%; February 3.7%; January 3.8%. **2021:** December 3.2%; November 3.4%; October 3.6%; September 3.8%; August 4.4%; July 4.6%; June 4.9%; May 4.5%; April 4.4%; March 4.6%; February 5.6%; January 6%. **2020:** December 6%; November and October 6.1%; September 7%; August 6.8%; July 8.9%.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in 44 of North Carolina's counties in March 2024, increased in 22, and remained unchanged in 34. Hyde County had the highest unemployment rate at 7.6 percent while Greene County had the lowest at 2.8 percent.

Six of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases, four decreased, and five remained unchanged. Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount had the highest rate at 5.0 percent while Asheville had the lowest at 3.0 percent. The not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 3.7 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in 72 counties, decreased in 11, and remained unchanged in 17. Fourteen metro areas experienced rate increases over the year and one decreased.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in March by 45,082 to 5,094,400, while those unemployed increased by 1,588 to 195,758. Since March 2023, the number of workers employed statewide increased 46,893, while those unemployed increased 15,025.

It is important to note that employment estimates are subject to large seasonal patterns; therefore, it is advisable to focus on over-the-year changes in the not seasonally adjusted estimates.

Atrium Women's Care Mobile Health Event is Saturday

'Drive to Thrive' event will provide a wide range of services

Atrium Health Women's Care Drive to Thrive is mobile care unit that provides a range of women's care services in a warm, welcoming environment. It will be in the front lot of Atrium Health Anson this coming Saturday, May 18, from 9:00 a.m. until 2 p.m. **Atrium Health Anson is located at 2301 US Highway 74 West in Wadesboro.**

- Services include:
- Cervical cancer screening (Pap smear)
 - Screening for urinary tract infections
 - Screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections
 - Birth control (contraception), including same-day access to long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs), like intrauterine devices (IUDs)
 - First-time prenatal visits, if not established with an OB/GYN
 - Postpartum visits
 - Ultrasounds
 - Mammogram referrals
 - Social worker on-site to help connect with other resources
- Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are recommended. You can call 704-468-0137 to schedule an appointment. Visit [AtriumHealth.org/MobileHealth](https://www.AtriumHealth.org/MobileHealth) or scan the QR code for the Drive to Thrive mobile health schedule, locations and more information. The website includes information on the Community Sliding Fee Discount Program that can provide up to a full 100% discount for qualifying patients.

Horse Owners Encouraged to Act Now to Vaccinate Against Mosquito-borne Diseases and Rabies

Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler is encouraging equine owners to have their animals vaccinated against Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis and West Nile Virus. "Mosquito-breeding season in North Carolina lasts from spring until the first frost and horses are at risk if not properly vaccinated," Troxler said. "EEE is fatal 90 percent of the time in horses and WNV has a fatality rate of 30 percent. However, both diseases are preventable by vaccination." So far this year we have had no cases of EEE or WNV, but last year there were seven cases of EEE, Troxler added. State Veterinarian Dr. Mike Martin recommends that equine owners talk to their veterinarians about an effective vaccination protocol to protect horses from mosquito-borne diseases. The combination vaccination initially requires multiple injections for horses, mules and donkeys that have no prior vaccination history. Mosquitoes can breed in any puddle that lasts for more than four days, so removing any source of standing water can reduce the chance of exposing animals to WNV or EEE. Keeping horses in stalls at night, using insect screens and fans, and turning off lights after dusk can also help reduce exposure to mosquitoes. Insect repellants can be effective if used according to the manufacturer's instructions. Symptoms of EEE include impaired vision, aimless wandering, head pressing, circling, inability to swallow, irregular staggering gait, paralysis, convulsions and death. Once a horse has been bitten by an infected mosquito, it may take three to 10 days for symptoms to appear. Symptoms of WNV include fever, weakness or paralysis of hind limbs, impaired vision, head pressing, seizures and aimless wandering. People, horses and birds can become infected from a bite by a mosquito carrying these diseases, but there is no evidence that horses can transmit the viruses to other horses, birds or people through direct contact. Equine care also includes keeping up to date on equine infectious anemia (EIA) testing, commonly referred to as the Coggins test. "Since January there have been three cases of EIA in North Carolina. There is no vaccine and no cure for this disease so testing annually is important," Troxler added. "It's also a great time to make sure your animal is current on its rabies vaccination," Troxler said. "So far this year we have had two positive cases of rabies in livestock. All livestock are naturally curious animals, which puts them at risk for a bite if a rabid animal gets through their fence line."

Mobile Health Clinic Offers Convenient Health Care for You and Your Family

The Atrium Mobile Health Clinic operates two days a week in Anson County. No appointments are necessary, walk-ins only. Please wear a mask. From treating minor injuries like sprains and cuts, to diagnosing long-term diseases like diabetes, the mobile clinic provides health care services in state-of-the-art mobile care units. They welcome patients age 2 and up.

- Every 2nd & 4th Monday of the month, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the HOLLA! Community Center, located at 229 East Main Street in Morven
- Every 1st & 3rd Monday of the month, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Burnsville Fire Station, located at 13380 Highway 742 North.

The Mobile Health Clinic offers diagnosis and treatment for:

- Short-term health problems like sprains, cuts and infections, including flu and strep throat.
- Long-lasting diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and arthritis.
- Minor injuries, like sprains and cuts.

Additional wellness services offered are:

- Help connecting with resources for non-health care needs, such as food and transportation assistance.
- Some recommended screenings and procedures will be referred to Atrium Health facilities in the area.

Need care but can't pay? They can help. Visit [AtriumHealth.org/MobileHealth](https://www.AtriumHealth.org/MobileHealth) for more information and location updates.

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The Crawford King Panel 5 Piece Bedroom Set in Grey includes a panel bed, dresser with mirror, chest and nightstand. The bed is crafted from solid pine and acacia wood, with an upholstered headboard. Each piece is carefully designed with function and style. All case pieces are constructed with beautiful, dark square knobs, ball bearing drawer glides and the top drawers are lined with felt. The three-drawer nightstand includes one power plug and two usb port for bedside charging.

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