The Texas economy continues to expand, with employment growing at a 3.2 percent annual rate in August. Texas existing-home sales increased in August, while single-family permits and housing starts declined. Texas exports edged up in July. Manufacturing activity in September rose at a faster rate than in August, according to the Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey.

Texas gained 30,700 jobs in August after adding 39,700 jobs in July. Current Texas employment stands at 11.6 million, according to the payroll survey (CES).

The Texas unemployment rate rose to 5.3 percent in August. The Texas rate continues to be lower than the U.S. rate, which fell to 6.1 percent in August.

Texas existing-home sales increased 1.8 percent in August and are up 1.5 percent year over year. Sales in all the major metro areas increased from July levels.

Single-family housing construction permits fell 3.9 percent in August after rising 2 percent in July and are up 6.8 percent year over year. Texas housing starts, which include single-family and multifamily starts, declined 3 percent in August after surging 41.6 percent in July and are up 32.1 percent from last year.

Home inventories held steady at 3.6 months of available supply in August, below their year-ago level of 3.9 months.

Monthly Texas exports rose 4.5 percent from June to July after falling 0.2 percent from May to June. July exports were 7.6 percent higher than year-earlier levels.
The West Texas Intermediate crude oil price fell to $93.03 per barrel in September and was down 12.4 percent year over year.

Natural gas prices edged up to $3.92 per million Btu in September, a 1 percent increase from the August level. The price was 8.3 percent higher than in September 2013.

The Texas rig count rose to 902 in September from 900 in August and was up 7.8 percent year over year.

The Texas Leading Index, which uses key economic indicators to forecast employment growth, rose 2.5 percent from May to July, and nearly all components rose during the period.

Texas factory activity increased again in September, according to business executives responding to the Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey. The production index, a key measure of state manufacturing conditions, rose markedly from 6.8 to 17.6, indicating output grew at a faster pace than in August.

The Dallas Fed conducts the monthly Texas Manufacturing Outlook Survey to obtain a timely assessment of the state's factory activity.

NOTE: Data may not match previously published numbers due to data revisions.

SOURCES: Employment: Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Current Employment Statistics (CES); Texas Workforce Commission; seasonal and other adjustments by Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas; Housing: Multiple Listing Service; U.S. Census Bureau; Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ. All housing data are seasonally adjusted; Energy: Wall Street Journal; Baker Hughes; Texas Leading Index: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Data are seasonally adjusted; Texas Manufacturing Production Index: Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Data are seasonally adjusted.

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