

Key Region 6W Findings and Analysis*
From JOBS NOW's Updated *Cost of Living in Minnesota* Research**

- The average annual cost of meeting basic needs for a family of four with two workers is about \$50,500. To cover these costs each worker must earn \$12.14 per hour.
- **Forty-three percent of jobs in Region 6W—almost 9,000 jobs—pay less than a family-supporting wage of 12.14 per hour.*****
- At the minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, a couple with two children would have to work 134 hours a week to meet basic needs.
- If one parent stays home with the children in a family of four, the other must find a job that pays \$14.45 per hour to cover basic needs. Fifty-seven percent of jobs in Region 6W pay less.
- If the purchasing power of the minimum wage had kept pace with inflation since the late 1960s, it would be \$9.95 per hour. **In the Upper Minnesota Valley, a quarter of the jobs—more than 5,000 jobs—pay less than \$9.95 per hour.******
- A single person with no dependents must earn \$11.09 per hour to meet basic needs. Thirty-six percent of Region 6W jobs pay less.
- The annual cost of basic needs for a single person with one child is about \$32,000—more than twice the federal poverty line. To cover these costs a person must earn \$16.33 per hour.

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* Economic Region 6W consists of the following Upper Minnesota Valley counties: Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac Qui Parle, Swift and Yellow Medicine.

** For a PDF version of the 2009 *Cost of Living in Minnesota* report, go to www.jobsnowcoalition.org.

*** Wage data were compiled by the Labor Market Information Office of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for the second quarter of 2009.

**** At \$7.25 per hour, the minimum wage has lost more than a quarter of its purchasing power since 1968, when it was \$1.60 per hour. If it had kept pace with inflation, it would be \$9.95 per hour in 2009 dollars. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator is on the following web site: <http://www.bls.gov/bls/inflation.htm>