

3.4 TRADE AND SERVICES SECTORS continued

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Employment in both wholesale and retail trade has increased from an average of 2,500 in 1972 to approximately 3,000 in 1976 in Eddy County alone. In Lea County, 1972 employment in both wholesale and retail trade was just under 3,600. In 1976, employment in this sector moved close to 4,400 people. Thus, the trade sector in the two-county area has shown substantial increase since 1972.

There were 835 establishments operating in the area of services--hotels, motels, barber shops, advertising, business services, repair shops, etc.--at the time of the 1972 Census of Business. In that year these establishments were doing an annual business of just over \$32.6 million. The 835 establishments represented just over 10 percent of the total 8,273 such establishments throughout the State. However, their volume of about \$32.6 million was only about 4.3 percent of the total volume of such establishments in New Mexico. Therefore, the average size of these businesses is somewhat below the state average. As in the trade sector, activity in the services sector has increased substantially since the 1972 Census of Business. In 1972 service sector employment in Eddy County was just less than 1,900. Preliminary estimates for Eddy County in 1976 put that employment at approximately 2,500, a substantial increase during the four-year period. In Lea County service sector employment is somewhat smaller than that in Eddy County. In 1972 that employment was slightly less than 1,800. Nevertheless, preliminary estimates for 1976 place employment in that sector at approximately 2,300 individuals, a substantial increase.

Analysis of the trade and services sectors indicates a steady increase in overall economic activity in Eddy County during the last three or four