BUSINESS

Home foreclosures increasing

Greenville region fared better than state or nation, August figures show

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The residential foreclosure rate rose in August in Greenville, the state and the nation.

But Greenville's economy is performing better than the state and nation in regard to foreclosure activity, according to Robert Salvino, research economist at Coastal Carolina University.

"This is consistent with the relatively smaller decline in home prices from the peak in Greenville and the slightly better recovery in employment," Salvino said. "Additionally, Greenville's unemployment rate average year to date for 2011 is 8.4 percent compared with 10.3 percent year to date for South Carolina overall."

RealtyTrac, which follows foreclosure proceedings, said the Greenville-Mauldin-Easley metro area had an 18.44 percent increase in foreclosure filings in August compared to July.

The foreclosure activity in the region in August dropped 20.83 percent from August last year. It was the ninth consecutive month in which the rate dropped compared with last year.

RealtyTrac published a total of 228,098 foreclosure filings nationwide in August, which includes everything from notice to default to bank repossessions. That pushed the foreclosure rate up 7 percent higher than the month before but down 33 percent from a year ago.

The United States posts one foreclosure per every 570 households. South Carolina had one foreclosure activity per 624 households in the state.

The state's foreclosure rate in August, with 412 foreclosure activities, was 1.48 percent lower than a year ago, but up 11.97 percent from July 2011, according to RealtyTrac.

Default notices were filed for the first time on a total of 78,880 U.S. properties in August, a nine-month high and a 33 percent increase from July — the biggest month-over-month increase since August 2007, RealtyTrac said.

James Saccacio, CEO RealtyTrac, said the jump in new foreclosure actions "may be a signal that lenders are starting to push through some of the foreclosures delayed by robo-signing and other documentation problems."

"It also foreshadows more bank repossessions in the coming months as these new foreclosures make their way through the process," he said.

He said the combination of an economy nationwide that isn't improving overall, a high inventory of delinquent mortgages not yet in foreclosure, and flat home prices, has contributed to an increase in foreclosure activity.

He also said some of the movement in foreclosure rates is due to the continued decline or lack of increase in home prices.