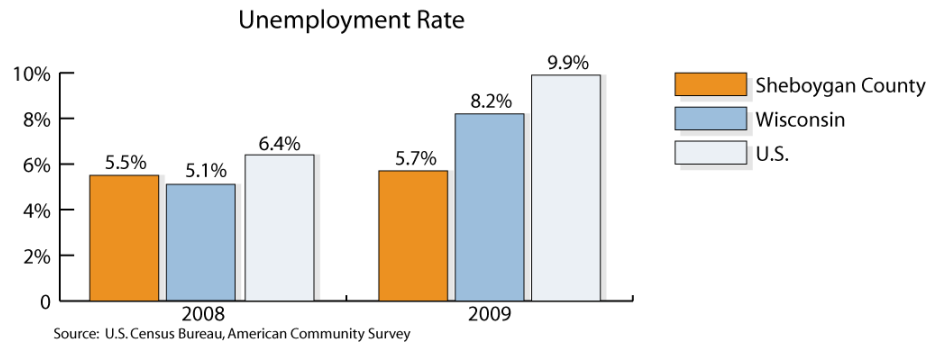


The Recession's Impact on Sheboygan County

Unemployment and Poverty Rates Are Up, Private Health Insurance Coverage is Down

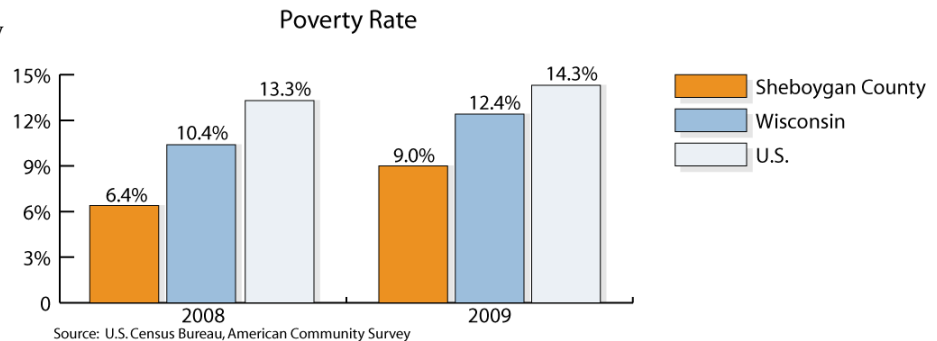
Unemployment Rate in Sheboygan County Has Stayed About the Same

The unemployment rate in Sheboygan County rose from 5.5 percent in 2008 to 5.7 percent in 2009. This change represents the smallest increase in unemployment of the Wisconsin counties large enough to be part of the American Community Survey database. The unemployment rate in Sheboygan County is lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 5.1 percent in 2008 to 8.2 percent in 2009.



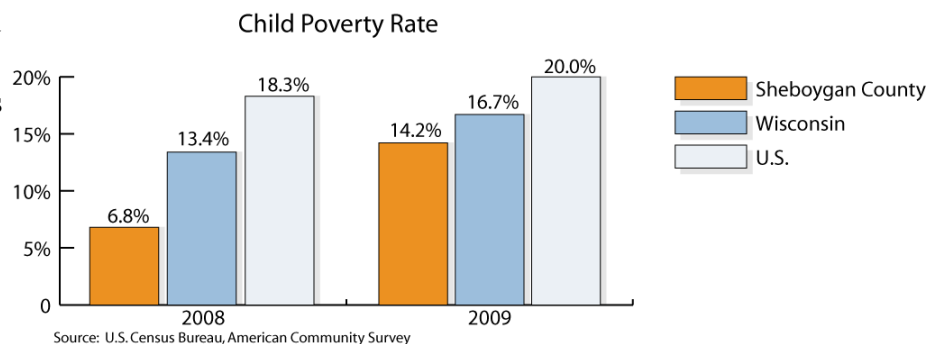
Poverty in Sheboygan County Has Increased

As a result of the recession, the total poverty rate in Sheboygan County increased from 6.4 percent in 2008 to 9.0 percent in 2009. Sheboygan County's poverty rate is lower than the Wisconsin average, which rose from 10.4 percent in 2008 to 12.4 percent in 2009. Wisconsin's poverty rate is also lower than the national average.



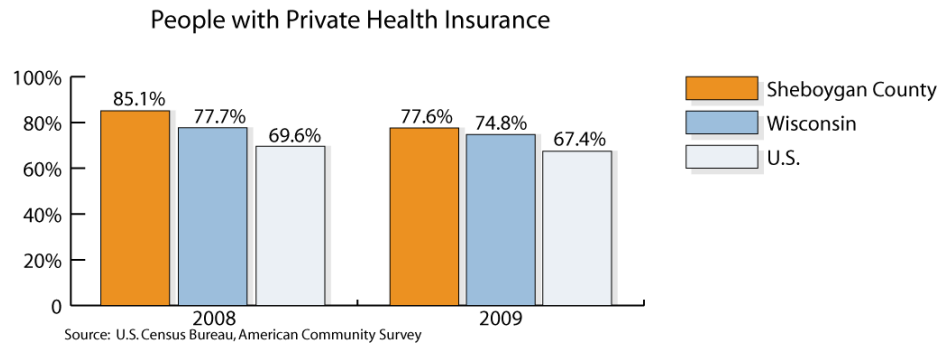
One out of Seven Children in Sheboygan County Now Lives in Poverty

The child poverty rate in Sheboygan County more than doubled, from 6.8 percent in 2008 to 14.2 percent in 2009. Even after this increase, Sheboygan County's child poverty rate was lower than the statewide average, which rose from 13.4 percent in 2008 to 16.7 percent in 2009. Nearly 2,400 additional children slipped into poverty in Sheboygan County between 2008 and 2009, a population larger than the village of Cedar Grove.



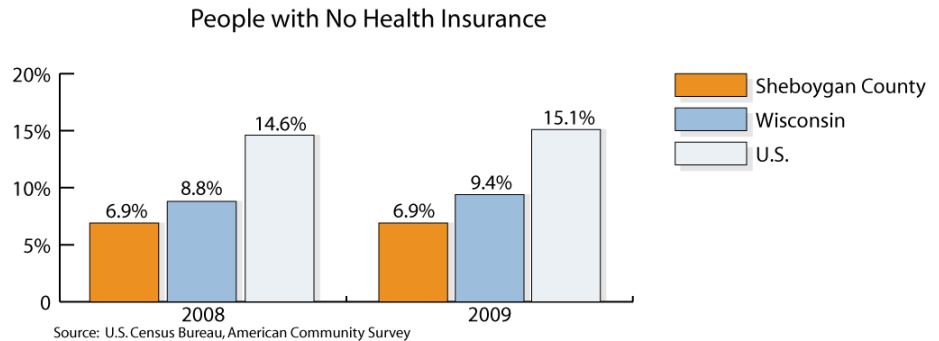
Fewer People in Sheboygan County Have Private Health Insurance

The percent of people in Sheboygan County with private health insurance decreased sharply, from 85.1 percent in 2008 to 77.6 percent in 2009. The increase in the unemployment rate impacted health insurance coverage, since most families obtain insurance through their employers. Sheboygan County and Wisconsin in general still have significantly higher rates of private health insurance coverage than the nation as a whole.



BadgerCare Plus Prevents Increase in the Uninsured

The percent of Sheboygan County residents that have no health insurance stayed the same at 6.9 percent, and did not change between 2008 and 2009. BadgerCare Plus enrollment grew by more than 2,300 (25 percent) in the county in 2009, which kept the steep drop in employer coverage from resulting in an increase in the uninsured. Both Sheboygan County and Wisconsin have a much smaller share of their population without health insurance than the national average.



Addressing the Impact of the Recession

Sheboygan County is feeling the impact of the national recession, as many residents have been pushed into poverty and lost private health insurance coverage. These changes are particularly alarming considering they happened over a time period of just one year. Still, by many measures, Sheboygan County's economic situation is better than the national average.

Fortunately, the Recovery Act contained several changes in tax credits for low income families that softened the blow of the recession a little. However, those credits are scheduled to end at the close of the year and Congress will have to vote soon on whether to extend them.

Low-income households were also assisted by increased Medicaid funding in the Recovery

Act, which enabled Wisconsin to preserve eligibility for BadgerCare Plus. Without an extension of federal aid for states and continuation of the state's hospital assessment initiated in 2009, Wisconsin will be hard pressed to avoid sharp reductions in the low-income families served by BadgerCare Plus.

It will take a concerted effort to meet the needs of struggling families in Sheboygan County. Public services like health care, education, and economic support are especially important in times of economic crisis. To help Wisconsin families and communities back on the road to economic recovery, state and federal policymakers will need to employ a balanced approach to closing the budget deficit, while avoiding significant cuts to programs that help families hit hard by the national recession.