

Recovery slow to come to all Nevadans

By **Conor Shine**, Las Vegas Sun

Ever look around at the signs of recovery here – the construction and rebound in travel and tourism – and wonder why it doesn't feel like the recession has ended for you?

There's a reason: It hasn't in terms of wages in Nevada.

But the slow increase in most people's pay has meant that thin family budgets are stretched even further, constricting consumer spending, a crucial cog in the region's overall economic recovery. With unemployment still at almost 9 percent in December, a return to normal wage growth likely will take several years, economists say.

With high unemployment and an excess of willing workers, there's little pressure for companies to increase salaries. That likely won't change until the unemployment rate drops to 5 or 6 percent.

As tourism stalled and consumer spending dipped, employees in service-related jobs also took a hit. Wages of hairdressers, fitness trainers, car technicians and others dropped as the public scrimped and saved by forgoing nonessentials.

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