



## Vermont Minimum Wage on the Rise

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Vermont's minimum wage increases Thursday by 38 cents per hour, from \$7.68 to \$8.06.

That figure puts Vermont as having one of the highest minimum wages in the country, despite a federal minimum of \$5.85. The federal minimum wage is set to increase in the summer to \$7.25 an hour.

Despite the increase, some residents, including Burlington's Jesse Desjardins, believe it's not nearly enough.

"Now that gas prices are down all other prices for things should go down, but they obviously aren't," Desjardins said. "And minimum wage isn't going to affect most jobs. Most jobs people are already paid over minimum wage."

Desjardins said he earns \$9.50 an hour as a gas station attendant.

"I have one of the cheapest places I could find in Burlington - \$700 a month," Desjardins said.

That includes heat, gas and water, but after rent and student loans, he said he's left with roughly \$20 per week for groceries.

"Vermont really needs more professional-type business in the area, where they pay a livable wage," Desjardins said.

The Vermont Livable Wage Campaign estimates that someone earning the \$8.06 minimum wage ends up with about \$16,000 a year.