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## Pinal, Maricopa pace new-home growth

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*FAMILIAR SCENE: Workers frame future homes at the Lion's Gate community at Higley Road and Ray Road in Gilbert. According to the Department of Economic Security, construction work will play a large part in employment growth this year.*

*Julio Jimenez Tribune*

Pinal and Maricopa counties are at the top of the charts when it comes to new homes. New figures today from the U.S. Census Bureau show that Pinal County added more than 18,000 new homes in the 12 months ending July 1, 2006. That is a 16.6 percent increase, higher than any other county in the nation.

By contrast, the number of new homes in the entire state grew by only 3.5 percent in the same period. And Maricopa County, the state's largest, posted just a 3 percent growth rate.

But in pure numbers, that 3 percent beat out every other county in the country. Maricopa County added 42,980 new homes in the 12-month period, besting Harris County, Texas - the home of Houston - by more than 4,000 homes.

Pinal County's 18,083 new homes was good enough to be the eighth highest in actual number of new homes in the nation.

Pima County hit the national list at 25th highest number of new homes in a year, even though its annual housing growth rate was just 2.7 percent.

In terms of the rate of growth, Arizona managed to put a couple of other counties on the top 100 list nationwide.

Tiny Santa Cruz County was 54th, where 817 new homes translated to a 5.3 percent growth

rate. And Yavapai County added 4,535 new homes for a 4.7 percent year-over-year increase.

The national rate of increase was just 1.4 percent.



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