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Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index falls

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The Conference Board's national Consumer Confidence Index fell in September to 53.1, down from 54.5 in August and 61.4 in September 2008.

The index for the region that includes Kansas City was 66.6 in September, up from 61.4 in August and 61.4 in September 2008.

In a Tuesday release, Lynn Franco, director of **The Conference Board Consumer Research Center**, said that although consumers aren't as pessimistic as earlier this year, they "remain quite apprehensive about the short-term outlook and their incomes."

"With the holiday season quickly approaching, this is not very encouraging news," Franco said.

The index number is relative to 100 for 1985 and is based on a representative sample of 5,000 U.S. households. Custom research company TNS conducts the monthly survey for The Conference Board. The cutoff date for the latest survey was Sept. 22.

Consumers' assessment of current conditions was less favorable in September, with 46.3 percent calling business conditions "bad," up from 44.6 percent. Consumers claiming jobs are "hard to get" increased to 47 percent from 44.3 percent, according to the survey.

Those anticipating improved business conditions in the next six months fell to 21.3 percent from 22.2 percent.

The New York City-based Conference Board operates as a global, independent, nonprofit membership organization working in the public interest. It publishes information and analysis, makes economics-based forecasts and assesses trends, and facilitates learning by bringing together senior executives from around the world.

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