

Springs ranks 7th in high-tech employment

Colorado Springs ranked seventh in the nation in the percentage of its work force employed in high-technology industries during 2006, according to a report by the American Electronics Association using the most recent data available.

That is down from fourth in 2001, mostly because the city had the second-highest percentage decline in technology employment among the 60 cities included in the Cybercities 2008 report, the first published by the Washington, D.C.-based organization since 2000.

Boulder kept its secondplace ranking.

Despite a decline in technology employment of 9,700 jobs from 2001 to 2006, the Springs still had 12.2 percent of its private-sector work force employed in technology jobs in 2006, the report found.

Most of the city's technology employment is in computer-systems design, engineering services and semiconductor manufacturing, where the Springs still ranked 10th-highest in chipmaking employment.

The Springs isn't likely to move in the rankings in coming years — Intel Corp. shut down its 1,000-employee Colorado Springs semiconductor plant late last year, and Hewlett-Packard Co. is moving a 800-employee technical and customer support center to New Mexico next year.

The report uncovered a couple of bright spots for the local technology industry: Local technology workers earned an average of \$74,673 in 2006, or nearly twice the average annual private-sector wage, and the number of technology businesses grew by 15.1 percent from 2001 to 2006.