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REAL ESTATE WEEKLY

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This week's Real Estate stories

A record percentage of mortgages entered the foreclosure process in the first quarter, the Mortgage Bankers Association reported this week. More mortgages in default were prime loans, given to those with the best credit -- and signaling that job losses are becoming a main driver of foreclosures.

The employment picture is also plaguing rental markets right now, according to research from Rent.com, an apartment listings site.

Vacancies are up and rents are down in many parts of the country, said Peggy Abkemeier, general manager for Rent.com. Part of that increase in supply is due to homeowners renting out single-family homes and condo units when they can't sell them.

Even as housing sales are down, demand for apartments is weak as more people double up and rent a place with a roommate, according to the site's research. Those who do decide to rent are really "buckling down and getting down to basics," focusing mainly on the amenities they absolutely need in order to keep their rents down, said Christina Aragon, director of strategy and marketing for Rent.com.

Read more on the foreclosure statistics in this week's pages. Plus, learn why mortgage rates rose this week and check out more housing market data.

The MBA is predicting that the employment picture won't start to look better until the middle of next year, and that will help slow foreclosure activity. Similarly, with high unemployment, rents could remain low for a while -- so if you're in the market for an apartment you have more opportunities to negotiate for a low rent.