

# PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS

## 2009 Community Profile

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*History ♦ Geography ♦ Government  
Demographics and Marketing Statistics  
Taxes ♦ Utilities ♦ Transportation  
Education ♦ Entertainment ♦ Recreation  
Medical Facilities ♦ Land and Material Resources  
Economic Development Incentives*

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Compiled by the



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# ***An Overview of Port Arthur***

## ***History***

Port Arthur was founded by Arthur Edward Stilwell in the late 19th century, and was once the center of the largest oil refinery network in the world. Stilwell, who founded what is now known as Kansas City Southern Railroad, envisioned Port Arthur as the southern terminus of his new railroad. The town was platted in 1895. Shortly afterward, John W. "Bet-A-Million" Gates acquired control of the Stilwell interests in the region and continued to lay the foundation for the city. He built a rice mill in Port Arthur in 1900, established a business college that is still in existence today and was one of the founders of what became Texaco. Both Texaco and Gulf got their start in the Port Arthur area in the early 1900s. The city of Port Arthur has become the home of several major refineries; Motiva, Valero, Chevron Phillips and many more.

Gates spent \$1.4 million to dredge the Port Arthur ship canal. Congress designated Port Arthur as a port of entry, and by 1914 it ranked as the twelfth largest port in the United States and the second largest refining port.

While Port Arthur has remained an important terminus of Kansas City Southern, the old rice mill was demolished to make way for the expansion of the port. However, rice remains one of the most significant agricultural products of Southeast Texas.

## ***Geography and Climate***

Port Arthur is located on a coastal plain where elevations range from sea level to 9 feet. Transportation is easy in Port Arthur, and most locations are a 10- or 15-minute drive from any location. It is 90 miles east of Houston in Southeast Texas. The Southeast Texas region is well known for its mild winter temperatures and warm summers. The normal yearly rainfall is 61 inches. Our neighboring cities are Beaumont and Orange; together these cities make up what is known as the Golden Triangle which is adjacent to the Louisiana border.

Between the points of the Golden Triangle are many smaller communities. In Jefferson County, these include the cities of Nederland, Port Neches and Groves as well as the rural communities of Hampshire, Fannett and Labelle. Orange County is home to the cities of Bridge City, Vidor and Rose City as well as the smaller communities of Orangefield, McLewis and Mauriceville. Hardin County and Chambers County, to the west of Jefferson County, have many similar small communities. The greater Southeast Texas market area includes a total of nine counties.

## ***Local Government Structure***

### ***City of Port Arthur***

**Phone:** (409) 983-8100

Port Arthur operates under a City Manager form of city government. Residents elect a mayor and eight council members. The nine-member council appoints a City Manager. The council meets bi-weekly in open session to conduct the business of the city.

**Website:** [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com)

### ***Jefferson County***

**Phone:** (409) 727-2191

Port Arthur is in Jefferson County. The Jefferson County Courthouse is located in Beaumont, TX, which is 15 miles north of Port Arthur. Residents of each county in Texas elect a county judge and four county commissioners to head the county government as members of the Commissioners Court. Commissioners are elected from their own districts and the County Judge is elected at-large. Each of these officials is elected for four-year terms and serves full-time. County residents also elect a Tax Assessor-Collector, County Clerk, County Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer, Justices of the Peace and Constables.

**Website:** [www.co.jefferson.tx.us](http://www.co.jefferson.tx.us)

**Other Government**

The state has created a number of special improvement districts to provide for development of economically important resources. These include the Port of Port Arthur, the Navigation District and several drainage and water districts. These districts have taxing and bonding authority.

**Demographics and Marketing Statistics**

**Top Major Employers in Port Arthur**

Company	Industry	Employees
Port Arthur Independent School District	Education	1,275
Motiva Enterprises, LLC	Petroleum Refining	1,096
CHRISTUS St. Mary Hospital	Medical Service	900
Valero Refining Group	Petroleum Refining	825
Walmart Super Center	Retailer (2 locations)	816
The Medical Center of Southeast Texas	Medical Service	785
City of Port Arthur	City Government	659
Total Petrochemicals USA, Inc.	Petroleum Refining	595
Sitel	Call Center	400
Chevron Phillips Chemical Company LP	Petroleum Refining	267

Other major area employers include the correctional facilities (5,000).

**Unemployment (as of June 2009)**

Port Arthur’s unemployment rate is 10.2 %

Source: Texas Workforce Commission

**Sample Wages and Rates (2009)**

Occupation	Median (per hr.)	Occupation	Median (per hr.)
Auto Technicians	\$ 16.77	Painters	\$ 15.90
Carpenters	\$ 14.92	Pipefitters	\$ 19.58
Cashiers	\$ 8.02	Plumbers	\$ 19.58
Computer Programmer	\$ 36.25	Receptionists / Clerks	\$ 11.00
Computer Support Specialists	\$ 21.17	Retail Sales	\$ 10.97
Correctional Officers & Jailers	\$ 14.07	Secretaries	\$ 12.37
Electricians	\$ 18.64	Security Guards	\$ 11.54
Electronics Engineer	\$ 41.31	Ship fitters	\$ 27.54
Janitors	\$ 8.91	Surgical Technologists	\$ 17.93
Machinist	\$ 15.70	Truck Drivers	\$ 16.80
Mechanical Drafting	\$ 23.43	Waiters/Waitresses	\$ 7.58
Network Administrators	\$ 30.79	Welders	\$ 15.70
Nurses	\$ 28.71		

Source: Texas Workforce Commission, and [www.socrates.cdr.state.tx.us](http://www.socrates.cdr.state.tx.us)

### **Housing Costs**

The average rental cost for a two-bedroom apartment in Port Arthur is \$800. The average purchase price of a single family home in Port Arthur is \$80,300.

### **2008 Median Priced Homes**

Area	Median Price
Beaumont / Port Arthur MSA	\$ 130,000
Texas	\$ 160,000
United States	\$ 234,300

### **Property Tax**

Most governing entities in Texas levy a property tax. The assessment ratio is 100 percent. Property values are established through the Jefferson County Appraisal District and most taxes are collected through the Jefferson County Tax Assessor-Collector's Office. Taxpayers can view their property tax balance and make payments online.

**Website:** [www.co.jefferson.tx.us/taxoffice/property\\_tax.htm](http://www.co.jefferson.tx.us/taxoffice/property_tax.htm)

### **Appraisals and Exemptions**

**Phone:** (409) 727-4611

Property values are established in a four-stage process each year by the Jefferson County Appraisal District, which also administers tax exemptions. Port Arthur also has property tax exemptions for homeowners and for senior citizens.

**Website:** [www.jcad.org](http://www.jcad.org)

### **Retail Area**

Port Arthur is a retail center in itself and is home to a major shopping mall, strip centers and several shopping areas that include large "anchor" stores such as Academy, Walmart, Office Depot, Target, Dillard's, JC Penny, Sears, Ross, etc. Retail and wholesale trade, distribution, business and medical services are important elements of the local economy.

### **Sales Tax**

Sales tax of 8.25% is charged on items that are subject to sales tax in Port Arthur. The State of Texas and other entities levy a sales tax on items that are considered non-essential.

In addition, many cities and counties in the state have approved a half-cent sales tax to fund Economic Development Corporations. Port Arthur and several of the surrounding cities have EDC's. Sales tax information for various cities within Texas can be found online.

**Website:** [www.cpa.state.tx.us/taxinfo/allocsum/cities.html](http://www.cpa.state.tx.us/taxinfo/allocsum/cities.html)

### **Personal Income Tax**

There is no personal income tax in Texas.

### **State Franchise Tax**

The franchise tax is imposed on corporations and limited liability companies that have originated or organized in Texas as well as those that do business in Texas.

### **Unemployment Insurance Tax**

The tax rate will be applied to the first \$7,000 of wages paid to each employee. The minimum tax rate is 0.008 percent of the first \$7,000.

## **Utilities**

### **Telecommunications**

**Phone:** (800) 422-0499 – AT&T / (800) 222-5355 – TWC

The primary local telephone service providers include AT&T and Time Warner Cable. A list of other local service providers is available in the local phone book. Cellular phone and data communication services are available through several companies.

**Website:** [www.att.com](http://www.att.com) / [www.timewarnercable.com](http://www.timewarnercable.com)

### **Electric**

**Phone:** (800) 368-3749

Entergy Texas serves about 395,000 customers in 27 counties. The company employs nearly 1,250 people in the state. The company continues to be an active partner in regional economic development efforts through its Team City Texas Program which helps communities identify strengths, mobilize leadership, set goals and implement sound growth strategies.

**Website:** [www.energy.com](http://www.energy.com)

### **Natural Gas**

**Phone:** (800) 700-2443

Texas Gas Service Company serves approximately 700,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in Texas. It was founded in Wink, Texas in 1929 as Southern Union Gas. It was purchased in 2003 by ONEOK, a diversified energy company involved in oil and natural gas production, gathering, processing, storage, transmission and marketing. Large industrial customers in Port Arthur are served by the transmission lines of these companies.

**Website:** [www.texasgasservice.com](http://www.texasgasservice.com)

### **Industrial Water**

**Phone:** (409) 892-4011

The Lower Neches Valley Authority, a non-profit, non-taxing agency, provides fresh water to municipalities, industries and farms via a system of canals in a three-county area. It currently has the capacity to pump and distribute more than 1 billion gallons of water per day, with average high demand being approximately 700 million gallons per day.

Industrial, municipal and irrigation rates are among the lowest in the state. Raw water rates are set annually by the LNVA board of directors.

**Website:** [www.lnva.dst.tx.us](http://www.lnva.dst.tx.us)

### **Sewer/Wastewater**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8550

The City of Port Arthur provides for the collection and treatment of wastewater. The maximum daily capacity is 36.7 million gallons and the average daily capacity is 9.2 million gallons.

**Website:** [www.portarthur.net/water\\_dept.cfm](http://www.portarthur.net/water_dept.cfm)

### **Water**

**Phone:** (409) 983-3846

The City of Port Arthur has the capacity to treat 20 million gallons of water daily and is currently treating 13 million gallons per day.

**Website:** [www.portarthur.net/water\\_dept.cfm](http://www.portarthur.net/water_dept.cfm)

### **Garbage**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8518

The City of Port Arthur provides residential and commercial garbage services. Various sizes of containers are available, and numbers of commercial pickups vary per week depending on the volume of use. The city does not handle hazardous, toxic or flammable waste, batteries, oil and oil filters, asbestos, medical waste, concrete rock or bricks, or any type of demolition material. Businesses with special disposal needs that cannot be handled by the city can contract with private services.

**Website:** [www.portarthur.net](http://www.portarthur.net)

### **Hazardous Waste Disposal**

**Phone:** (409) 736-2821

Veolia Environmental Services, previously ONYX Environmental Services, operates a hazardous waste disposal facility west of Port Arthur. Methods of disposal are incineration and injection.

**Website:** [www.veoliaes.com](http://www.veoliaes.com)

## **Transportation**

### **Airport**

**Phone:** (409) 722-0251

The Southeast Texas Regional Airport is located off U.S. 69 two miles north of Port Arthur and features both commercial and executive terminals. Airlines provide several flights a day to Houston.

**Website:** [www.co.jefferson.tx.us/setra/frames.htm](http://www.co.jefferson.tx.us/setra/frames.htm)

### **Port Arthur Transit System**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8767

Port Arthur Transit offers citywide bus services. In addition to its regular service it offers a special paratransit door-to-door service for the elderly and disabled residents of Port Arthur. Lift-equipped vehicles are used in the service, which is available five days a week.

**E-mail:** [pat@portarthur.net](mailto:pat@portarthur.net)

### **Port of Port Arthur**

**Phone:** (409) 983-2011

The Port of Port Arthur is situated on the 1,200 mile Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, only 19 miles from the Gulf of Mexico and positioned to competitively handle any type of breakbulk project or container cargo. The five elected Commissioners are the policy makers for the international public port.

The port facility consists of 5 berths with a total dock length of 3,102 linear feet and 518,400 square feet of transit shed space. Also available is 17 acres of open asphalt surface. The Port's 75-ton gantry crane straddles 3 sets of wharf tracks with a rail capacity for 150 rail cars.

The "ultimate direct transfer facility" means the most efficient production in transferring metal and forest products commodities from vessel to landside conveyance or transit shed. In addition, numerous lumber, paper, baled and forest products move in and out of the most modern transit shed in North America that include extra wide and high doorways, state-of-the-art lighting and an enclosed rail and truck loading/unloading docks.

**Website:** [www.portofportarthur.com](http://www.portofportarthur.com)

### **Rail Lines**

Three major railroad lines operate in Port Arthur: Kansas City Southern Railway, Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe. These companies mainly direct their service to the petroleum and chemical plants and directly or through Reciprocal Switching to the Port of Port Arthur.

### **Motor Freight**

There are about 12 general freight carriers serving Port Arthur. Specialized truck companies are prepared to handle dry bulk and liquid commodities.

## **Education**

### **Port Arthur Independent School District**

**Phone:** (409) 989-6222

Port Arthur ISD, with an enrollment of more than 10,000 students, is the primary public school system serving Port Arthur. The district currently has one high school, five secondary schools, eight elementary schools and four campuses for special services such as vocational and technical programs and early childhood programs. PAISD is accredited by the Texas Education Agency and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

**Website:** [www.paisd.org](http://www.paisd.org)

### **Sabine Pass ISD**

**Phone:** (409) 971-2321

The mission of Sabine Pass School is to guarantee our students are empowered with the skills necessary to make transitions from one grade level to the next and ultimately become productive members of society. This will be accomplished by providing our students with enthusiastic, supportive and competent facilitators teaching relevant and flexible curriculum in a positive, technologically-advanced environment. The district has one school that serves students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelve.

**Website:** [www.sabinepass.net](http://www.sabinepass.net)

### **Parochial Schools**

**Phone:** (409) 924-4300

The Catholic Diocese of Beaumont has a number of schools in Jefferson County and surrounding areas. Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic School in Port Arthur, serves Pre-K through eighth grade, and Monsignor Kelly High School in Beaumont serves ninth through twelfth grades.

**Website:** [www.dioceseofbmt.org](http://www.dioceseofbmt.org)

### **Other Port Arthur Schools**

**Phone:** (409) 963-1107

A number of private schools provide education for students throughout our community.

**Website:** [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com)

### **Vocational/Technical/Business Schools**

There are several vocational schools in the Port Arthur area. Many of them are tailored to particular fields such as computers, welding and the maritime industry.

## **Higher Education**

### **Texas State University System**

Southeast Texas is the home to four campuses that are members of the Texas State University System: Lamar State College-Port Arthur, Lamar University in Beaumont, Lamar State College-Orange, and the Lamar Institute of Technology, also in Beaumont. Each is a separate degree-granting institution that reports to the TSUS chancellor and Board of Regents based in Austin.

The campuses became part of the system, which is the third largest in Texas, in 1995. Other TSUS institutions include Sam Houston State University, San Marcos State University, Angelo State University and Sul Ross State University.

**Lamar State College-Port Arthur**

**Phone:** (800) 477-5872

Lamar State College-Port Arthur is a two-year institution that offers freshman- and sophomore-level work in about 50 academic and technical fields of study. The college has seen steady enrollment growth for more than a decade, culminating with record enrollments in 2005.

John W. Gates, one of the founders of Texaco, founded the Port Arthur Business College in 1909. Since then, the college which became Lamar-Port Arthur in 1975, has operated continuously on Lakeshore Drive and Procter Street in historic Port Arthur. The campus has nearly 25 buildings located on 40 acres of property. It is the site of several major new building and renovation projects, including a new athletic/multi-purpose center, and an expanded library.

Some of the college's technical programs include nursing, surgical technology, automotive technology, cosmetology, accounting, child care, computer maintenance technology, computer information systems (both network engineering and software development), office technology and electronics and instrumentation. In addition to offering two-year degrees and one-year certificates in these programs, the college offers associate degrees in academic areas. Students may complete the core curriculum at Lamar-Port Arthur and transfer those credits to any public four-year institution in Texas.

The campus is home to Carl Parker Multipurpose Center, Gates Memorial Library, and the Small Business Development Center. It also funds the Museum of the Gulf Coast along with the City of Port Arthur and Port Arthur Historical Society. Their new \$5.9 million Performing Arts Theater includes a 400-seat theater, a "black box" theater, musical rehearsal rooms, an arts studio and room for future music, art and recording technology programs.

Lamar State College-Port Arthur is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

**Website:** [www.lamarpa.edu](http://www.lamarpa.edu)

**Lamar University, Beaumont**

**Phone:** (409) 880-7011

Lamar University, a four-year state-supported institution, is a member of The Texas State University System and offers more than 150 programs of study, 47 masters programs and doctorates in audiology, educational leadership, engineering, and deaf education. More than 11,000 students attend courses on the 270-acre campus that includes more than 75 buildings, three state-of-the-art residence halls housing more than 1,500 students.

With about 925 full-time faculty and staff and some 205 part-time employees, the university is one of the largest employers in the area. The College of Engineering administers seven research centers under the Texas Center for Technology Incubation, bringing more than \$50 million for research since 1988. The College of Business' undergraduate and graduate programs are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, a distinction earned by less than 16 percent of business schools worldwide. The Texas Board of Nurse Examiners has cited Lamar's BSN program with commendations three years in a row for outstanding student achievement.

**Website:** [www.lamar.edu](http://www.lamar.edu)

**Lamar State College-Orange**

**Phone:** (409) 883-7750

Lamar-Orange is a two-year state-supported institution that offers about 35 associate degrees and one-year certificates. Enrollment exceeds 2,000 students.

**Website:** [www.lSCO.edu](http://www.lSCO.edu)

**Lamar Institute of Technology**

**Phone:** (800) 950-6989

Lamar Institute of Technology is a two-year state-supported technical college that offers about 55 associate degrees and 1-year certificates. The campus enrollment exceeds 2,500 students.

**Website:** [www.theinstitute.lamar.edu](http://www.theinstitute.lamar.edu)



## ***Hotels, Restaurants and Meeting Facilities***

### ***Robert A. "Bob" Bowers Civic Center***

**Phone:** (409) 985-8801

The City of Port Arthur maintains a Civic Center that is used for special events, concerts, conventions, exhibitions, sporting events and festivals throughout the year. The 20,000-square-foot main hall seats 2,818 or 1,673 for a banquet. Smaller halls and meeting rooms are available. There is free parking for over 550 cars and additional parking off-site. The Civic Center's address is 3401 Cultural Center Drive, centrally located off Texas 73 at the Ninth Avenue exit.

**Website:** [www.portarthur.net/pa\\_civic\\_center.cfm](http://www.portarthur.net/pa_civic_center.cfm)

### ***Hotels, Motels and Meeting Facilities***

**Phone:** (409) 963-1107 / (800) 235-7822 PACVB

Numerous hotels and motels provide Port Arthur with a total bed capacity of over 500. Banquet and meeting room facilities are available at the Holiday Inn Park Central and Ramada Inn.

**Website:** [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com)

### ***Restaurants***

**Phone:** (409) 963-1107 / (800) 235-7822

Port Arthur and the surrounding cities have an ever-growing number of restaurants featuring the cuisine of a diverse community. Mexican food is a popular choice of ethnic foods in the area, with Cajun, Italian and Asian cuisine right behind. Seafood, barbecue, pizza and fried chicken are other popular local choices. The combination of national restaurant chains and locally-owned establishments provide residents with an excellent variety of choices.

**Website:** [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com)

## ***Cultural Arts and Entertainment***

### ***Cultural Arts***

**Phone:** (409) 835-2787 SETAC / (800) 235-7822 PACVB

The Southeast Texas Arts Council is the central cultural arts organization in the region. Its role is to provide funding, technical assistance and information services for the local arts. It is also involved in arts education.

There are dozens of groups, facilities and events dedicated to enhancing the cultural life of the region. They include the Golden Triangle Writers Guild, Young Audiences of Southeast Texas, the Tyrrell Historical Library and lecture series sponsored by Lamar University and Lamar State College-Port Arthur. Others are described below.

The Port Arthur Convention and Visitors Bureau is another place to learn about activities and sites in the area.

**Website:** [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com)

### ***Dance***

Lamar University's dance department presents several performances a year, and the area has several schools for non-college students interested in dance. Jefferson County has several other dance organizations, including the Beaumont Civic Ballet, Beaumont Ballet Theater, Lamar Dance Company, and other numerous dance studios.

### ***Festivals and Annual Events***

Mardi Gras Southeast Texas, which draws more than 300,000 to Port Arthur annually, is the largest of the many festivals held throughout the year in Port Arthur and Jefferson County.

The community celebrates the local cuisine each year at cavOILcade which is an annual salute to the oil and petrochemical industry. Cultural celebrations in the area include Juneteenth, the Mexican Heritage Festival, Mercado Days, Tet, and Cayman Night in Port Arthur.

Other regular festivities are the Nederland Heritage Festival, the Texas Pecan Festival in Groves, the Texas Rice Festival in Winnie, the YMBL South Texas State Fair in Beaumont, Crawfish Festival in Mauriceville, Taste of Gumbo, Taste of Cultures, March of Dimes Walk America, Port Neches Riverfest and the Children's Miracle Network. Most of the communities in South Jefferson County kick off the Christmas season with parades and other events.

**Historic and Cultural Sites**

Historic Port Arthur has several homes that have been preserved, including Rose Hill Manor, White Haven and the Vuylsteke Home. Some are open regularly; the others are by request. Other sites worth visiting are the Buu Mon Buddhist Temple, the Vietnam Queen of Peace Shrine, the Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine, the Dick Dowling Monument and Veterans Memorial Park.

**Museums**

**Phone:** (409) 982-700 MGC / (409) 983-4881 TAM

The Museum of the Gulf Coast is a Smithsonian-quality facility in historic Port Arthur that features the early history of the Gulf Coast. There are also pop exhibits featuring music and sports figures from the region, arts and special exhibits.

The Texas Artists Museum, on Cultural Center Drive next to the Port Arthur Civic Center, features the work of many regional artists. Other museums in the region include the Art Museum of Southeast Texas, the Texas Energy Museum in Beaumont, the Stark Museum in Orange, and the Dutch Windmill Museum in Nederland.

**Website:** [www.museumofthegulfcoast.org](http://www.museumofthegulfcoast.org) / [www.texasartistsmuseum.org](http://www.texasartistsmuseum.org)

**Music**

The Southeast Texas region is known for its blues, jazz and rock 'n' roll, and audiences can find something to fit every taste. Numerous clubs in the area feature local and guest bands. A number of organizations promote homegrown talent. Some of those organizations are:

Beaumont Civic Opera	Harmony Exporters
Beaumont Interfaith Choral Society	Port Arthur Community Concert
Beaumont Music Commission	Southeast Texas Youth Symphony
Beaumont Symphony Women's League	Sweet Adelines
Symphony of Southeast Texas	

Lamar University's music department hosts a series of music concerts featuring the symphonic band, jazz ensemble, Cardinal Singers, a capella choir and grand choir. Musical theater and opera round out the university's offerings.

Lamar State College-Port Arthur and the area community theaters present several musicals each year.

**Theater**

**Phone:** (409) 727-7258

Both Lamar State College-Port Arthur and Lamar University present theatrical performances to the public each season. The Golden Triangle also has three well-established community theaters that offer regular seasons, dinner theater productions and children's workshops. They are the Port Arthur Little Theatre, Beaumont Community Players and Orange Community Players.

The Julie Rogers Theatre and Jefferson Theatre in Beaumont and the Lutcher Theater in Orange host touring companies performing plays, musicals, concerts and dance pieces.

**Website:** [www.palt.org](http://www.palt.org)

### **Visual Arts**

In addition to the art exhibits of the many area museums, there are other galleries and organizations for the visual arts. They include the Texas Artists Museum, the Dishman Gallery at Lamar University, the Art Studio Inc., Art Museum of Southeast Texas and the Beaumont Art League. The Texas Artists Museum regularly host events such as artists' receptions and musical performances.

### **Ford Park**

**Phone:** (409) 951-5400

Home to the ABA Southeast Texas Mavericks, Ford Arena is conveniently located on IH-10 in Beaumont. The complex is the perfect destination to enjoy year-around sports and recreational activities. The multi-purpose complex includes an 8,500 seat air-conditioned multi-purpose arena, an 18,000 seat outdoor amphitheater, a 48,000-square-foot multi-use exhibition hall and meeting facilities, and over 70,000 square feet of agricultural facilities, including a barn and practice arena. To accommodate the region's love of sports, Ford Park is comprised of 12 championship-caliber fast pitch, softball/youth baseball fields.

**Website:** [www.fordparktx.com](http://www.fordparktx.com)

## **Outdoor Recreation**

### **Fishing and Hunting**

Southeast Texas has been called a sportsman's paradise, and the area's moderate climate makes outdoor activity a year-round possibility. Hunting ducks, geese, dove, quail, deer or squirrel, and fishing for a wide variety of fresh or saltwater fish, can be done within a few miles of the city limits.

Public fishing and waterfowl hunting are available in the Martin Dies State Park, McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge and Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. The lumber industry opens acres of forest to the public every year for hunting. For the shooting enthusiast, several gun clubs as well as trap, skeet, rifle and pistol ranges operate in the area.

### **Water Sports and Beaches**

The many area waterways and bays offer excellent opportunities for the boating enthusiast, whether it is power boats, sailing or canoeing. Sam Rayburn Reservoir, Toledo Bend Reservoir, and the Neches and Sabine rivers offer a wide range of water sport activities. McFaddin Beach located near Sabine Pass is also a popular recreational area.

### **Bird Watching**

Bird watching is popular along the Texas Gulf Coast, and Sabine Woods is a world-class bird sanctuary located near the Gulf. It is a major migratory path and is a favorite seasonal haunt for serious bird watchers. The Triangle Bird Club hosts its annual Exotic Bird Expo & Fair at the Robert A. "Bob" Bowers Civic Center.

### **Golf**

Golf is another popular activity year-round. The Palms, an 18-hole championship golf course is situated between Sabine Lake and the intracoastal canal on Pleasure Island. Due to damages from Hurricane Ike, the Palms is currently closed but is scheduled to reopen in March of 2010. Babe Zaharias Golf Course is Port Arthur's 18-hole municipal course. Other local 18-hole courses are located within a 20-minute driving distance.

### **Recreational Facilities**

**Phone:** (409) 962-6644

Port Arthur's many recreational facilities include a recently-expanded YMCA Family Fitness Center, a bowling center, tennis courts, racquetball courts, baseball diamonds, softball diamonds, municipal pools and an athletic complex.

### **National Parks and Forests**

McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge covers an area totaling 41,682 acres. Other national parks and forests in the region include Big Thicket, Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, Angelina National Forest, Sabine National Forest, Davy Crockett National Forest and Sam Houston National Forest. Together these sites cover more than 750,000 acres of land.

## **Daily Living**

### **Other Recreational Facilities**

Port Arthur boasts a community park (Fun Island Depot), eight parks and playgrounds, The Pompano, a private dinner club, and Dickinson Theater located inside Central Mall.

### **Port Arthur Public Library**

**Phone:** (409) 985-8838

The City of Port Arthur operates a library and archive of more than 150,000 volumes, including books and audio and videotapes. The main library is located in front of the Port Arthur Civic Center on Cultural Center Drive. Newly remodeled Gates Memorial Library, 317 Stilwell Blvd. on the Lamar State College-Port Arthur campus, hosts a small branch library for the city.

**Website:** [www.pap.lib.tx.us](http://www.pap.lib.tx.us)

### **Communications**

The Port Arthur/Golden Triangle area is served by three daily newspapers plus three main weeklies and several smaller papers. Each of the three major networks has a television station in the area. Cable service options include wireless service and digital cable.

### **Financial Institutions**

More than a dozen banks and credit unions are established in the greater Port Arthur area, with more than \$900 million in deposits. For a listing of financial institutions in the area, visit [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com), and search members by category.

### **Churches**

Port Arthur residents worship at local churches and synagogues representing 25 different denominations and faiths. For a listing of churches in the area, visit [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com), and search members by category.

## **Emergency Services and Medical Facilities**

### **911**

**Phone:** (409) 899-8444 SETRPC / (409) 835-8757 Jefferson County

The Southeast Texas area has a 911 emergency system. Jefferson County also has an emergency management coordinator to assist in coordinating interagency response to potential large-scale emergencies such as hurricanes.

**Website:** [www.setrpc.org](http://www.setrpc.org) / [www.co.jefferson.tx.us/em.htm](http://www.co.jefferson.tx.us/em.htm)

### **Reverse 911**

REVERSE 911 is a communications solution that uses a patented combination of databases and GIS mapping technologies to deliver outbound notifications. Users can quickly target a precise geographic area and saturate it with thousands of calls per hour. The system's interactive technology provides immediate interaction with recipients and aids in rapid response to specific needs.

### **2-1-1**

2-1-1 is an easy to remember a telephone number that, where available, connects people with important community services and volunteer opportunities. The implementation of 2-1-1 is conducted by United Way through comprehensive and specialized information. It is also used by referral agencies in states and local communities.

#### **Fire Service**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8734 / (409) 983-8700

The Port Arthur Fire Department employs 105 full-time people and maintains various fire trucks in stations throughout the city. The Insurance Services Office rating is 3.

**Website:** [www.portarthurfd.com](http://www.portarthurfd.com) / <http://departments.firehouse.com/dept/portarthur2tx>

#### **Police**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8600

The Port Arthur Police Department has 121 full-time police officers and maintains 88 patrol and specialty vehicles.

**Website:** [www.portarthurpd.com](http://www.portarthurpd.com)

#### **Sheriff's Office**

**Phone:** (409) 835-8411

The Jefferson County Sheriff's Office has approximately 370 employees. It is comprised of three divisions: Law Enforcement, DARE/SRO, Criminal Investigations, Fugitive Warrants, Forensics and Identification, Communications, Sheriff's Training/Academy, Court Security, Narcotics Unit and Support Staff. The correctional facility has a daily average inmate population of 1,000.

**Website:** [www.co.jefferson.tx.us/sheriff/mission.htm](http://www.co.jefferson.tx.us/sheriff/mission.htm)

#### **Hospitals and Services**

The South Jefferson County area has three hospitals plus an extensive offering of other medical services, including day surgery, a cancer treatment center, prenatal and child care, physical therapy, nursing homes, hospice services, a minor care unit, and a substance abuse outpatient treatment program.

##### **CHRISTUS St. Mary Hospital**

3600 Gates Blvd.  
Port Arthur, TX 77642  
**Phone:** (409) 985-7431  
[www.christusstmary.org](http://www.christusstmary.org)

##### **The Medical Center of Southeast Texas**

2555 Jimmy Johnson Blvd.  
Port Arthur, TX 77640  
**Phone:** (409) 724-7389  
[www.medicalcentersetexas.com](http://www.medicalcentersetexas.com)

##### **Renaissance Hospital**

5500 39th Street  
Groves, TX 77619  
**Phone:** 962-5733  
[www.renhealthcare.org](http://www.renhealthcare.org)

#### **STAN – Southeast Texas Alerting Network**

**Phone:** (877) THE-STAN (843-7826)

STAN is a one-of-a-kind, custom built, public awareness system designed to communicate important information to the people of Southeast Texas. During community emergencies, such as severe weather, large railcar or truck spills or industrial accidents, local emergency management and industry officials can post information on the STAN line.

**Website:** [www.thestan.com](http://www.thestan.com)

## Land and Material Resources

### Land and Buildings

**Phone:** (800) 729-SITE

One of Port Arthur's outstanding features is a variety of industrial sites. There are thousands of acres of prime industrial land surrounding Port Arthur. Parcels of land range from 2,000 to 8,000 acres and prices are from \$1,500 and up per acre. Sites fully served by utilities, rail, water and sewer are on major highways. Others are available on the ship channel with easy access by rail or well-maintained industrial roads. Frontage on the interstate highway is still available in several locations. These properties with plats and detailed information are on the market. Site development and lease financing may be arranged with developers.

In addition to land, a number of existing buildings are available. However, if a company's needs cannot be met, investors in the Port Arthur area deal in build-to-suit, long-term agreements. The Greater Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce, Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation and the Regional Economic Development Initiative maintain information on available properties and buildings for the purpose of assisting companies involved in a site search.

Entergy Texas, which is involved in regional economic development, has its own site list of available properties within the region. The list includes the building name and location, available square footage and cost, structural specifications and an image of the site.

**Website:** [www.entergy.com/our\\_community/economic\\_development.aspx](http://www.entergy.com/our_community/economic_development.aspx)

### Raw Materials

Port Arthur has an abundance of raw materials. Besides the naturally-occurring raw materials, a great variety of manmade materials are available in the area. Along the Texas Gulf Coast, the maze of pipelines dubbed "The Spaghetti Bowl" delivers feedstocks for the manufacture of an unlimited number of end products. Most of the feedstocks are hydrocarbons derived from Texas' abundant oil and natural gas. Below is a partial listing of naturally-occurring and manmade raw materials produced in Southeast Texas:

Acrylonitrile	Ammonia	Argon	Benzene	Butadiene
Butane	Butylene	Caustic Soda	Chlorine	Crude Oil
Cyclohexane	Ethane	Ethyl Benzene	Ethylene	Ethylene Glycols
Fuel Oil	Gasoline	Hexane	Hydrogen Chloride	Hydrogen Sulfide
Kerosene	Methanol	Naphtha	Natural Gas	Nitric Acid
Nitrogen	Oxygen	Paper	Polyacrylates	Polyethylene
Propane	Propylene	Propylene Glycols	Solvents, Aromatic	Solvents, Paraffin
Steel (Rod & Wire)	Sulfuric Acid	Toulene	Wood Pulp	Xylene

### Agriculture

**Phone:** (409) 835-8461 Texas Cooperative Extension - Jefferson County

Jefferson County's production of rice, livestock, soybeans, hay, aquaculture, horticultural products and outdoor recreational activities on agricultural lands contributes an estimated \$48.8 million to the local economy. The sale of commodities and the manufacturing, value-added processing and wholesale trade has an estimated annual economic impact of \$2.3 billion. 714 agribusinesses in the county employ 12,363 persons, with a payroll of \$253 million. Beef Cattle were the No. 1 agricultural commodity in 2008. Over 30,000 head of cattle are located in Jefferson County. The second most important enterprise is rice; approximately 17,626 acres of rice was harvested last year.

Other agricultural enterprises include soybeans, grain sorghum, hay, turf, crawfish and timber.

**Website:** <http://jefferson-tx.tamu.edu>

## **Local Economic Development Resources and Incentives**

### **Greater Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce**

**Phone:** (409) 963-1107

The Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce is made up of over 700 businesses, organizations and individuals working together as a team to achieve a sound economic environment and quality of life for the entire community. It strives to attract new businesses and to retain and expand existing ones. The Chamber is a source of information for business prospects and for those who are moving to or planning to visit the Port Arthur area.

**Website:** [www.portarthurtexas.com](http://www.portarthurtexas.com)

### **Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation**

**Phone:** (409) 963-0579

The Port Arthur EDC promotes economic development within the city by providing financial incentives to qualified businesses. The EDC's primary focus is on the creation of jobs, manufacturing, and industrial businesses. Funding is provided through a half-cent sales tax within the city.

**Website:** [www.paedc.org](http://www.paedc.org)

### **Pleasure Island Commission**

**Phone:** (409) 982-4675

The Pleasure Island Commission, composed of nine members, is appointed by the Port Arthur City Council to oversee the development of Pleasure Island, which is located between the Intracoastal Waterway and Sabine Lake. Much of the island is dedicated to residential use, retail and recreational purposes, but some land is used for industrial and maritime purposes.

**Website:** [www.pleasureislandtx.com](http://www.pleasureislandtx.com)

### **City Zoning and Permits**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8135

Zoning in Texas is under the jurisdiction of municipalities. County governments do not have zoning power. All city zoning and permitting is done by the City's Planning Division.

**Website:** [www.portarthur.net](http://www.portarthur.net)

### **Small Business Development Center**

**Phone:** (409) 984-6531

The Small Business Development Center at Lamar State College-Port Arthur provides assistance to small-business owners and people interested in starting a new business. The center sponsors breakfasts, seminars, workshops, one-on-one counseling; and a business resource library. The SBDC also has a part-time branch office at the Nederland EDC. Most of the SBDC's services are free.

**Website:** [www.lamarpa.edu/?url=/dept/sbdc/index.html](http://www.lamarpa.edu/?url=/dept/sbdc/index.html)

### **Golden Triangle Minority Business Development Center**

**Phone:** (409) 962-8530

The Center is a reference facility with computer counseling stations, video and audio cassette resources, and business planning guides to help entrepreneurs plan their business ventures.

**Website:** [www.gtmbc.com](http://www.gtmbc.com)

### **Entergy Economic Development**

**Phone:** (800) 729-SITE

Entergy Texas is the sponsor of the Team City program, which helps communities in its service area organize, plan and prepare for local economic development. It can help them identify strengths, mobilize leadership, set goals and implement sound growth strategies. The Team City Cooperative Grant Program provides funds to non-profit economic development organizations in the company's service area for marketing, economic development or business development projects.

The company's other services include a list of available land and building sites within its service area (*see Land and Buildings*).

**Website:** [www.entergy.com/txed](http://www.entergy.com/txed)

**SBA Alliance (Southeast Texas Economic Development Foundation)**

**Phone:** (409) 838-6581

Low down payments, long-term financing and favorable interest rates are available through the SBA-504 Small Business Loan Program. The foundation will participate with private lenders in making direct loans to businesses for the purchase of land, buildings, machinery and equipment Information: (409) 838-6581,

**Website:** [www.sballiancecapital.org](http://www.sballiancecapital.org)

**Enterprise Zones**

**Phone:** (512) 936-0101 / (800) 735-2989

Several areas in Southeast Texas have been designated as Enterprise Zones by the State of Texas. Projects developed within the zones are eligible for incentives such as franchise tax deductions and a refund of state sales or use taxes paid on machinery and equipment, building materials, labor for the rehabilitation of existing buildings and electricity and gas purchased for use in the zone. Qualified businesses in the zone also have priority or preference for all programs administered by the state. Limited Enterprise Zone benefits are also available to businesses outside of the Enterprise Zone and hire workers from this Zone.

**Foreign Trade Zone**

**Phone:** (409) 983-2011 / 722-7831

The Foreign Trade Zone of Southeast Texas, Inc. is a private non-profit corporation. A Foreign Trade Zone is a site within the United States where foreign and domestic merchandise is considered to be outside U.S. Customs territory. Domestic and foreign goods can be placed in a zone without formal Customs entry, payment of Customs duties or quota limits.

**HUBZone Empowerment Contracting Program**

**Phone:** (202) 205-6400

Port Arthur, from Gulfway Drive, south to Sabine Lake and from Texas 82, east to U.S. 69 is designated as a federal HUBZone. Qualified small businesses in the zone that bid on federal contracts have an edge in receiving those contracts. Eligible firms may also benefit from employer tax credits, tax-free facility bonds and investment tax deductions.

**Website:** [www.sba.gov/hubzone](http://www.sba.gov/hubzone)

**Employment Training**

**Phone:** (409) 719-4750 / (866) 878-4600

The Southeast Texas Workforce Development Board oversees the delivery of all workforce training and services in Jefferson, Orange and Hardin counties. The board serves as a point of contact for local businesses to communicate their needs and to influence the direction of all workforce development programs.

Workforce Centers offer a variety of services for employers and job seekers, including customized training, pre-employment testing of job seekers, recruitment of job seekers with specific skills and planning for growth or downsizing.

**Website:** [www.setworks.org](http://www.setworks.org)

**City Revolving Loan Fund**

**Phone:** (409) 983-8135 / 983-8138

The City of Port Arthur has established a Revolving Loan Fund to make 5-percent low-interest loans to small businesses. The program can make fixed-assets and working capital loans for up to 10 years.

**Skills Development Fund**

The Texas Workforce Commission oversees the Skills Development Fund (SDF). The SDF grants fund the training, and the businesses guarantee jobs for graduates.

**Website:** [www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/sdfintro.html](http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/funds/sdfintro.html)



## **State Economic Development Resources**

### **Licenses and Permits**

**Phone:** (800) 888-0511

The TDED has an online Guide to Texas Business Licenses and Permits that includes general business regulations and information, an alphabetical list of business licenses and permits and lists of state and federal regulatory agencies.

**Website:** [www.texasonline.com/portal/tol/en/bus/home](http://www.texasonline.com/portal/tol/en/bus/home)

### **Economic Development Databases**

**Phone:** (512) 936-0100 / 936-2000

The Economic Information Clearinghouse and the Business and Industry Data Center are economic development tools that allow people to access and compare Texas data that is useful in making business decisions.

**Website:** [www.bidc.state.tx.us/2-4db.htm](http://www.bidc.state.tx.us/2-4db.htm)

### **Domestic Expansion and Recruitment**

**Phone:** (512) 936-0254

Domestic Expansion & Recruitment serves businesses that want to expand existing Texas operations as well as out-of-state businesses interested in relocating or expanding in Texas. Domestic Expansion & Recruitment serves as a focal point for disseminating business leads to Texas communities.

**Website:** [http://governor.state.tx.us/ecodev/business\\_resources](http://governor.state.tx.us/ecodev/business_resources)

### **Texas Enterprise Fund**

**Phone:** (512) 936-0101

The TEF gives Texas the competitive edge in attracting new business to the state or assisting with the substantial expansion of an existing business. This fund provides financial resources to help strengthen the state's economy. The Texas Enterprise Fund, the largest "deal-closing" fund of its kind in the nation, continues to attract businesses and jobs to Texas. The TEF can be used for a variety of economic development projects, including infrastructure development, community development, job training programs and business incentives.

**Website:** [http://governor.state.tx.us/ecodev/financial\\_resources](http://governor.state.tx.us/ecodev/financial_resources)

### **International Business & Recruitment**

**Phone:** (512) 936-0240

The primary objective of the International Business & Recruitment office is to help companies expand into foreign markets. It provides foreign trade leads and encourages foreign representatives to make or strengthen contacts with Texas companies. The office connects companies with trade counseling and training programs available through the International Small Business Development Centers and U.S. Department of Commerce Export Assistance Centers.

**Website:** [http://governor.state.tx.us/ecodev/business\\_resources](http://governor.state.tx.us/ecodev/business_resources)

### **Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center**

**Phone:** (800) 625-4876

TMAC serves as a technical and business resource to streamline manufacturing processes, optimize factory operations, integrate today's technology, facilitate vendor contacts, increase global competitiveness and enhance workforce development. Its field staff specializes in manufacturing and industrial engineering; manufacturing specialists work with small to medium-sized manufacturers, providing technical support and implementing best business practices. TMAC has provided services to a wide range of industries such as metalworking, food processing, electronics, plastics, apparel and more.

**Website:** [www.tmac.org](http://www.tmac.org)

### **State HUB, SBE and DBE Programs**

**Phone:** (409) 984-6531 SBDC

The Historically Underutilized Business is one with ethnic, female or other ownership designated by the government as nontraditional. A business with HUB certification has an advantage when bidding on state contracts. Some state agencies, such as the Texas Department of Transportation, have similar programs offering incentives to businesses designated as a Small Business Enterprise or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. Businesses with one of these certifications have an advantage in seeking a contract with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

**Website:** <http://www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/hub-certification>

**University of Houston SBDC**

**Phone:** (713) 752-8444

The University of Houston Small Business Development Center (UH SBDC) provides business consulting and training to entrepreneurs of small and emerging companies. Start-up and growing businesses meet with professional consultants to evaluate financing alternatives, develop loan packages, review and update business plans and strategies and access financial check ups and recommendations. Evaluate new market opportunities selling to the federal, state and local governments and to customers outside the United States.

**Website:** <http://www.sbdc.uh.edu>

**U.S. Small Business Administration**

**Phone:** (713) 773-6500

The Small Business Administration is a federal agency dedicated to the development and growth of small businesses. Its resources include a Small Business Startup Kit, a library of publications on business topics and a series of loan programs. In most of the loan programs the SBA guarantees loans that are made by its lending partners; the agency currently does not loan funds directly. The 8(a) program is intended to help socially and economically disadvantaged business owners. The SBA also has a Small Business Technology Transfer Program which awards funding for partnerships between small business and nonprofit research institutions. It follows phases similar to those in the SBIR Program, with the first phase qualifying for up to \$100,000 and the second phase for up to \$500,000.

**Website:** [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

**Minority Business Development Agency**

**Phone:** (214) 767-8001

The Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) at the U.S. Department of Commerce is the only federal agency dedicated to advancing the establishment and growth of minority-owned firms in the United States. Through a network of minority business centers and strategic partners, MBDA works with minority entrepreneurs who wish to grow their businesses in size, scale and capacity. These firms are then better positioned to create jobs, impact local economies and expand into national and global markets. MBDA has spent more than four decades increasing the competitiveness of minority firms.

**Website:** [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)