

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Although the Coastal Bend is a major hub for health care services for the South Texas and Northern Mexico region, Coastal Bend residents still outpace state averages for diabetes-related deaths, deaths linked to other behavioral factors such as smoking and obesity, and the overall death rate per year. Contrary to popular belief, the teen pregnancy rate is comparable to the state average, and nearly half the rate of the top county in the state.

Rates of violent and property crime in the Coastal Bend are above the state average in most categories. Corpus Christi's law enforcement efficiency is rated 10th in the state in comparing budget to personnel numbers, but the ratio of law enforcement officers to population is well below the state average.

- Corpus Christi is home to the region's major hospitals, which are located on several campuses.
- Del Mar College dedicated \$30 million to construct and equip the award-winning Health Sciences and Emerging Technology Complex to its West Campus to offer 16 health science technology programs including the Pharmacy, Biomedical Instrumentation and Echocardiography Technologies.
- Texas A&M University is building a Health Sciences Center in Corpus Christi to provide instruction for third- and fourth-year medical students from Texas A&M University College of Medicine.

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE - NUECES COUNTY

- Nueces County had a lower ratio of people to health professionals than the statewide average in 2000, based on the number of health professionals per 100,000 people. This means that health professionals saw fewer patients than the state average:

	Nueces County	State
Number of Direct Care Patient Physicians	715	31,769
Ratio of population per direct care physician	439	656
Ratio of population per general/family practice	2,681	3,789
Ratio of population (females 15-44) per ob/gyn	1,748	2,298
Number of Registered nurses	2,665	131,205
Ratio of population per registered nurse	118	159
Number of Dentists	112	7,417
Ratio of population per dentist	2,800	2,811

Ratios are determined by dividing total population for each county the the number of health care professionals in each category.

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services

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ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE - SAN PATRICIO COUNTY

- San Patricio County had a higher ratio of people to health professionals than the statewide average in all but one category:

	San Patricio County	State
Number of Direct Patient Care Physicians	34	31,769
Ratio of Population per Direct Care Physician	1,975	656
Ratio of Population per General/Family Practice	3,357	3,789
Ratio of Population (Females 15-44) per ob/gyn	0	2,298
Number of Registered Nurses	158	131,205
Ratio of Population per Registered Nurse	425	159
Number of Dentists	14	7,417
Ratio of Population per Dentist	4,796	2,811

Ratios are determined by dividing total population for each county the the number of health care professionals in each category.

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services

- Medicaid paid for 64.8% of births in Nueces County and 62.0% in San Patricio County in 2004 compared with the statewide average of 53.6%.

- The number of residents receiving Medicaid has increased in both Nueces and San Patricio Counties between 2000 and 2004. The number rose by 24.6% in Nueces County and 40% in San Patricio County.

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Regional Mortality Rates and Causes

- Nueces and San Patricio Counties had higher death rates per 100,000 population in 2004 than the state average. The rate in Nueces County was 866.3 compared to the state average of 827.7. In San Patricio County, the rate was 943.3.

MORTALITY – NUECES COUNTY

	Deaths	County Rate	State Rate
Deaths from All Causes	2,407	866.3	827.7
Cardiovascular Disease	759	280.4	299.1
Heart Disease	541	199.0	224.5
Stroke	157	58.1	56.2
All Cancer	504	177.6	181.4
Lung Cancer	130	46.4	52.0
Female Breast Cancer	31	19.5	23.2
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	123	45.3	41.7
Diabetes	155	54.7	29.6
Unintentional Injury (Accidents)	122	42.0	39.2
Motor Vehicle Injury	48	15.5	17.1
Homicide	23	7.1	6.1
Suicide	27	8.7	10.6
Infant Deaths	38	7.6	6.3
Fetal Deaths	24	4.8	5.6

MORTALITY – SAN PATRICIO COUNTY

	Deaths	County Rate	State Rate
Deaths From All Causes	519	934.3	827.7
Cardiovascular Disease	181	341.5	299.1
Heart Disease	131	246.2	224.5
Stroke	39	75.2	56.2
All Cancer	107	181.3	181.4
Lung Cancer	35	60.3	52.0
Female Breast Cancer	5	--	23.2
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	27	49.8	41.7
Diabetes	41	72.9	29.6
Unintentional Injury (Accidents)	22	35.4	39.2
Motor Vehicle Injury	7	--	17.1
Suicide	12	--	10.6
Infant Deaths	11	--	6.3
Fetal Deaths	12	--	5.6

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services Center for Health Statistics 2004

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■ The death rate from diabetes rose in Nueces and San Patricio Counties from 2000 to 2004 even though the rate declined statewide. The statewide rate dropped from 31.1 deaths per 100,000 population to 29.6. Meanwhile, the death rate in Nueces County climbed from 47.7 to 54.7 and, in San Patricio County, from 58.2 to 72.9.

■ The Texas Department of State Health Services measured behavioral health risk factors in Public Health Administration Region 11, which includes Nueces and San Patricio Counties, and found that a higher percentage of residents were at risk in seven of eight categories:

BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTORS, REGION 11 VS. NATION, STATE TEXAS GULF COAST INCLUDING COASTAL BEND COUNTIES

Behavioral Risk Factor	Percent at Risk		
	Nationwide	State	Region 11
No Pap Smear within 3 years, Women over 18	16.1	19.8	37.5
No Mammogram within 2 yrs, Women over 18	23.4	29.0	34.0
No Health Insurance	15.6	25.2	40.3
Could Not See a Doctor Because of Cost	13.3	18.5	29.6
Overweight & Obesity (BMI 25 or Greater)	61.5	62.3	71.7
Obesity (BMI 30 or greater)	26.1	26.1	32.7
Diabetes	8.1	8.0	12.3
Alcohol Use: Binge Drinking	15.0	14.6	13.2

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services

Pregnancy and Birth Rates

- Contrary to popular opinion, as far back as 1994 statistics show that Nueces County does not have the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Texas.
- In 2003, Nueces County's teen pregnancy rate was 27.9 per 1,000 teenagers compared to the statewide average of 27.6. The highest rate was in Starr County with 50.2 teen pregnancies per 1,000 teens. Five urban areas in Texas had a higher percentage of teen births to total births than Corpus Christi in 2003.
- Between 2000 and 2004, the percentage of births to females under the age of 18 declined at a slightly higher rate in Nueces County compared with the decline statewide, and the rate of decline in San Patricio County was twice the state average.

- The percentage of births to unwed mothers has increased in Nueces County from 39.3% in 2000 to 47.3% in 2004. In San Patricio County, the percentage has gone from 35.1% to 42.2%. The statewide numbers are 30.6% and 36%.
- The percentage of low-birth-weight babies increased in Nueces County between 2000 and 2004, increasing from 8.4% to 9.3%, while in San Patricio County the numbers were reversed.
- Chlamydia and gonorrhea rates were higher in Nueces County in 2004 than the state average. San Patricio County reported lower rates of communicable diseases in 2004 than the state average in all eight categories, including sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

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Crime and Public Safety

- In 2004, the crime rate in Corpus Christi was 154.5 per 10,000 residents compared with the state average of 97.2.
- In 2006, 2,070 violent crimes were reported in Corpus Christi and 19,138 property crimes.

- The crime rate in Corpus Christi is higher than the national average in both violent crimes and property crimes.
- Among eight categories of crimes monitored by the FBI, Corpus Christi has a higher crime rate than the state average in seven categories.

2006 CORPUS CHRISTI CRIME RATE PER 100,000 POPULATION

	Texas	Corpus Christi
Violent Crime	516.3	710.1
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	5.9	7.2
Forcible Rape	35.6	57.3
Robbery	158.5	160.5
Aggravated Assault	316.4	485.1
Property Crime	4,081.5	6,565.2
Burglary	917.3	1,030.8
Larceny/Theft	2,758.2	5,232.2
Motor Vehicle Theft	405.9	299.1

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation

- Corpus Christi employed 150.6 law enforcement personnel per 100,000 residents in 2006 compared with a statewide average of 213.4.
- Corpus Christi employed 67.6 civilians in law enforcement agencies in 2006 compared with a statewide average of 138 per 100,000 population.
- Corpus Christi's Crime Control and Prevention District, funded by a one-eighth-cent sales tax, was renewed in 2007 for another 10 years.
- Corpus Christi's Crime Control and Prevention District funding (more than \$4.9 million in 2007-2008) has funded 50 additional officers in high crime areas of the city, among other things.

Questions We Need to Consider

1. How can we improve Coastal Bend residents' access to adequate health care services?
2. How can we lower illness and death rates from high-risk behaviors?
3. How can we lower teenaged mother birth rates?
4. How can we lower the rates of sexually-transmitted disease?
5. How can we lower the rates of violent crime in the region?
6. How can we lower the rates of property crimes?

Sources:

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Texas Department of State Health Services