

Hurricane Ike Impact Report: Chambers County



Texas Engineering Extension
Service

Knowledge Engineering

800-541-7149

KE@teexmail.tamu.edu

HURRICANE IKE IMPACT REPORT

CHAMBERS COUNTY SUMMARY

Economic Impact

Overall Economic Impact to Chambers County is estimated to be \$20 billion

\$20.9 billion in estimated losses to the industrial sectors

\$24.4 million in estimated losses to the services sectors

\$10.9 million in estimated losses to the agricultural sectors

The total economic impact (loss) to Chambers County from Hurricane Ike is estimated to be \$20 billion. Numbers are based on the Disaster Impact Model's accumulation of loss in sales during the four quarters (2008 Q4 – 2009 Q3) following Hurricane Ike. Already considered the most costly storm to make landfall in Texas, Hurricane Ike's true economic impacts to the region continue to be analyzed. Chambers County's utilities sector was impacted the hardest following Ike, experiencing an estimated \$12.1 billion in losses alone.

Impact Report

COUNTY INFORMATION

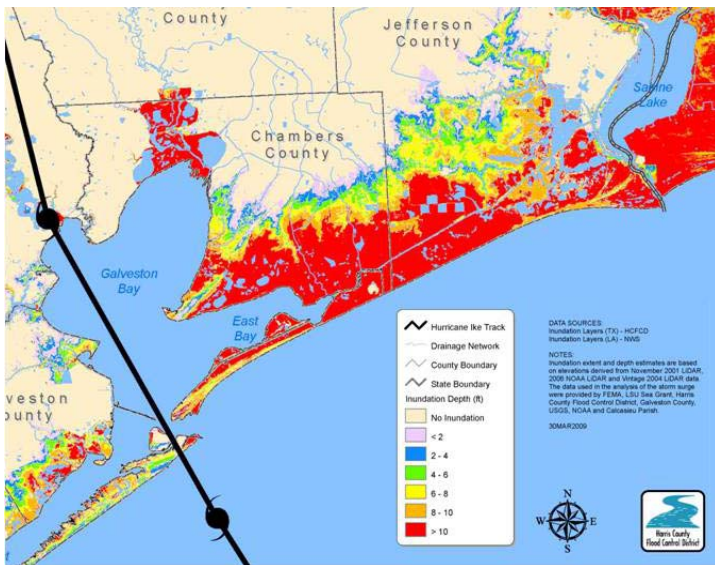
Chambers County is a Texas coastal attraction that relies primarily on natural assets and agricultural industries in the central and eastern parts of the county, and the petro-chemical industry in the west. Chambers County is home to 29,356(2008) residents along with the Anahuac

National Wildlife Refuge and Bolivar Flats.

Primarily rural, Chambers County relies on rice farming, ranching, hunting, fishing, marine trades and eco-tourism to support jobs in their economy. The county is bordered by two bodies of water with Galveston Bay on the West and bounded on the south by Galveston's East Bay.

Hurricane Ike

Chambers County has endured numerous Hurricanes, including Katrina, Rita, Dolly, Gustav and Ike, along with tropical storm Eduardo, within the three year span from 2005-2008.



Hurricane Ike made landfall on September 13, 2008, with category 2 winds and Category 4 water surges. As the eye of the storm moved through Galveston Bay water surges reached 20 feet. The water surge was responsible for wiping out two small fishing communities, Smith Point and Oak Island, along with inundating nearly 143,000 acres with salt

County Impacts

According to the Disaster Impact Model, developed by Texas A&M AgriLife, the estimated economic impact to Chambers County for the 12 month period following Ike was **\$20 billion**. Among the 29 industry sectors evaluated in Chambers County, the utilities sector suffered the greatest economic loss at \$12.1 billion. Chambers County also suffered the greatest loss, among impacted counties, in certified nursing home beds. Chambers County lost nearly 45.5% of the county's capacity, primarily from the closing of the Anahuac Healthcare Center's 100 bed facility due to Ike related damages.

Housing and jobs along the western shore of Chambers County are a major concern. Communities like Smith Point and Oak Island suffered severe home losses. Of the 350 homes in Oak Island prior to Ike, only 50 were left standing, half of which were uninhabitable. The residents of these communities were the backbone to Chambers County's clam, oyster and shrimp industry which were inoperable with the loss of boats, shelter and processing facilities.

Hurricane Ike surged salt water onto roughly 146,000 acres of land in Chambers County washing away livestock fences and destroying crop

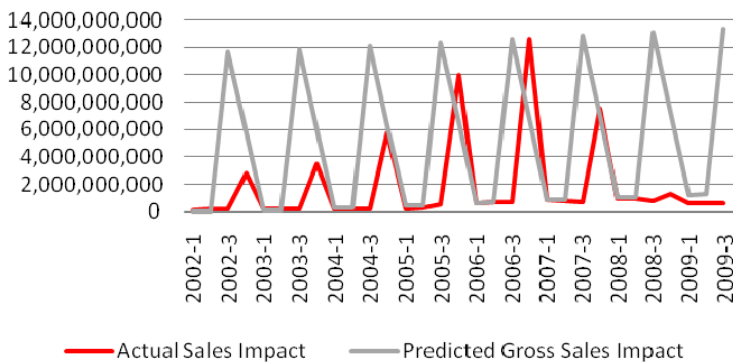
lands. The salt waters impacted the rice farms the hardest with 12-month-losses following Ike estimated at \$9.7 million.

Debris was also a major problem following the storm, especially for Chambers County which received large debris deposits from their southern neighbor Bolivar Peninsula and High Island in Galveston County. Chambers County endured debris 15 to 18 miles in land resulting in miles of debris piles during clean-up. The cost of debris removal for Chambers County was \$64,439,825.26 (FEMA.gov).

Federal Funding

- \$15,586,286.89 in Individual Assistance grants
- \$13,712,685.09 in Housing Assistance grants
- \$1,873,601.80 in Other Needs Assistance grants
- \$74,610,145.99 in Public Assistance grants
- \$14,504,800.00 in U.S. Small Business Administration loans

Chambers County- Economy-wide Ike Impact



After Hurricane Ike (2008 4Q – 2009 3Q) Chambers County experienced on average a 71% per quarter reduction in gross sales during the four quarters following the storm. Total losses to the county are estimated at \$20 billion.