Hurricane Ike Impact Report: Chambers County
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 Penninsula 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

---

*After Hurricane Ike (2008 4Q – 2009 3Q) Chambers County experienced an 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.*

---

Hurricane Ike Impact Report
Texas Engineering Extension Service
www.thestormresource.com