



# 2015

## STATE OF THE REGION REPORT

**Ventura County Civic Alliance**

Advancing Regional Stewardship & Dialogue

# The Business of Workforce Vitality

The **Workforce Investment Board** (WIB) of Ventura County is committed to growing the skilled, competitive workforce needed for economic vitality in the Ventura County region. Through strategic connections, collaboration, and job seeker and employer services, our business is bringing people and opportunities together.

The WIB is proud to sponsor the 2015 Ventura County Civic Alliance State of the Region Report.

Learn more at  
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THE VENTURA COUNTY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DIVISION OF  
**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**



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# About the Ventura County Civic Alliance

## Promoting a healthy and sustainable future for the Ventura County region

Founded in 2001 as an initiative of the Ventura County Community Foundation, the Ventura County Civic Alliance is a coalition of civic leaders with a shared commitment to the three Es — the Economic, Environmental and social

Equity interests of our region. This balance ensures that our research and community dialogue is embedded with a broad and diverse set of perspectives and priorities.

### The Civic Alliance focuses on these areas:

The **Livable Communities Initiative** works with local governments and civic groups to increase understanding and support for integrating livable community principles into development decisions, and to showcase how those principles are being used throughout Ventura County.

The **Workforce Education Initiative** promotes integrated economic and workforce development strategies that match employer needs with skilled workers. This group collaborates with other organizations to create and maintain a skilled and educated workforce, in order to keep our businesses successful, our economy strong and our residents gainfully employed so they can live productive and prosperous lives.

The **Alliance for Linked Learning** is an innovative collaboration between the Oxnard Union High School District, businesses in Oxnard, Port Hueneme and Camarillo, and local organizations and leaders determined to ensure that graduating seniors are prepared for college, career and life. This effort promotes diverse high school academies centered around career exploration to engage students and allow them to understand the modern economy so that they excel in their college pursuits or immediately in careers. The Civic Alliance is proud to serve as the business intermediary.

**Civic Dialogue** is a core mission of the Ventura County Civic Alliance and we continue to explore and promote forums and technologies to engage our community and foster dialogue between residents and community leaders. The State of the Region Report, and its fact-based research, is a tool to better inform all stakeholders.







# Core Principles & Values

The Alliance holds a set of core beliefs that guides its mission: regional stewardship, open dialogue, collaboration, evenhandedness, unbiased research, and community building and decision making by consensus. We bring together residents and civic organizations to cooperatively explore options and find integrated solutions to the complex economic, environmental and social challenges of our region.

The Alliance welcomes supporters to become members for a small annual fee. Members receive discounts to special events, newsletters, invitations to participate on committees, and most importantly, the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to ensuring Ventura County's quality of life. To join, visit [CivicAlliance.org](http://CivicAlliance.org).



## VCCA Executive Committee

**Tracy Perez** – VCCA Chair  
*United Staffing Associates*

**Kay Faulconer Boger, Ed.D.** –  
Immediate Past VCCA Chair  
*Workforce Development Consultant*

**David Maron** – State of the Region  
Report Committee Chair and  
VCCA Vice Chair  
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**Sean Bhardwaj**  
*Aspire<sup>3</sup> Entrepreneur Education*

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**Stacy Roscoe**  
*Community Volunteer*

**Sandy Smith**  
*SESPE Consulting, Inc.*

**Nancy Stehle**  
*Retired Environmental Consultant*

**Tom Tarantino**  
*City of Santa Paula*

# Key Statistics

## Ventura County

### POPULATION

**2013:** 829,017  
**2005:** 782,759  
**2000:** 753,197  
**Number of Veterans:** 47,834  
**Persons per household:** 3.06  
**Land Area (2010):** 1,843 sq. miles  
**Persons per square mile:** 449.8

### MEDIAN AGE

**2013:** 36.6  
**2011:** 36.5  
**2005:** 35.4  
**2000:** 34.2

### INCOME

**Percent of residents below the poverty level:** 11.1%  
**Per Capita Income:** \$32,930  
**Median Household Income:** \$77,363  
**Median Family Income:** \$86,048

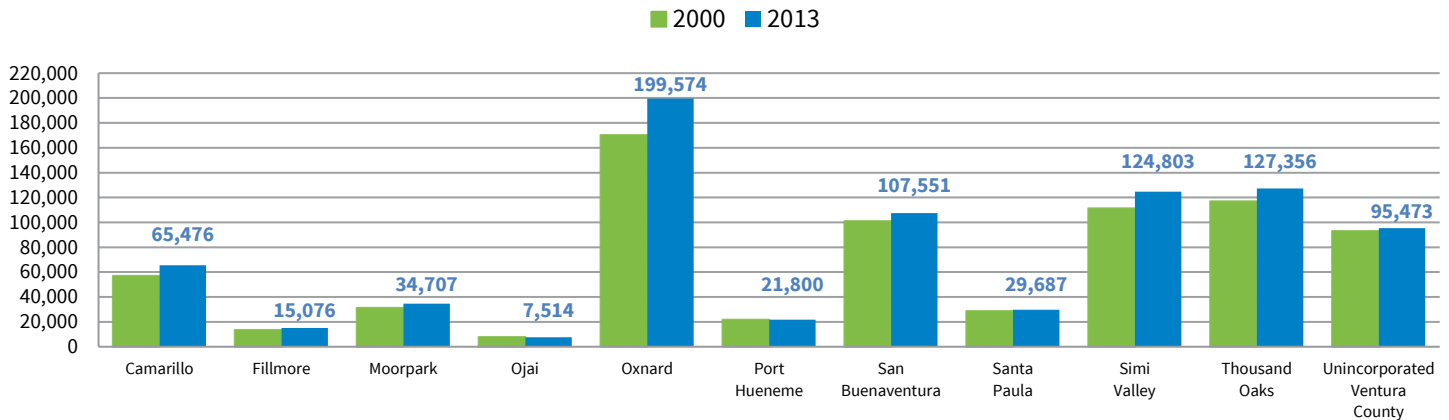
**Household income** includes all households, **family income** only includes households with two or more persons related through blood, marriage or adoption.

### EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT, AGE 25+

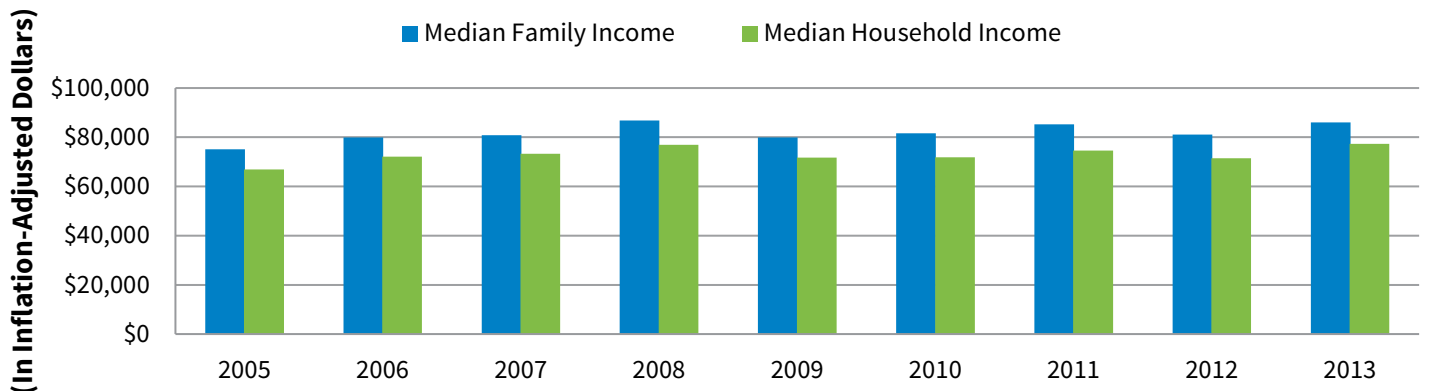
**High school diploma or higher:** 82.8%  
**Bachelor's degree or higher:** 31.4%

All information listed is for 2013, unless otherwise noted.

### Population by City in Ventura County (2000 - 2013)

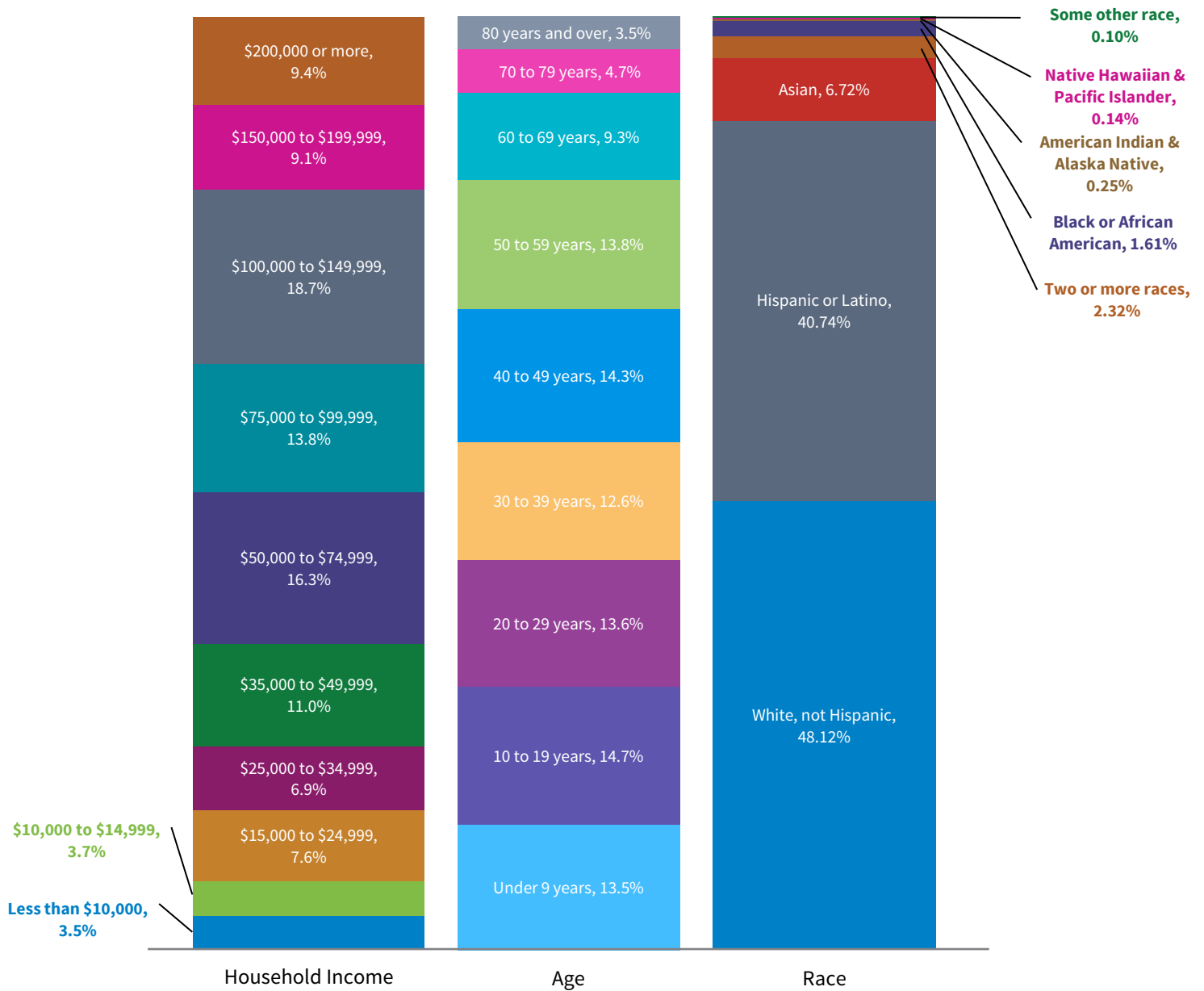


### Ventura County Median Household & Family Income in Inflation-Adjusted Dollars (2005 - 2013)





## Ventura County Population by Household Income, Age and Race (2013)



# The State of the Region, Ventura County 2015

The Ventura County Civic Alliance (VCCA) is proud to provide this updated report on 12 domains of interest to Ventura County residents. After our last report in 2013, we surveyed local leaders to identify additional categories of importance to our community. In this 2015 report, we have added 16 new statistical measures for a total of 78 overall. Look for the “New This Year” icon at the top of selected pages to gain insight into these trends impacting our region.

We believe effective civic engagement and policy formation require accurate data to understand the issues impacting our region, and we are committed to releasing these reports every two years to serve that purpose. At our core, the Civic Alliance is a neutral convener on community issues, whether that means workforce education, livable communities, civic dialog or sustaining Ventura County’s quality of life.

We are grateful for the generous support of our sponsors, who understand the importance of the State of the Region Report to Ventura County. The research, writing, design, printing, project management and distribution of this report is a massive undertaking which would be impossible without their support.

As in 2002, 2007 and 2013, the Ventura County Civic Alliance is proud to contract with the California Lutheran University School of Management to research and compile this 2015 State of the Region Report. The school has helped us produce a reliable source of objective, unbiased information about the quality of life in Ventura County and the trends that impact our community. This data will assist business leaders, community organizations and elected officials in shaping our regional identity. Our goal, in collaboration with other stakeholders, is to reach across long-standing boundaries and barriers to solve problems and measure the effectiveness of our efforts over time.

This report is designed to be easy to read; each page stands on its own so you can jump around from section to section. In the Sources section, you will find the sources of every measure in this report, along with websites you may use to pursue your own research.

We hope you will find the results of our research as enlightening as we have, and we look forward to working with you to achieve effective solutions to our common challenges.

**David Maron**

*State of the Region  
Report Committee Chair*

**Tracy Perez**

*VCCA Chair*

**Kay Faulconer Boger, Ed.D.**

*Immediate Past VCCA Chair*

**Sandy Smith**

*Past VCCA Chair*

**Ron Bottorff**

*State of the Region  
Report Committee*



# Agriculture

**The state of agriculture in Ventura County, and in much of the Western United States, can be summed up in one word: dry.**

By the summer of 2014, the word “drought” by itself was insufficient. All of California was in a state of drought defined as “severe,” “extreme” or “exceptional” by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The driest category, “exceptional drought,” covered more than one third of the state, and much of its prime farmland. Ventura County, along with the rest of the coast between Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area, fell into that category.

Drought isn’t the only challenge that Ventura County farmers face. The Asian citrus psyllid, a pest that spreads a disease that can wipe out citrus crops, has been spotted throughout the county. The disease itself hasn’t been detected, and the psyllid infestations are lighter than those in other parts of Southern California.

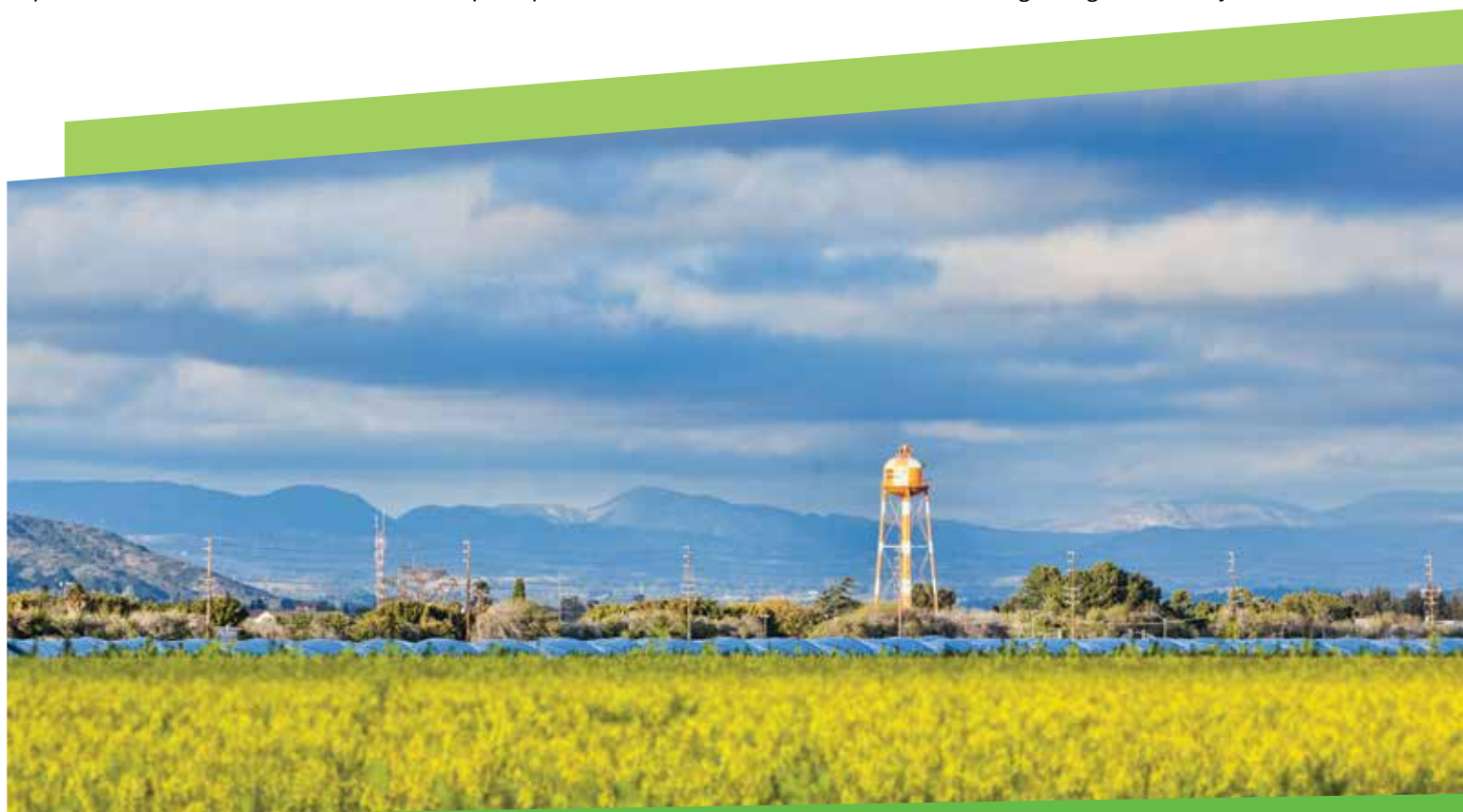
Cost and availability of labor remains an issue for growers, particularly in light of the stalemate over immigration policy.

Pressure to develop farmland is ever-present, even in Ventura County, where most agricultural property is legally required to remain as either farmland or open space. The

laws that limit development of farmland and open space are set to expire starting in 2020, and slow-growth advocates are preparing to take them to the ballot for renewal in 2016.

But for now, it’s scarcity of water that affects nearly every aspect of farming, down to the decision of whether to plant at all on a particular piece of land. As strawberry growers planned for their 2015 harvests, they prepared to leave hundreds of acres fallow because they were not sure they would have reliable water supplies. And the water that was left — most of it pumped from private wells — is getting worse in quality as it dwindles in quantity.

The county’s agricultural industry grew even after the drought set in, with 2013 setting records again for total farm revenues. Ventura County has weathered droughts before, and its farmers have persevered. This time around, the drought is prompting farmers to be more efficient with their water and compelling water suppliers to find new sources and new infrastructure for storage and delivery. Both efforts will continue to pay off once this drought ends, during normal rains and when the next big drought inevitably arrives.



# HARVESTED ACRES

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of crop-producing acres in Ventura County. It includes all irrigated acres plus a small amount of dry-land farmed acreage. It excludes rangelands and agricultural lands that are not producing crops.

## Why is the measure important?

Harvested acres represents virtually all active farmland, so it offers insight into how much of the county is being put to productive agricultural use. When compared to the county's agricultural output, harvested acres can form a rough gauge of the efficiency of the area's farmers. It can also measure how much land is being lost to urban and suburban development. Finally, the harvested acreage data is broken down into different types of crops, so it describes how the agricultural industry is changing as growers move in and out of certain crops.

## How are we doing?

The portion of Ventura County land that is actively farmed grew dramatically in 2012 and 2013, after years of gradual decline. In 2013, there were 106,613 acres in use, an increase of 14.7 percent over two years.

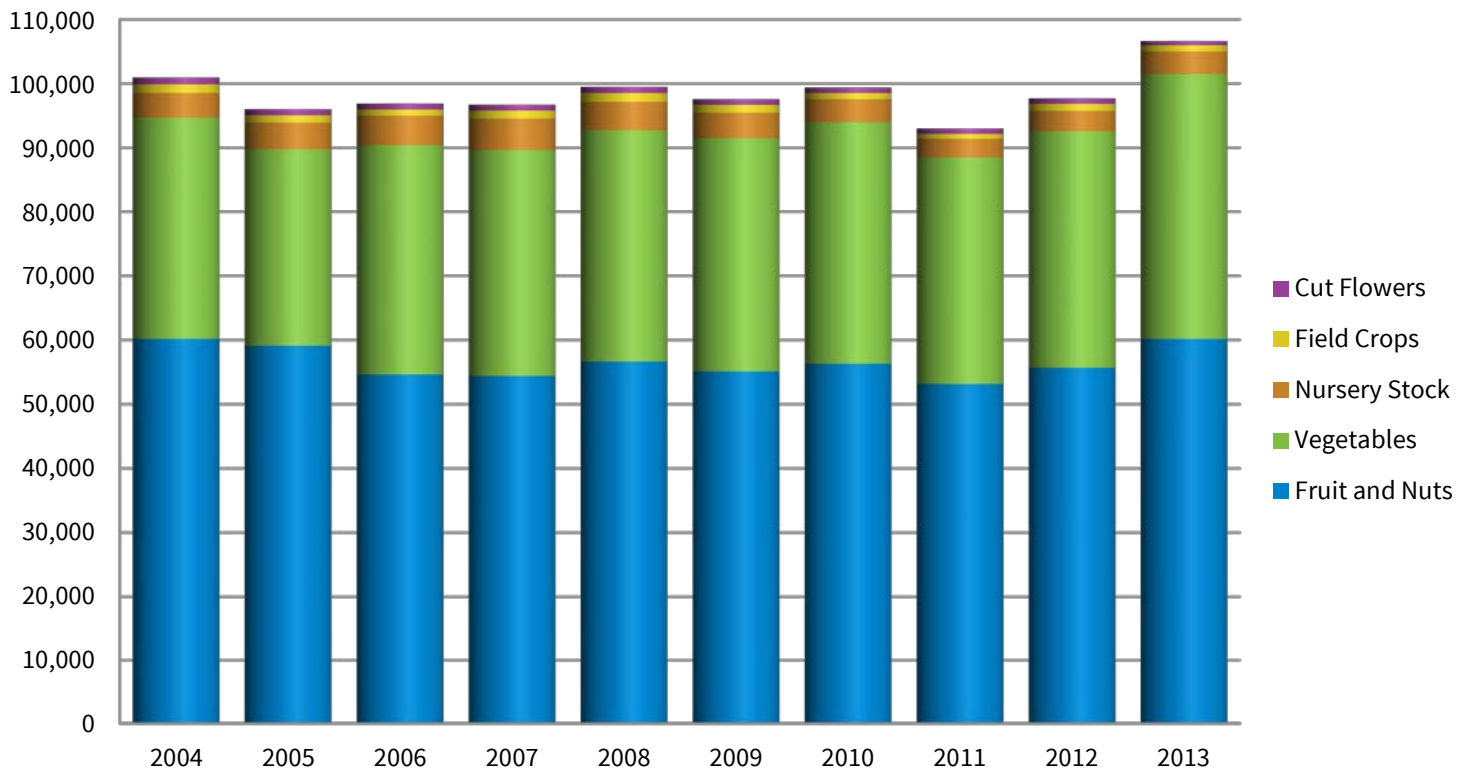
It was the first time since 2004 that more than 100,000 acres were harvested in Ventura County. In the 1990s, harvested acreage hovered around 110,000. It began to drop around the turn of the millennium, and bottomed out in 2011. The likeliest factors behind the decline were a shift to crops, such as berries, that use less land; and development of some farmland for residential or commercial uses.

There are a number of possible explanations for the recent expansion. One is that 2013 was not a good year for strawberries, the county's most valuable crop. With prices and yield per acre both low, strawberry growers may have planted more acres in an attempt to stem their losses.

Diversification of the county's farm industry also appears to be driving the expansion onto more land. The acreage devoted to fruit and nuts, the most common type of crop in Ventura County, was about the same in 2013 as it was seven years before. But the amount of land planted with vegetables grew by nearly 35 percent over the same period.

There are some anecdotal signs that the growth in harvested acres may already have peaked. Many growers have reported leaving fields fallow due to the drought, though it won't be clear how many have done so until the crop report for 2014 is released in 2015.

**Total Harvested Acres in Ventura County (2004 - 2013)**





# CROP CHANGES

## What is the measure?

The measure is a series of snapshots of the 10 most valuable crops in Ventura County in 1922, 1952, 1992 and 2013.

## Why is the measure important?

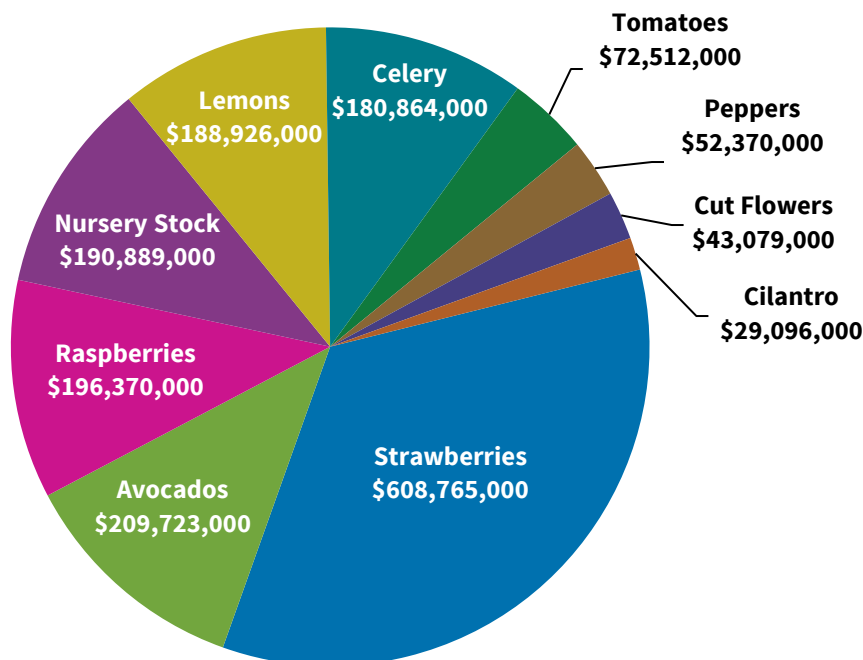
It's not just the presence of agriculture that's important to Ventura County; the specifics of what's grown and raised here are crucial to determining the region's character. Orchards, row crops, berries, livestock and other products have different economic, environmental and aesthetic impacts on the county. Changes in crop production are also a window into our evolving tastes and demands as consumers.

## How are we doing?

Over the past century, Ventura County has evolved from a bean-growing region to one of the nation's leading strawberry hubs. In 2013, strawberries were worth nearly three times as much as the next most valuable crop, avocados. Citrus and other tree crops have always been prevalent in the county, with lemons as the most valuable crop from the 1930s through the 1990s. The orange industry, though, has never recovered from a slump in the 1990s.

The overarching trend in the county's agricultural industry has been a move away from crops that require a lot of land and a little labor, like beans, toward crops that require a lot of labor and a little land, like berries. Farmland in Ventura County is many times more expensive than farmland in most of the nation, so growers are pressed to be as efficient as possible. Labor, on the other hand, is relatively cheap.

**Top 10 Ventura County Crops (2013)**



**Crop Changes in Ventura County (1922 - 2013)**

Crop Ranking	1922	1952	1992	2013	2013 Value
1	Beans	Lemons	Lemons	Strawberries	\$608,765,000
2	Lemons	Valencia Oranges	Strawberries	Avocados	\$209,723,000
3	Walnuts	Beans	Celery	Raspberries	\$196,370,000
4	Apricots	Misc. Vegetables	Nursery Stock	Nursery Stock	\$190,889,000
5	Valencia Oranges	Walnuts	Valencia Oranges	Lemons	\$188,926,000
6	Sugar Beets	Livestock	Avocados	Celery	\$180,864,000
7	Navel Oranges	Poultry Products	Lettuce	Tomatoes	\$72,512,000
8	Hay	Dairy Products	Cut Flowers	Peppers	\$52,370,000
9	Grain	Navel Oranges	Broccoli	Cut Flowers	\$43,079,000
10	Misc. Citrus	Grain	Cabbage	Cilantro	\$29,096,000

# CROP VALUE

## What is the measure?

The measure is crop value, which is the total wholesale value of all crops and livestock produced in the county, as reported annually by the Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner.

## Why is the measure important?

Crop value measures the overall size, as well as the growth or contraction, of the agricultural industry, along with its relative importance to the overall county economy. It is a measure of total revenue, not the net return to growers, so it does not reflect profits or losses in the industry.

## How are we doing?

Even with a poor year for the county's most valuable crop, 2013 was a record year for the Ventura County agricultural industry. Revenues topped \$2 billion for the first time, and the total was 12.7 percent higher than it had been just two years earlier.

Agriculture's share of the Ventura County economy has grown seven of the past eight years. In 2013, agriculture was 5.38 percent of the county's economy, up from a low point of 3.75 percent in 2005.

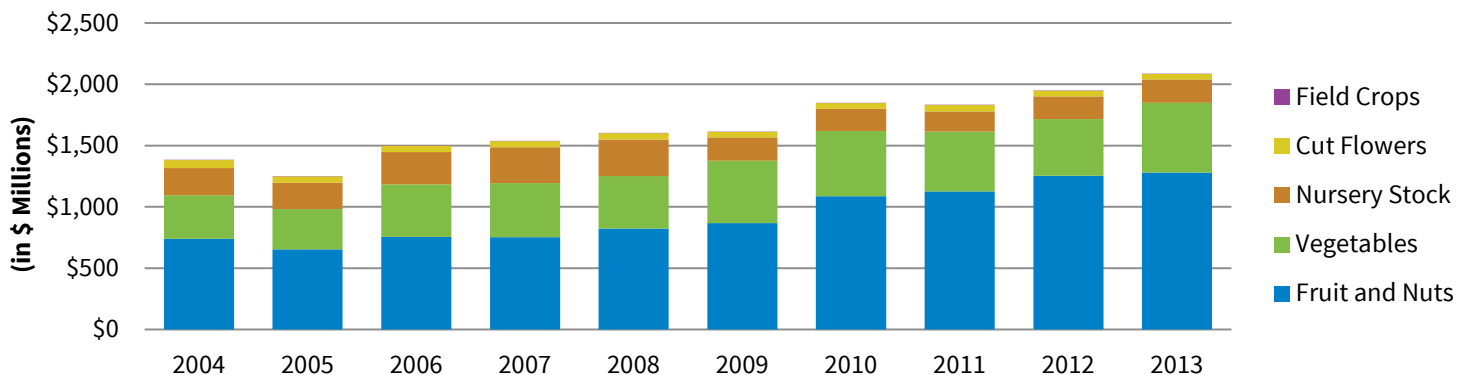
Strawberries are by far the county's most valuable crop, worth almost three times as much as avocados, the runner-up. In 2013, the county's strawberries were worth \$608.8 million, a drop of 11.9 percent from the year before. Growers have reported a few reasons for their struggles, with the drought topping the list. Many of the other problems were exacerbated by drought — for example, cold weather is hard on berries, and the combination of cold and dry weather in 2013 left many plants dehydrated. Scarcity of water also makes it hard to combat predatory insects, and strawberry crops in 2013 were hit hard by spider mites and other bugs.

It's not clear whether the drop in strawberry revenue is a one-year blip or the beginning of a trend. The drought, of course, has only gotten worse since the 2013 harvest, but other factors dragging down strawberry sales appear to be temporary.

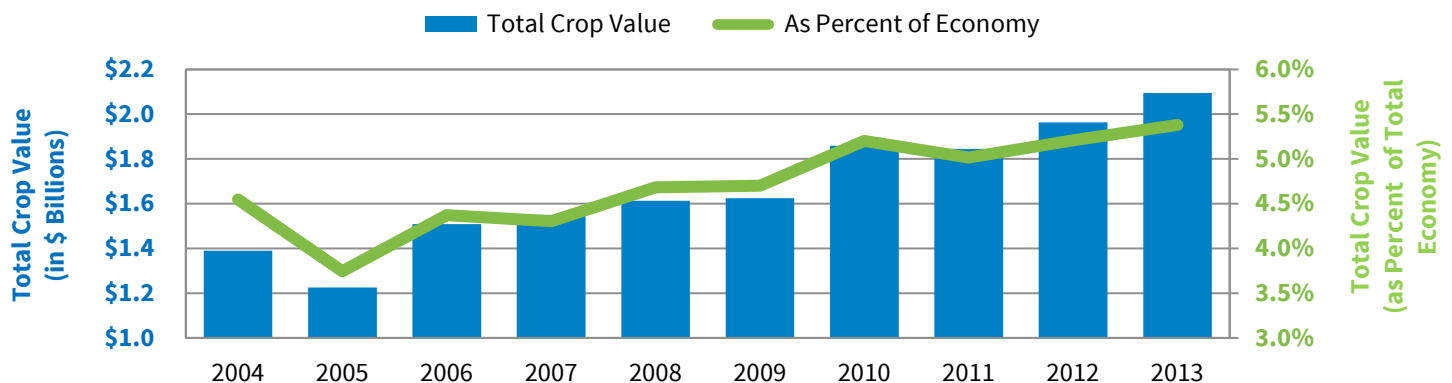
Almost every major crop in Ventura County saw an increase in production in 2013, with the exception of strawberries. Avocado revenue nearly doubled over the previous year, with most of the growth due to higher prices and better per-acre productivity.

Most of the county's biggest crops are fruits, but vegetables are the fastest-growing category. In 2013 growers sold \$568.7 million in vegetables, 23.6 percent more than in 2012.

## Value of Harvested Acres in Ventura County (2004 - 2013)



## Total Crop Value as Percent of Total Ventura County Economy (2004 - 2013)



# ORGANIC PRODUCTION

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of acres devoted to organic farming. According to federal standards in place since 2002, organic food is defined as having been produced without using most conventional pesticides; without fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; without bioengineering and without ionizing radiation. Animals raised in an organic operation must be fed organic feed and have access to the outdoors, and cannot be given antibiotics or growth hormones.

## Why is the measure important?

Organic products are a large and rapidly growing part of the agricultural economy. Their adoption by major chains has brought them into refrigerators in every part of the country. They tend to command higher prices than conventionally farmed products, making them potentially lucrative for farmers.

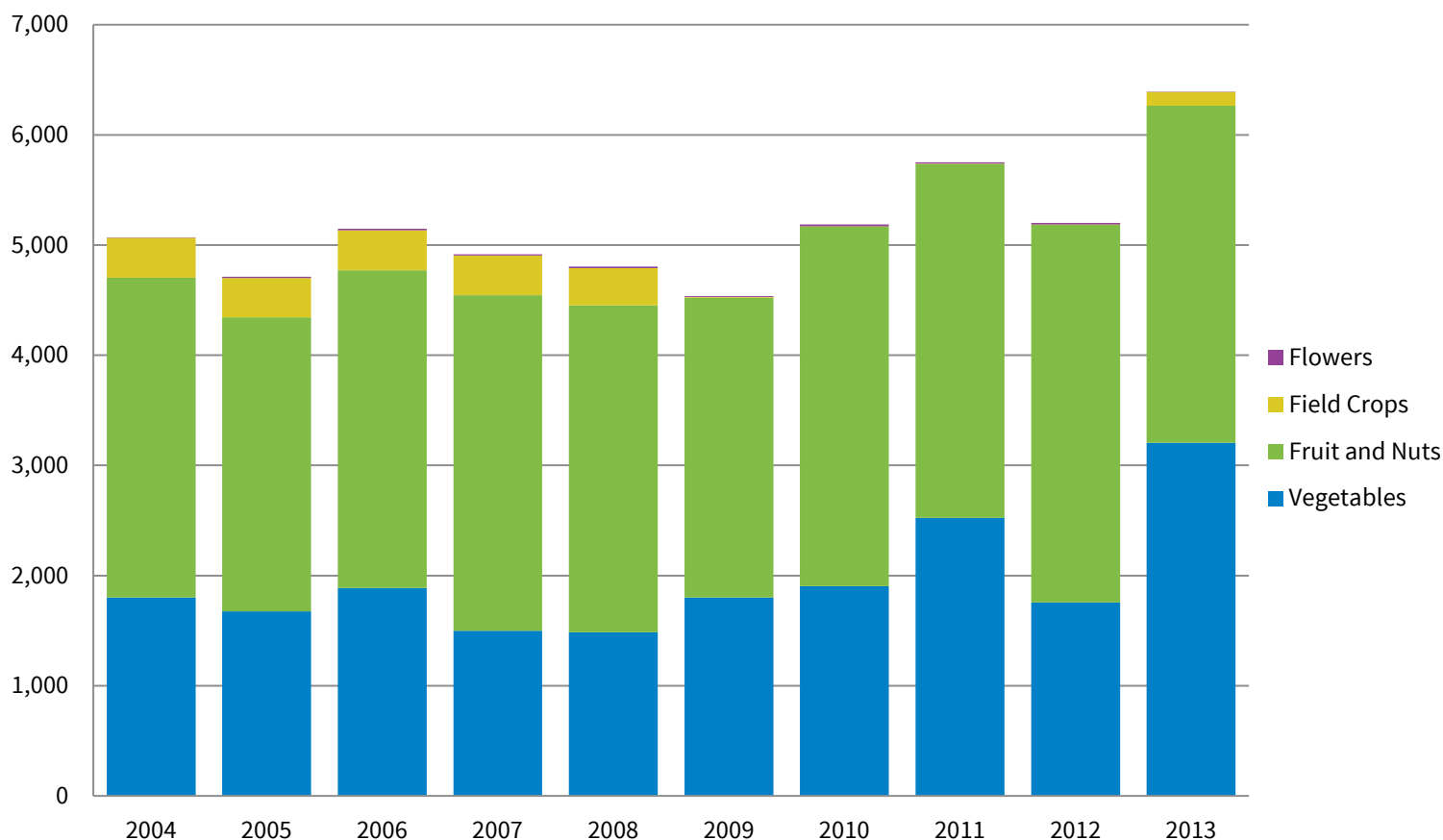
## How are we doing?

Organic acreage in Ventura County hit an all-time high in 2013, at 6,394 acres. It is still a niche market, though, accounting for a little less than 6 percent of the county's harvested acres.

The area devoted to organic crops in the county has fluctuated, but the general trend is upward, increasing 23 percent from 2012 to 2013.

Vegetables are the category of crop most likely to be grown organically. In 2013, 7.8 percent of vegetable acres were planted with organic produce, compared to 5 percent of fruit and nut acreage. Land devoted to organic flowers or field crops is nearly nonexistent in Ventura County.

**Acres of Organic Farming in Ventura County (2004 - 2013)**



# LAND VALUES

## What is the measure?

The measure is the median value of one acre of agricultural land. The land is divided into row crops, such as berries, and different types of tree crops. The estimates are drawn from records of property sales compiled by a statewide professional appraisers' association.

## Why is the measure important?

Land, whether bought or leased, is one of the biggest costs for any agricultural operation. The price of land reflects not only its perceived value as growing territory, but the potential value it might have if developed. Since most Ventura County farmland is restricted from development by growth-control laws, that speculative value is probably lower than it could be.

## How are we doing?

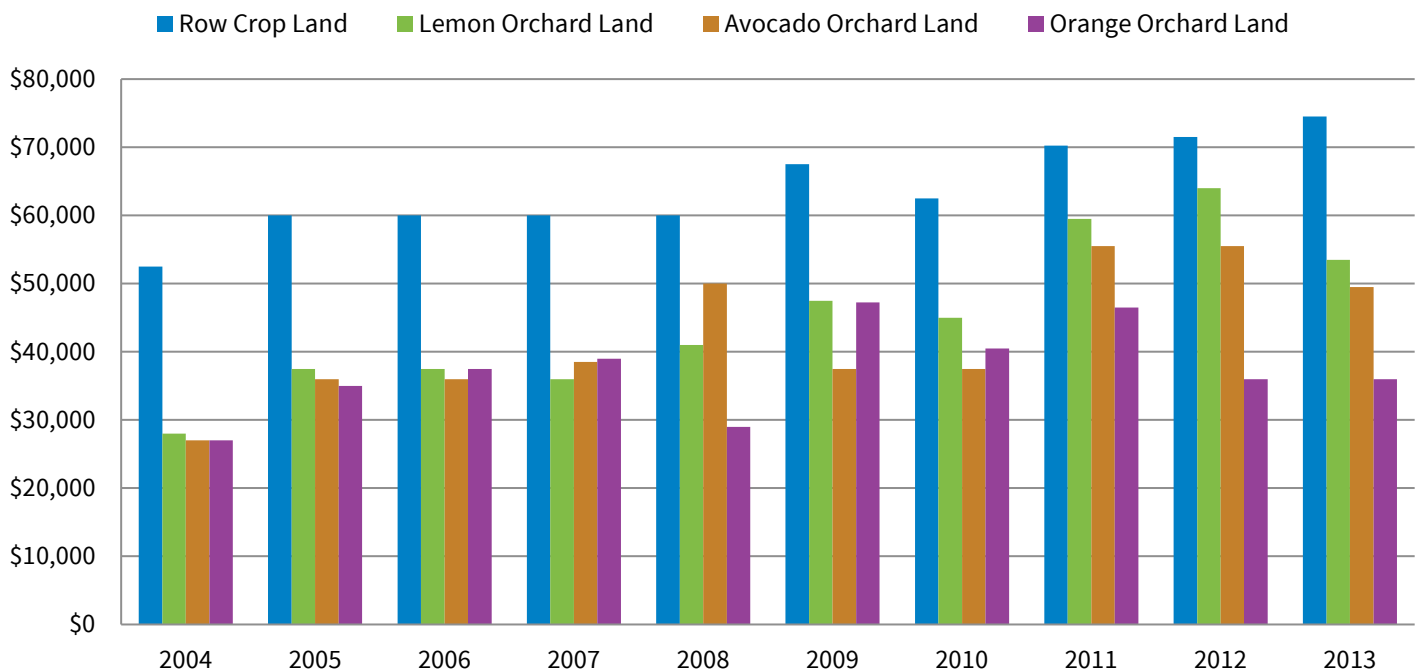
The value of Ventura County farmland grew from 2004 to 2013, a time when commercial and residential land values dropped precipitously. Land for row crops is the most valuable type of farmland, at a median price of \$71,500 per acre in 2013.



Different types of orchard land have similar land values, though the price of orange orchards dropped significantly from 2011 to 2012.

The prices of all types of Ventura County farmland are extraordinarily high, compared to elsewhere in the nation. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the national average is about \$4,000 per acre. That means for the price of a single acre of row crop land in Ventura County, a farmer could buy almost 18 acres of average American farmland.

**Estimates of Crop Land Values Per Acre (Midpoints) in Ventura County (2004 - 2013)**





# EXPORTED AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

## What are the measures?

The measures are the leading agricultural exports from Ventura County, expressed as percentage shares of the total number of shipments exported, and the countries that make up the biggest markets for Ventura County's agricultural exports.

## Why are the measures important?

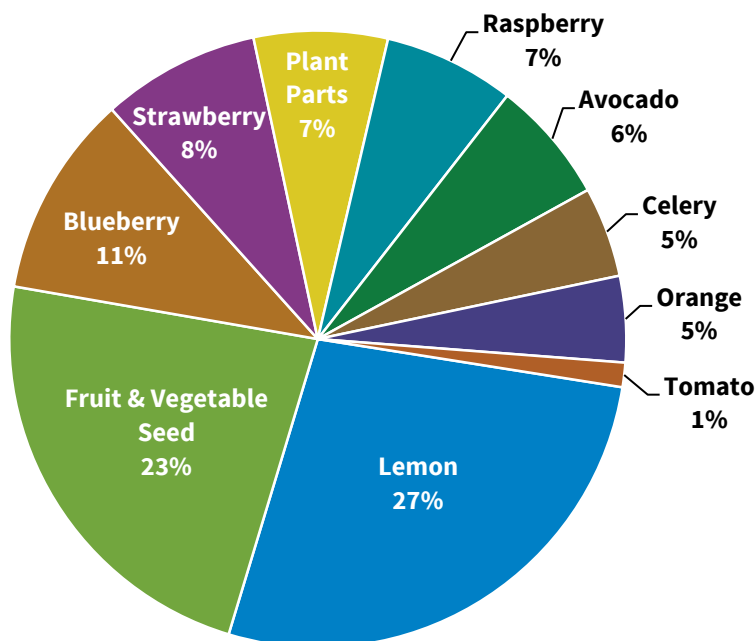
The market for Ventura County agriculture is increasingly a global market. When growers here think about which crops to plant, they must take into account what customers in Asia, Europe and elsewhere want to buy.

## How are we doing?

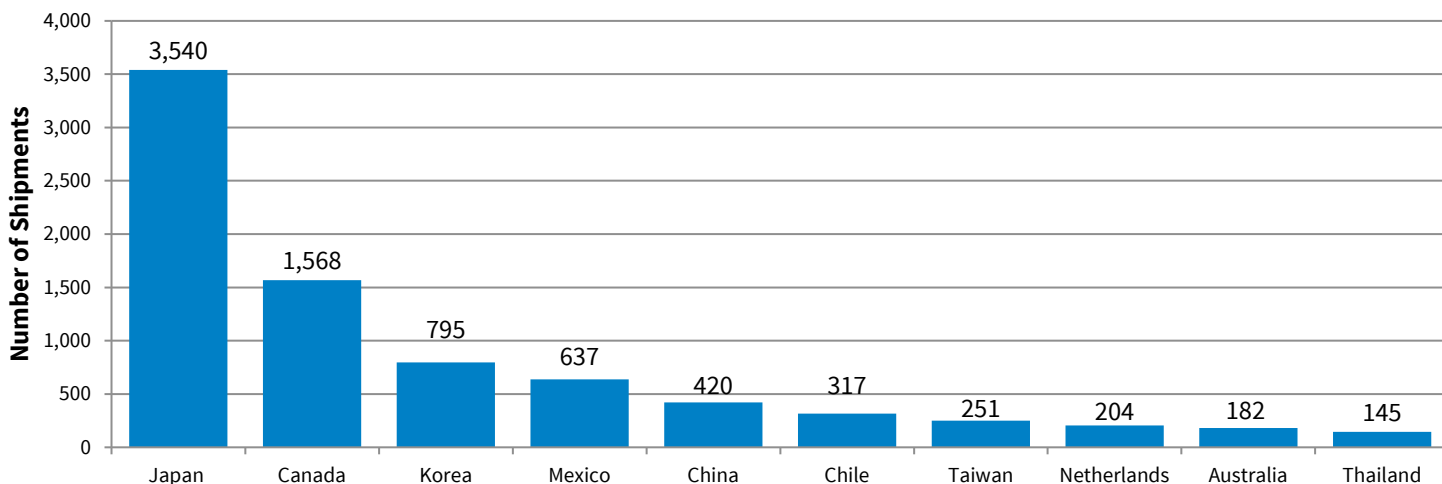
Lemons from Ventura County are consumed around the world. In 2013, lemons were the county's top export crop, accounting for 27 percent of Ventura County's agricultural exports. Fruit and vegetable seeds were next, at 23 percent, followed by blueberries, at 11 percent, and strawberries, at 8 percent.

In 2013, Ventura County exported over 27 different commodities to 81 countries. Approximately 10,000 total shipments were exported. The top destination for Ventura County exports is Japan, by a large margin, followed by Canada, South Korea, Mexico and China.

**Top Ten Agricultural Commodities Exported from Ventura County (2013)**



**Top Ten Export Countries for Ventura County Agricultural Commodities (2013)**



# EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS

## What are the measures?

The measures are the real and nominal agricultural wages over time, employment by job category and wages by job category.

## Why are the measures important?

Along with land, labor is one of the major inputs into an agricultural business, so these wage measures shed light on a major cost of production. Job growth in agriculture is also an important factor in the health of the overall county job market.

The wages of agricultural employees give insight into the standard of living they can afford, from the middle-class owners and managers to the migrant farm workers at the bottom of the wage scale. Social service charities and governments often end up providing aid to the thousands of low-paid farmworkers in the county.

## How are we doing?

Jobs in agriculture grew from 2005 to 2008, dropped significantly in 2009, and recovered from 2010 to 2012. There were 27,000 farm jobs in 2012, 1,800 more than in 2011.

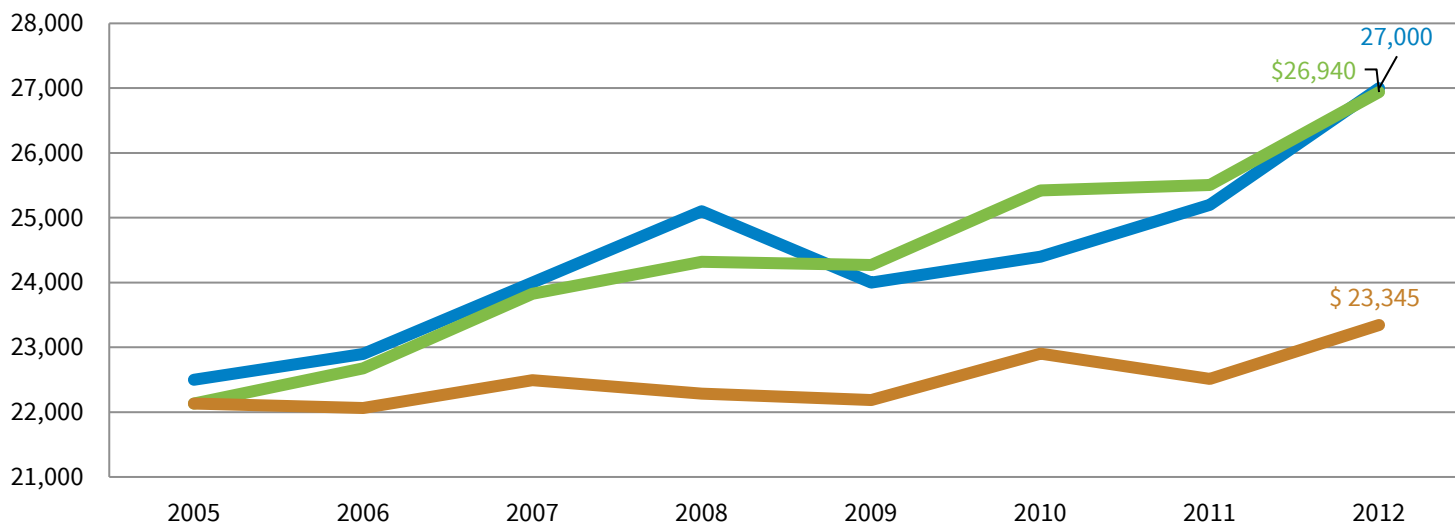
This follows the trend in the larger job market, as the recession bottomed out in 2011 and a gradual recovery took root in the years after.

The average salary of a Ventura County agricultural worker was \$26,940 in 2012. Wages grew, but only barely, between 2010 and 2012, after a five-year period in which pay was essentially flat. Even a flattening of agricultural wages was an improvement over the late 1990s and early 2000s, when wages dropped.

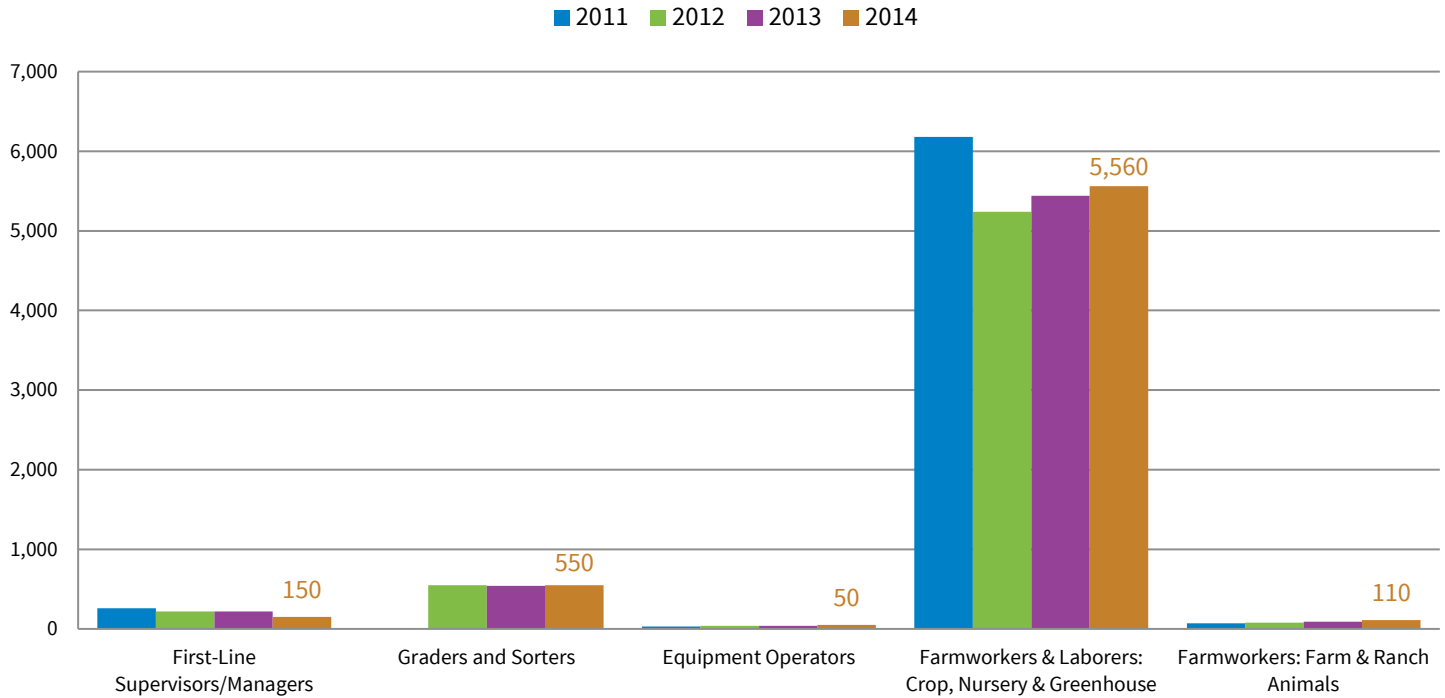
Salaries in agriculture vary, from about \$36,000 a year for supervisors and managers to \$31,000 for equipment operators to around \$20,000 for field laborers and packing house sorters, all according to figures from the first quarter of 2014. The overwhelming majority of agricultural employees are field workers, who are among the lowest-paid people in the sector. In the first quarter of 2014, those positions paid an average of \$19,439, which was slightly less than they paid three years before.

## Ventura County Agricultural Production Employment & Earnings (2005 - 2012)

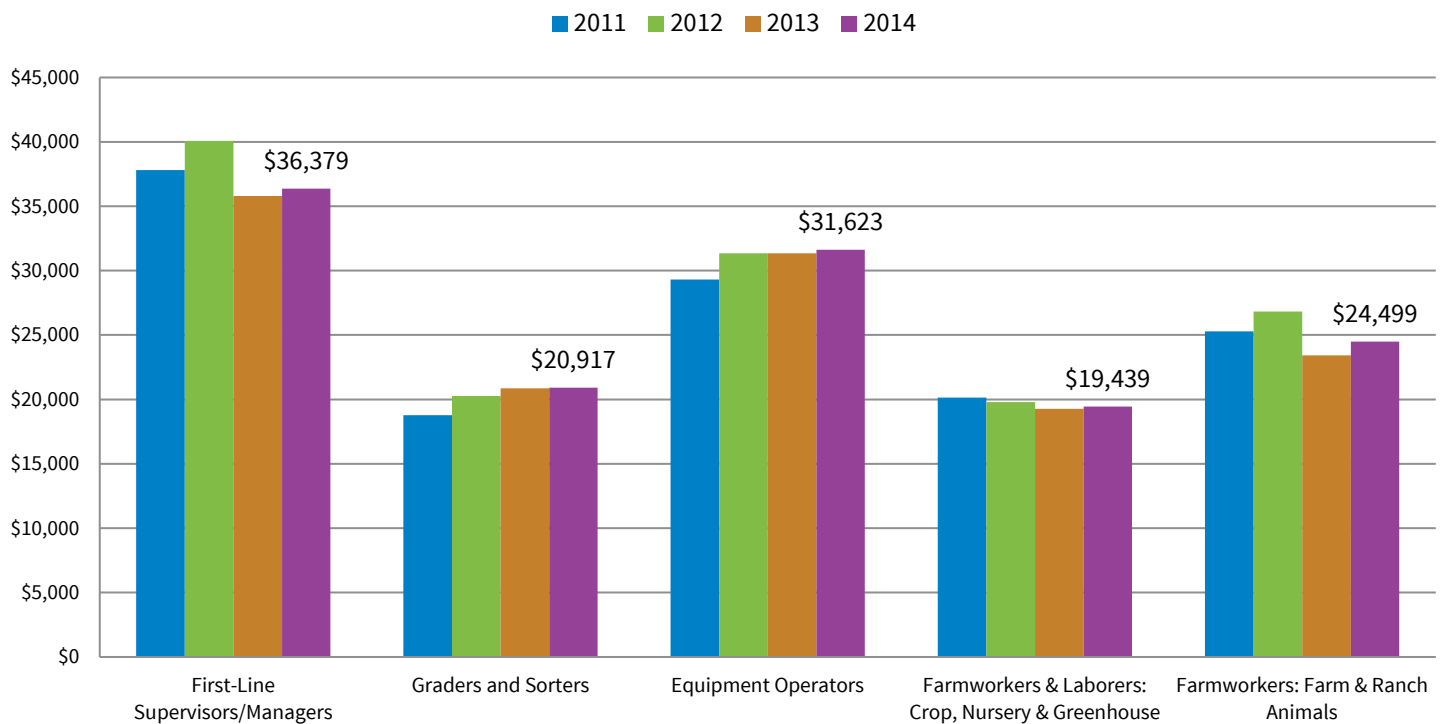
- Employment in Agricultural Production (Number of Jobs)
- Average Annual Salary (\$ per Worker)
- Average Salary in Real 2005 Dollars (\$ per Worker)



## Number of Agricultural Jobs in Ventura County (Q1) (2011 - 2014)



## Agricultural Earnings (Mean Annual Wage) in Ventura County (Q1) (2011 - 2014)







# Civic Engagement

“Civic engagement” can mean many things. We use it to refer to anything people do by choice, typically without pay, to help their fellow citizens and keep society running smoothly.

In this report, we focus on two broad umbrellas of civic-minded activity: elections and nonprofit organizations. Those aspects of civic engagement are the easiest to quantify, and they are also among the most important. A democracy can function only if its citizens vote, and a society flourishes when its people give their time or their money to charities, whether to help the less fortunate or promote arts and culture in their communities.





# VOTER REGISTRATION

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of eligible Ventura County residents who are registered to vote.

## Why is the measure important?

Registering to vote is a necessary step in participating in our democracy. In most states, including California, voters must register ahead of time, though California has set 2015 as its target to implement a same-day registration system.

## How are we doing?

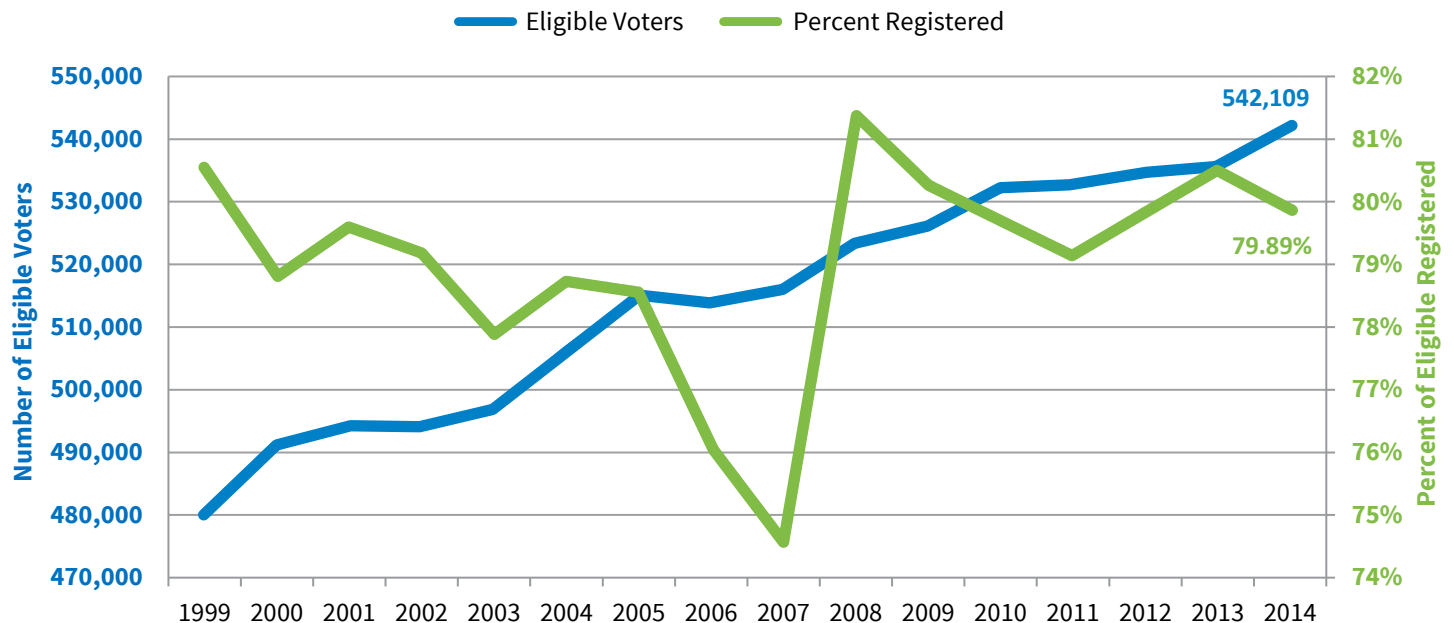
Voter registration ebbs and flows with the political tides. It is typically higher in the even-numbered election years and lower in odd-numbered non-election years. It is also usually higher in presidential election years than in gubernatorial election years, such as 2014.

The 2008 election remains a recent high-water mark for political participation in Ventura County and in the rest of the nation. It also reversed a 10-year trend of declining registration rates. In 2008, 81.4 percent of eligible county residents were registered to vote, up from 74.6 percent the year before and 78.7 percent in the previous presidential election year.

Registration rates have dropped since 2008, but they remain higher than they were in the early years of the 21st century. For the November 2014 general election, 79.89 percent of eligible voters were registered.

The number of people eligible to vote grows as the population grows. In 2014, it hit an all-time high of 542,109 in Ventura County.

Ventura County Voter Registration (1999 - 2014)





# VOTER TURNOUT

## What are the measures?

The measures are the percentage of eligible citizens who actually vote and the type of ballot they use.

## Why are the measures important?

Voting is the fulcrum of our democracy. It is how we select our leaders and how we hold them accountable to their constituents.

Voter turnout is often considered a gauge of the legitimacy of a government; the higher the turnout, the more likely it is that election results reflect the will of a broad majority of the populace. Voter turnout also can be seen as a proxy for people's confidence in their country and its political system; the more they believe individuals can make a difference, the more likely they are to vote.

Many government agencies report voter turnout as a percentage of the number of registered voters in the jurisdiction. We feel expressing turnout as a percentage of the total eligible voters, whether or not they are registered, is a more accurate representation of civic engagement. The first step in voting is registering, and when people do not bother to register, turnout figures should consider them non-voters.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County is, relatively speaking, a high-turnout county. Turnout here was higher than California's overall turnout in the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 elections.

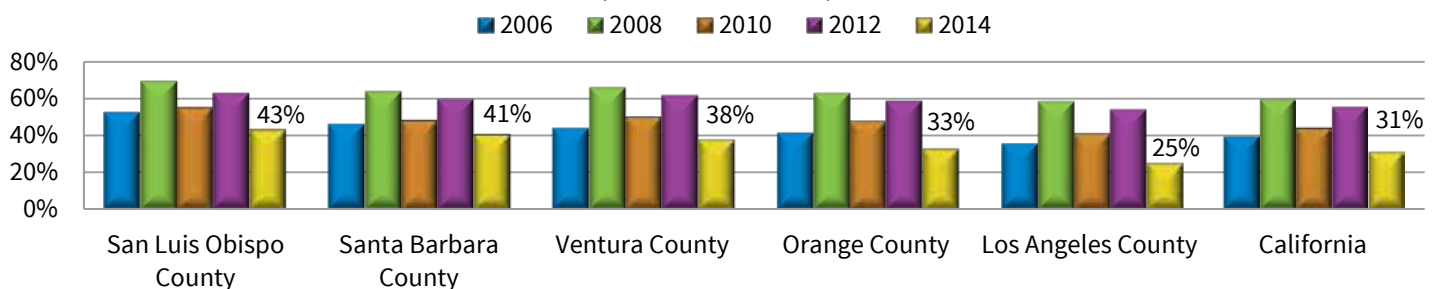
The November 2014 election saw remarkably low turnout. Statewide, turnout was just 30.9 percent, the lowest of any general election on record (the state's turnout records go back to 1910). In Ventura County, turnout was 37.59 percent, also the lowest on record (the county's turnout records go back to 1970).

Presidential elections have much higher turnouts than midterm elections; the last presidential election in Ventura County, in 2012, had turnout of 61.8 percent.

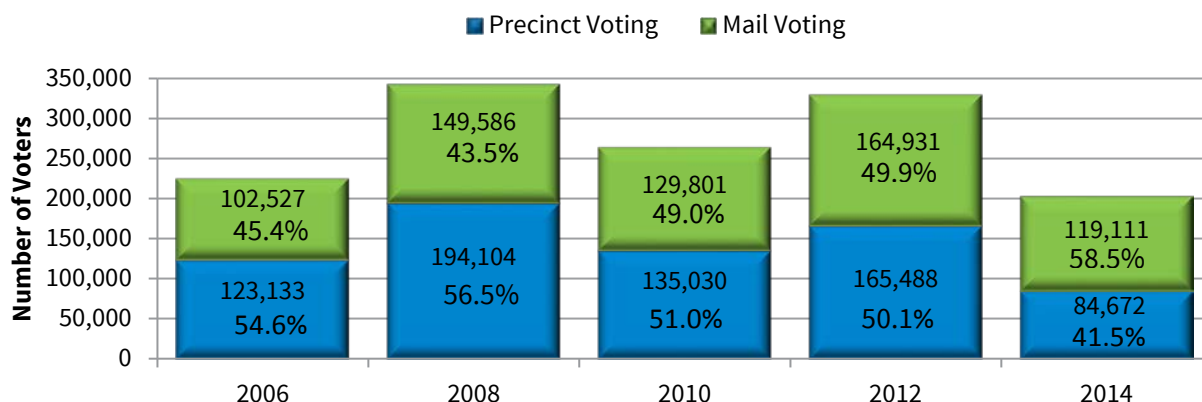
Ventura County's voter turnout parallels that of a few demographically similar Southern California counties. It tends to be about the same as Santa Barbara County, slightly better than Orange County and slightly worse than San Luis Obispo County. In 2014, Ventura County lagged behind Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties in turnout. It was ahead of Orange County's 32.6 percent, and far ahead of Los Angeles County's dismal 24.9 percent.

The act of voting in California has gradually shifted away from visiting a polling place and toward putting a ballot in the mail, and Ventura County is no exception. The percentage of ballots cast by mail went from 45.4 percent in 2006 to just under 50 percent in 2012. In November 2014, 58.4 percent of the votes cast in Ventura County came by mail, topping 50 percent for the first time in a general election.

## Percent of Eligible Voters Actually Voting in California General Elections (2006 - 2014)



## Ventura County Mail-in Ballots vs. Precinct Voting (2006 - 2014)





# PARTY AFFILIATION

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of voters in Ventura County who register as Republicans, Democrats or as Other/Decline to State, which means they are not affiliated with either of the two major political parties.

## Why is the measure important?

The party affiliation of voters in a particular area is usually the most important factor in deciding who represents that area in state and federal legislatures. It is also a factor in many local elections, though those are ostensibly nonpartisan.

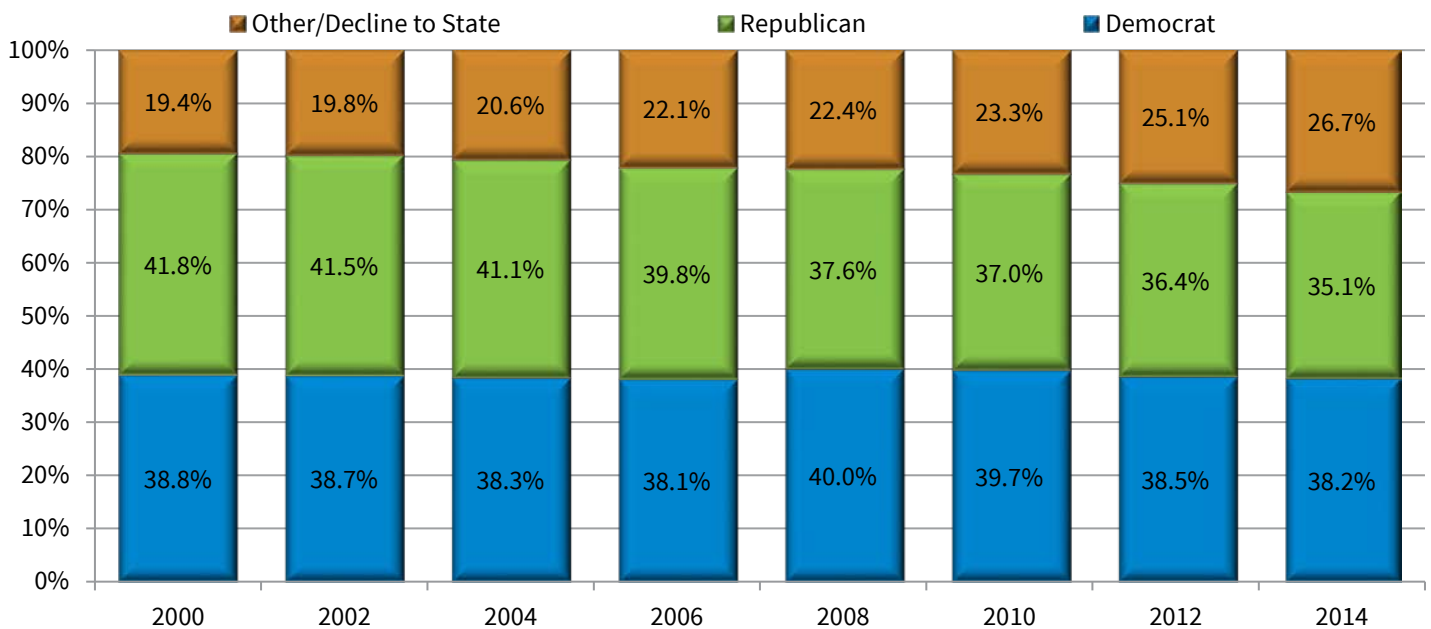
Furthermore, the number of voters who do not align themselves with either major party can be seen as a gauge of the level of disillusionment with the political system, since the two major parties control the state and federal governments.

## How are we doing?

Republicans dominated Ventura County for the second half of the 20th century. By the early 2000s, the balance started to shift, and in 2008, Democrats outnumbered Republicans for the first time in decades. The trend has continued since then, and in 2014 the county's registered voters were 38.2 percent Democrats and 35.1 percent Republicans.

The proportion of Republicans in the county has dropped steadily in recent years, from 41.8 percent in 2000 to 35.1 percent in 2014. But Democrats haven't gained the ground that Republicans have lost; from 2000 to 2014, the percentage of Democrat voters basically remained unchanged. In 2014, 26.7 percent of registered voters in the county were not members of either major party, up from 19.4 percent in 2000.

**Affiliations of Registered Ventura County Voters (2000 - 2014)**



# NONPROFITS

## What are the measures?

The measures are the numbers of nonprofit organizations filing with the IRS and their total assets and revenues; the number of nonprofits divided by type; and the gross receipts and total assets of each of the 10 largest nonprofits in Ventura County.

Note: Gross receipts are the total amounts the organization received from all sources during its tax year, without subtracting any costs or expenses. For some nonprofit organizations, this may include revenue from sources other than donations.

## Why are the measures important?

Nonprofits fill a vital role in supplying goods and services that for-profit businesses and government agencies either can't or won't provide. In Ventura County, nonprofits provide a good deal of the social safety net, including shelter for the homeless and food for the poor and hungry. They also run some of the region's largest hospitals and universities. The arts are primarily a nonprofit concern as well, with donors funding music, theater and fine art throughout the county.

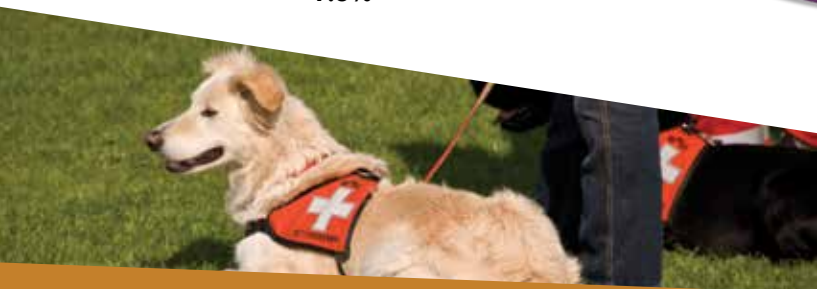
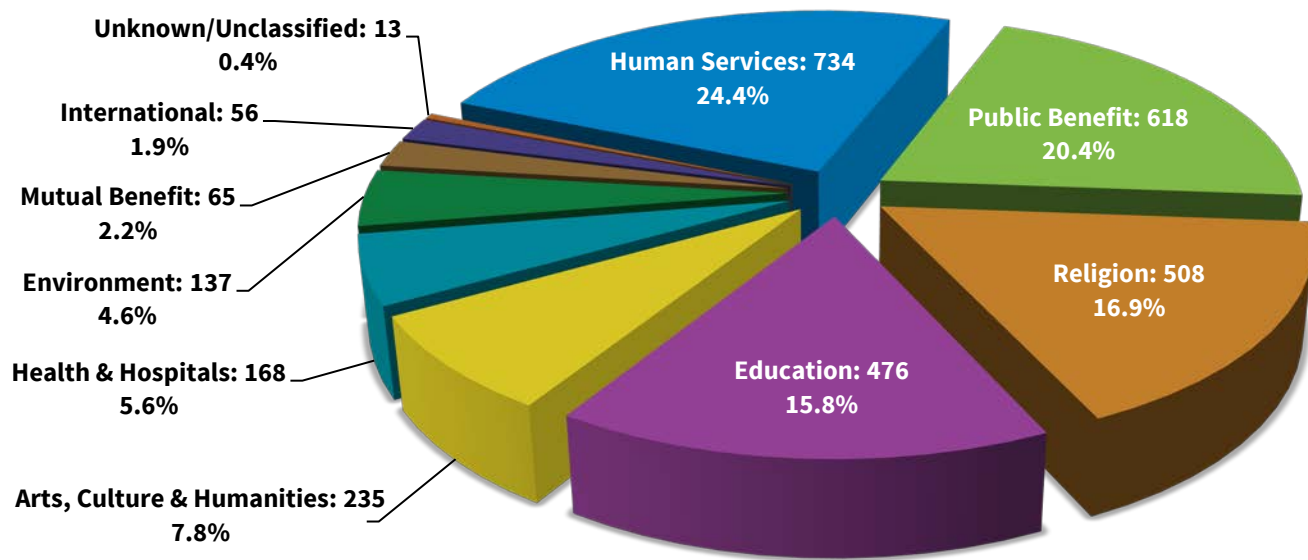
## How are we doing?

Nonprofits are a large and growing segment of Ventura County's economy. In 2013, the county was home to 2,305 tax-exempt nonprofits, not counting faith-based organizations (faith groups do not have to file Form 990 with the IRS). Nonprofits reported \$1.7 billion in income for the year, up from \$1.6 billion in 2012, and \$4.1 billion in total assets, up from \$3.4 billion in 2012. On a per capita basis, Ventura County's nonprofits are not particularly wealthy. They took in \$2,063 per county resident in 2013, compared to \$6,791 for all nonprofits in the state.

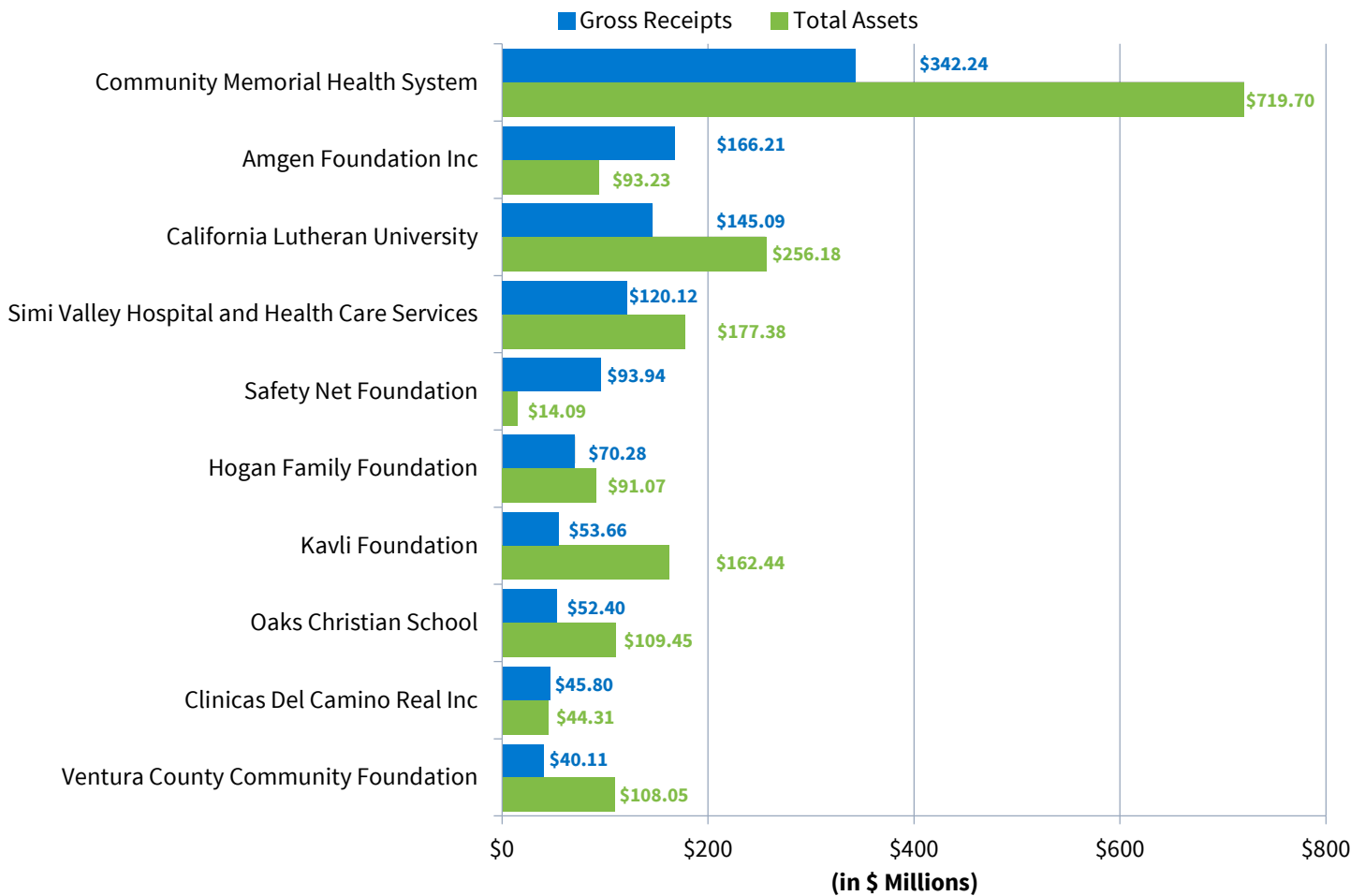
The county's nonprofits fill a variety of roles. Most fall into the categories of human services (24 percent), public benefit (20 percent), religion (17 percent) and education (16 percent). Arts and culture (8 percent), health and hospitals (6 percent) and the environment (5 percent) are less common types of nonprofits.

Healthcare nonprofits may not be as plentiful as some other types, but by far the largest nonprofit in the county is a healthcare facility. Community Memorial Health System, which owns two hospitals and nine clinics in the county, reported \$342.2 million in revenue in 2013, more than double the next-biggest nonprofit by revenue, and \$719.7 million in assets, almost triple the assets of the next-largest group.

**Number of Ventura County Nonprofit Organizations by Type (2013)**



## Gross Receipts and Total Assets of the 10 Largest Ventura County Nonprofits (2012 - 2013)



## Comparison of Ventura County and California Nonprofits (2000 - 2013)

	2000	2005	2010	2012	2013
<b>Organizations Filing 990s</b>					
Ventura County	989	1,244	2,121	2,499	2,305
California	51,220	63,298	101,000	115,647	109,754
<b>Total Revenue Reported on 990</b>					
Ventura County	\$ 683 Million	\$ 1.4 Billion	\$ 1.4 Billion	\$ 1.6 Billion	\$ 1.7 Billion
California	\$ 86 Billion	\$ 178 Billion	\$ 197 Billion	\$ 186 Billion	\$ 260 Billion
<b>Total Assets</b>					
Ventura County	\$ 1.1 Billion	\$ 2.3 Billion	\$ 3.2 Billion	\$ 3.4 Billion	\$ 4.1 Billion
California	\$ 241 Billion	\$ 364 Billion	\$ 438 Billion	\$ 480 Billion	\$ 538 Billion
<b>Per Capita Revenue</b>					
Ventura County	\$906.86	\$1,806.22	\$1,740.36	\$1,932.10	\$2,062.61
California	\$2,553.61	\$5,048.06	\$5,293.31	\$4,954.94	\$6,790.76

# NONPROFIT REVENUES

## What is the measure?

The measure is the revenue of nonprofits based in Ventura County, expressed on a per capita basis.

## Why is the measure important?

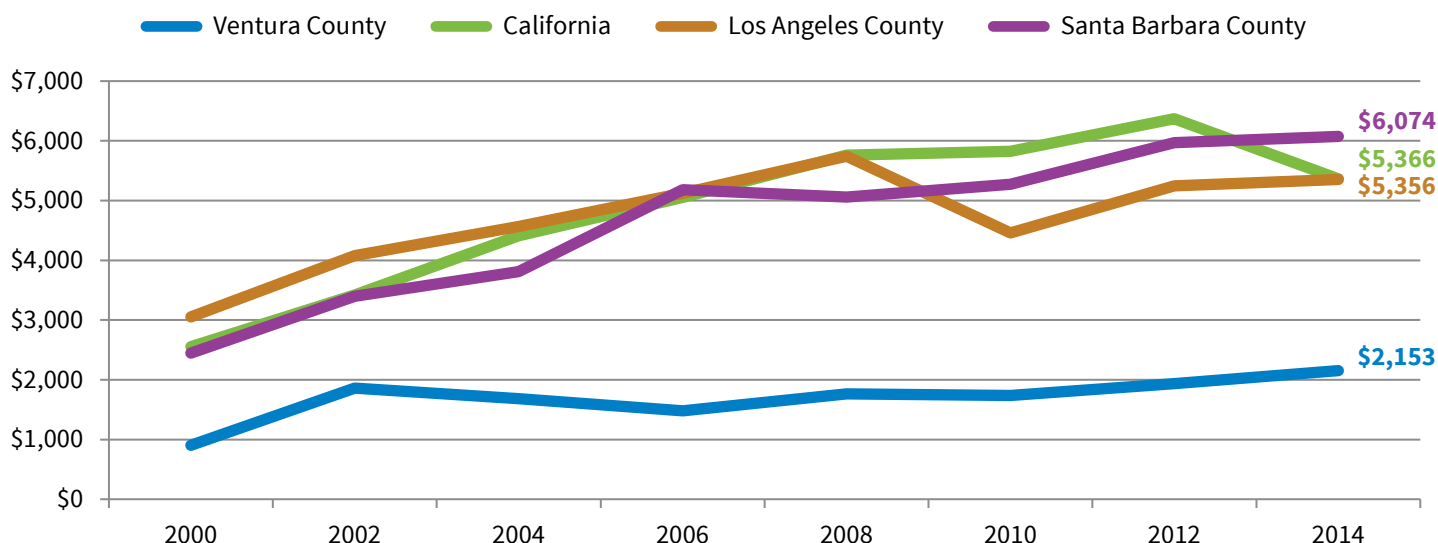
Per capita nonprofit revenue measures how much money, in relative terms, the county's nonprofits have to work with, which is an important factor in how well they can provide the charitable and cultural services on which people rely. It is also an imprecise measure of the generosity of Ventura County residents — imprecise because donations given to nonprofits based elsewhere are not counted.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County lags far behind our neighboring counties and the state of California as a whole in per capita nonprofit revenue. In 2014, the average for all nonprofits in the state was \$5,366 per resident. Nonprofits in Los Angeles County received \$5,356 per resident, and those in Santa Barbara County took in \$6,074 per resident. In Ventura County, the per capita revenue was \$2,153.

Though Ventura County's nonprofit revenue is relatively low, it has been growing. The 2014 figure was 23.8 percent higher than the per capita total in 2010, and more than double the per capita amount in 2000.

**Nonprofit Per Capita Revenue (2000 - 2014)**





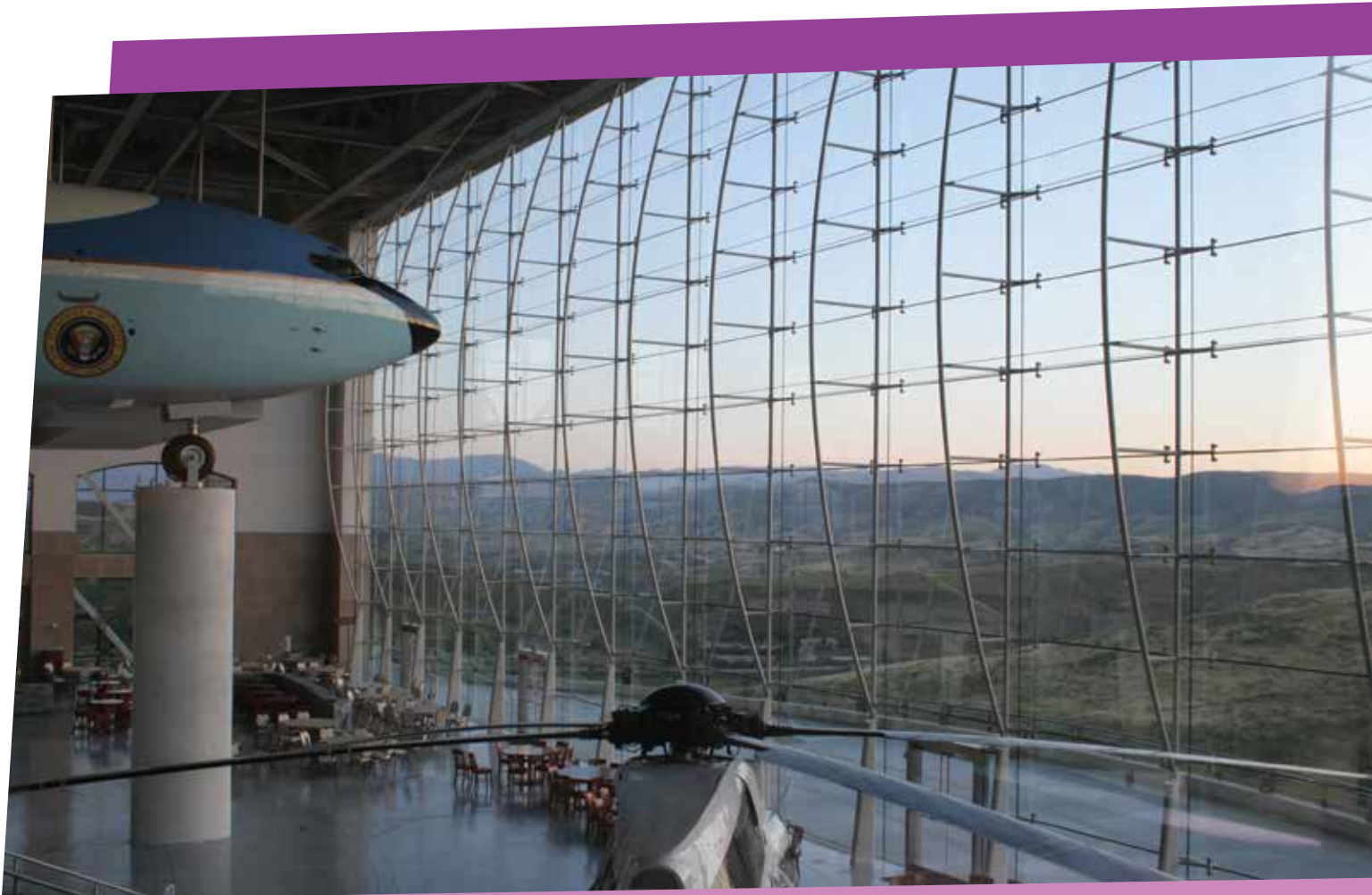
# Cultural Resources

Culture, by its very nature, defies measurement. Fine art, literature, music, religion, language, social mores — these are the things that make one society different from another. Taken together, they make up the richness of the human tapestry. They do not easily lend themselves to summary in chart and graph form.

In this report, we've isolated the aspects of Ventura County's culture that we can examine in a quantitative way. These are: the arts and creative industries, religion and public libraries.

The arts in Ventura County are largely promoted and showcased by nonprofit organizations. We've summarized data that reflects the size and economic impact of this often-overlooked corner of our economy.

Religion and public libraries are both subjects of extensive studies and surveys, so it is possible to analyze their prevalence and impact in the county. Both are communal expressions of personal needs: the human thirst for knowledge, expressed in books; and the desire to make sense of the universe and our place in it, expressed through religion.



# CREATIVE ECONOMY

## What are the measures?

The measures are the number of businesses in creative industries in Ventura County, and the number of people they employ, expressed as percentages of the total number of businesses and the total workforce, respectively. This data is based on active U.S. businesses that have registered with Dun & Bradstreet. Not all businesses choose to register, so this analysis probably undercounts creative businesses.

## Why are the measures important?

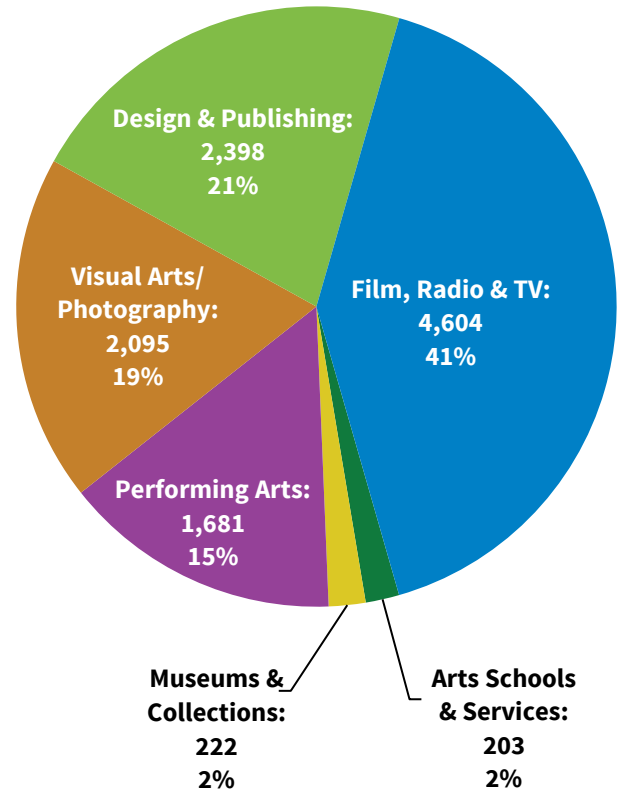
The arts are a large and often overlooked part of the economy. Jobs in creative industries stimulate the larger economy, as people spend money at concert venues, galleries and other art outlets, but also at restaurants and hotels. According to surveys by arts and tourism organizations, people who come to Ventura County for art-related trips spend more time and money here than the average tourist.

## How are we doing?

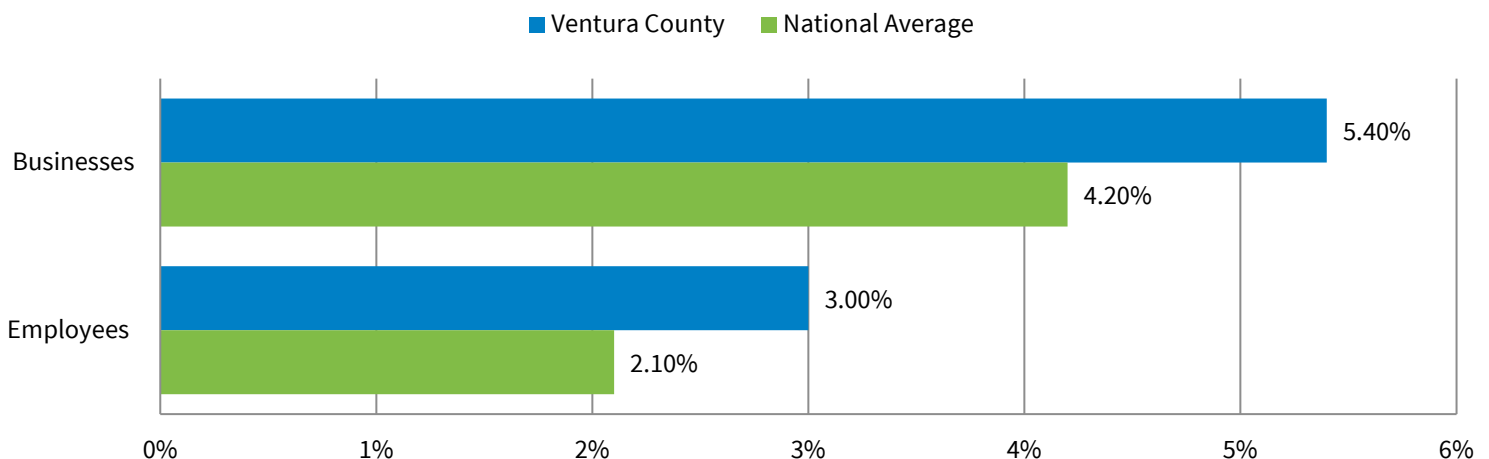
The arts are a bigger part of the economy in Ventura County than in the nation as a whole. In 2014, more than 11,000 people in Ventura County worked in creative industries, including film, radio and television; fine arts; performing arts; photography; and publishing and design. That adds up to 3 percent of the county's total workforce, which exceeds the national figure of 2.1 percent employed in the arts. There are 2,657 businesses considered part of the creative economy in Ventura County, or 5.4 percent of the total, above the national rate of 4.2 percent.

Film, television and radio is the biggest part of the county's arts sector, with 41 percent of arts employment in those industries. Design and publishing is next, at 21 percent, followed by photography and visual arts, at 19 percent.

Employees Within Ventura County  
Creative Industries (2014)



Number of Business and Employees in Creative Industries (2014)



# CULTURAL NONPROFITS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of Ventura County-based nonprofit organizations in artistic and cultural fields.

## Why is the measure important?

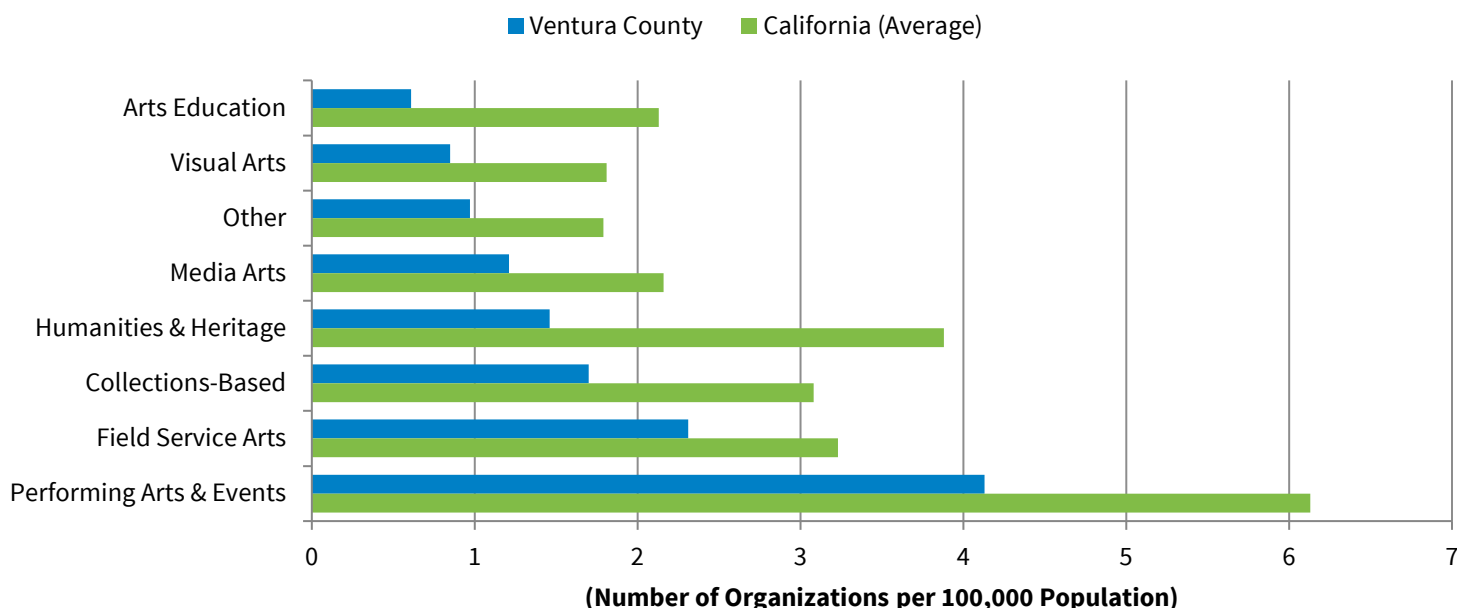
Art is often a solitary pursuit, but training and developing artists and showcasing, selling and distributing their work requires a support system. Nonprofits are integral to that system, particularly in the case of fine and performing arts.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County lags behind the rest of California in its concentration of artistic and cultural nonprofits. In 2010, there were 13.24 such organizations in Ventura County for every 100,000 residents; in California, the rate was 24.21 nonprofits for every 100,000 residents.

Performing arts and events groups were the most plentiful form of cultural nonprofit, with 4.13 organizations for every 100,000 Ventura County residents. Next were field service groups, a category that includes professional societies, research institutions and public policy analysis organizations. In every category, there were more nonprofits per capita statewide than in Ventura County.

## Types of Cultural Nonprofit Organizations (2010)



# RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS

## What are the measures?

The measures are the proportion of Ventura County residents who are members of, or identify with, any faith organization; and the number of adherents of different religious groups in 2000 and 2010.

The “unclaimed” population noted in the chart are those who are not adherents of any of the 236 groups included in the Religious Congregations & Membership Study. This number should not be used as an indicator of irreligion or atheism, as it also includes adherents of groups not included in the data set.

This data is only updated every 10 years.

## Why are the measures important?

The level of participation in religious institutions is an indicator of the level of religious belief and devoutness among county residents. Faith-based organizations such as churches, synagogues, temples and mosques play a key role in reinforcing the cultural beliefs of their followers and passing those beliefs down to new generations. They also do a large part of the county’s charitable work.

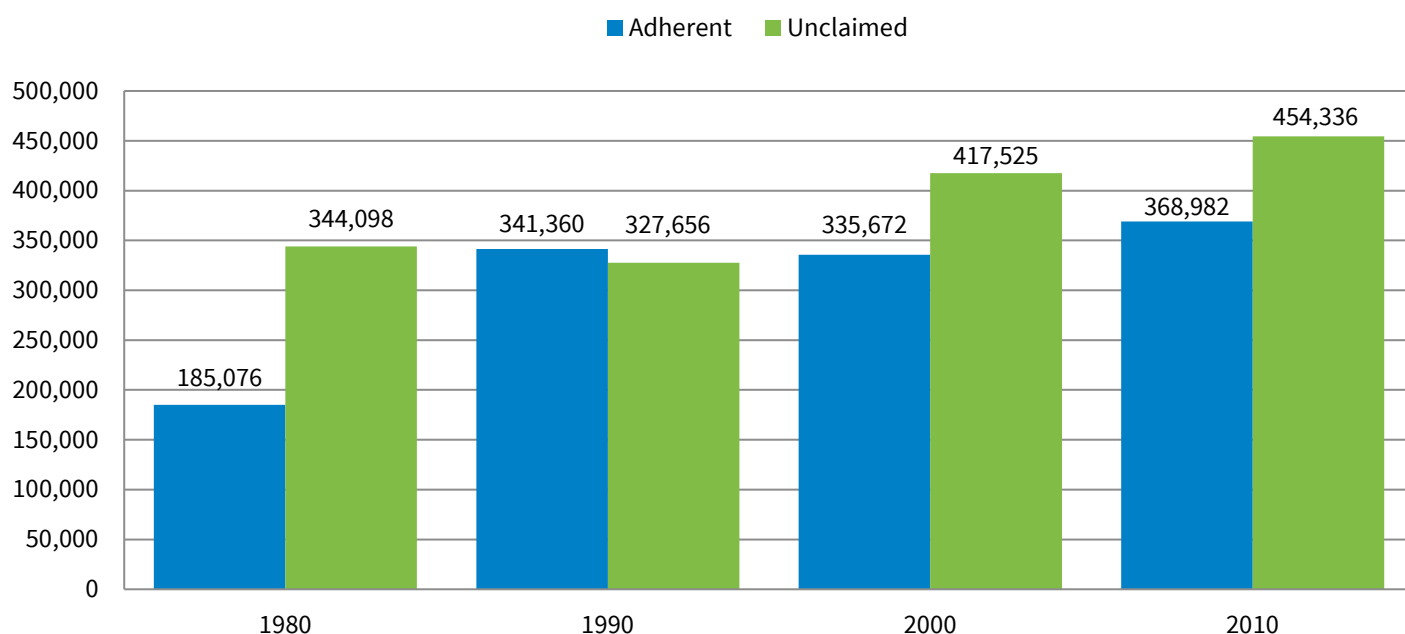
## How are we doing?

The portion of Ventura County residents who belong or adhere to a religious denomination grew throughout the 1980s and has dropped since then. At nearly every 10-year interval, though, at least half of county residents claimed no particular religious affiliation.

In 1980, just 35 percent of county residents were church members or adherents. That figure grew to 51 percent by 1990. In both 2000 and 2010, about 45 percent of county residents were members or adherents of a congregation, leaving the majority of residents either nonbelievers or unaffiliated with any particular denomination.

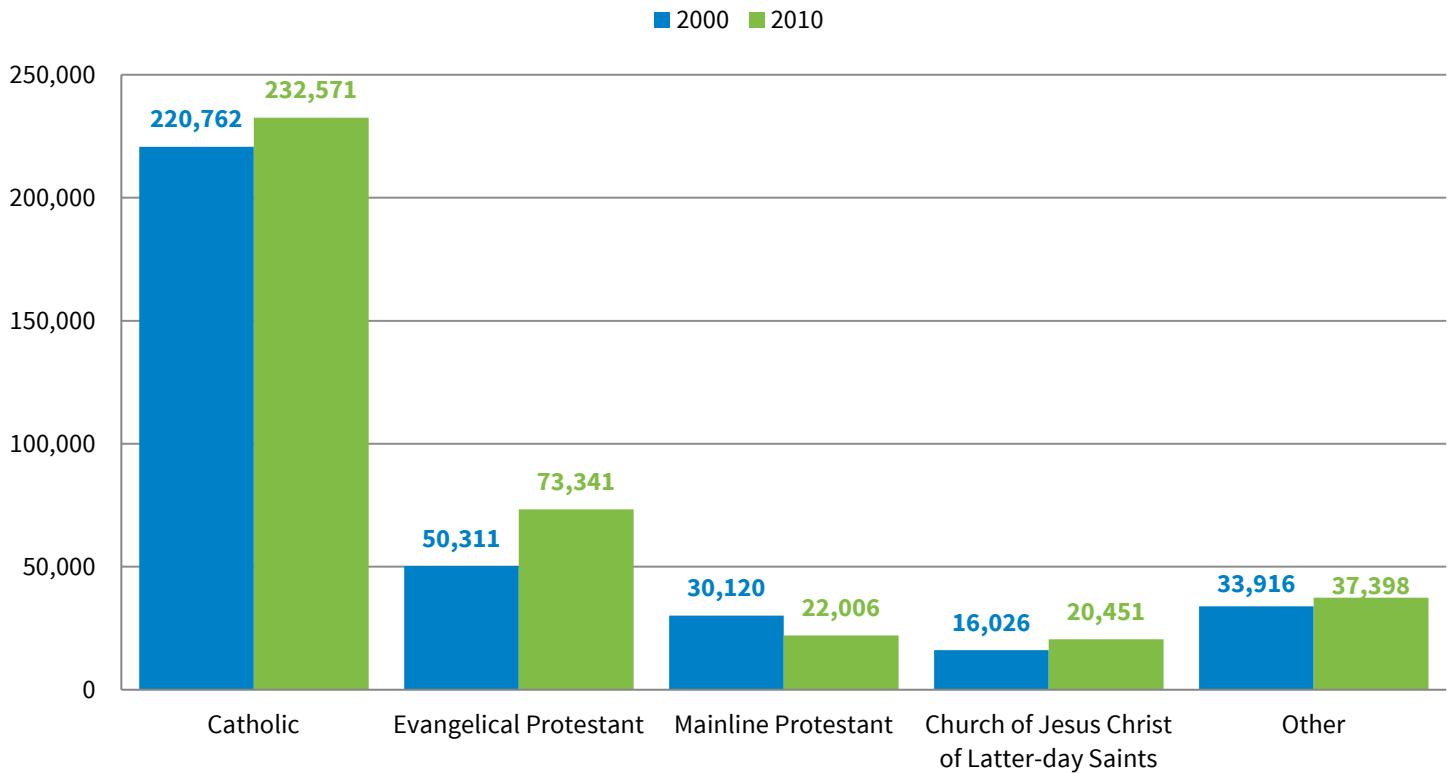
There were changes between 2000 and 2010 in which religions people follow, though Catholicism remained the most popular. Catholicism was by far the largest denomination in both 2000 and 2010, with 65.9 percent of adherents in 2000 and 63.7 percent 10 years later. Because the county population grew, and other religions grew faster than Catholicism, the percentage of Catholics dropped, even though the sheer number of Catholics grew by 11,809. Evangelical Protestant denominations showed the biggest growth between 2000 and 2010, with 23,030 more members, a 46 percent increase. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints also grew significantly: in 2010, there were 20,451 Mormons in Ventura County, 27 percent more than in 2000. Mainline Protestants were the only group to shrink over the decade, with 8,114 fewer members, a drop of 27 percent.

## Religious Adherents in Ventura County (1980 - 2010)





## Numbers of Ventura County Adherents in Selected Religious Categories (2000 - 2010)



# PUBLIC LIBRARIES

## What is the measure?

The measure is spending on public libraries on a per capita basis.

## Why is the measure important?

Public libraries are important community resources, even — perhaps especially — in an era when more and more materials are available online. Libraries offer Internet access for many people who otherwise wouldn't have it, and of course, they put thousands of books at each resident's fingertips. They also host lectures and other community happenings and promote literacy with events like children's story times.

## How are we doing?

Most of Ventura County spends less on public libraries than the state average of \$31.35 per resident. The two exceptions are Thousand Oaks, where the city spent \$58.98 per resident in the 2011/12 fiscal year, and Camarillo, where the city spent \$59.97.

The Ventura County Library System runs the county's public libraries, except for those in cities with their own library systems. The biggest recent trend in public libraries has

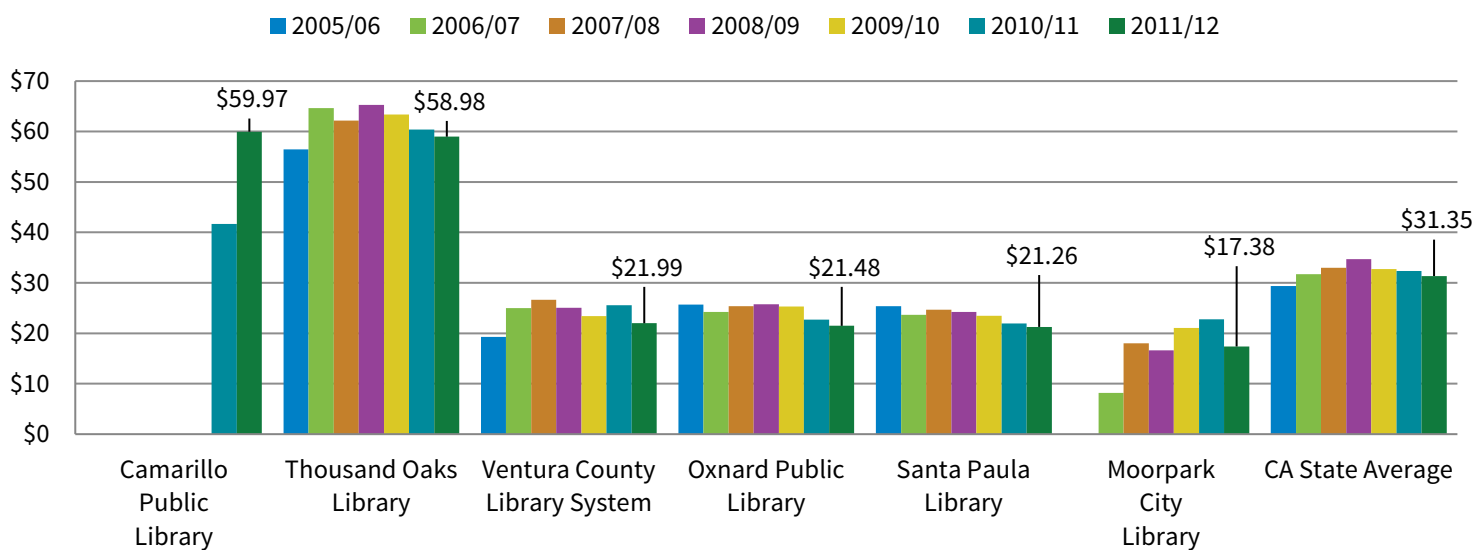
been cities leaving the county system and owning their own libraries, typically with a private company contracted to run the day-to-day operations.

Oxnard and Santa Paula have long had their own libraries. In 2007, Moorpark joined them. Camarillo followed suit in 2011. Simi Valley declared its library independence in 2011 as well, though it hired the county to keep running its library system until 2013. Library Systems & Services, LLC, the nation's largest private operator, now runs the libraries in Simi Valley, Moorpark and Camarillo.

Because Simi Valley's library system did not begin operating independently until mid-2013, it does not show up in the most recent state statistics for library spending. Moorpark's library system spends the least in the county, at \$17.38 per city resident in 2011/12. That's about 30 cents for every dollar spent by Thousand Oaks or Camarillo.

The county system, Oxnard and Santa Paula were clustered between \$21 and \$22 per resident in 2011/12. Every library system in the county spent less in the 2011/12 fiscal year than it did four years earlier, as local government budgets were squeezed by the recession.

## Per Capita Expenditure for Ventura County Public Library Systems (FY 2005/06 - 2011/12)



# Economy

The past few years have been a period of recovery in the American economy, though it hasn't always been easy to tell. The banking crisis and subsequent recession of 2008 were so severe that even after six years of economic growth, the country, by some measures, still has not fully recovered to pre-crash levels.

But a real recovery did take hold in 2010 and continues to this day. Ventura County's economic output has grown every year since 2009 and is projected to keep growing. The unemployment rate, in the nation and the county, peaked in 2010 and has dropped ever since. Real estate prices are rising again, this time at a pace that indicates we may not be in another bubble. The tech industry is booming, and again, there are signs that this time it may not be a transitory bubble.

Ventura County still has significant economic challenges. Housing is unaffordable for vast swaths of the population. Job growth has been slow and has been concentrated in

low-paying service industries. Ventura County is becoming more stratified — more like Santa Barbara, in many ways — a place with many low-paid service workers and a smaller population of wealthy, often retired, people who can afford to buy homes.

But in many ways, the county is in a good position to benefit from America's evolving economy. Agriculture in Ventura County has moved toward the high-value crops the American consumer is seeking. Manufacturing is making a comeback in the United States, and the industry in Ventura County consists mainly of high-skill, high-tech jobs. Health care is one of the nation's growth industries, and the sector is a large and growing part of the Ventura County economy. The Port of Hueneme allows the county to benefit from the growth in international trade. And the county's biggest employer, Naval Base Ventura County, is at the forefront of the military's new high-tech endeavors.



# GROSS COUNTY PRODUCT

## What is the measure?

The measure is gross county product, or GCP, which is calculated in much the same way as the U.S. gross domestic product: by adding up the market value of all the goods and services sold in Ventura County in one year. GCP counts only the final sale to the consumer, not intermediary transactions among producers and wholesalers.

## Why is the measure important?

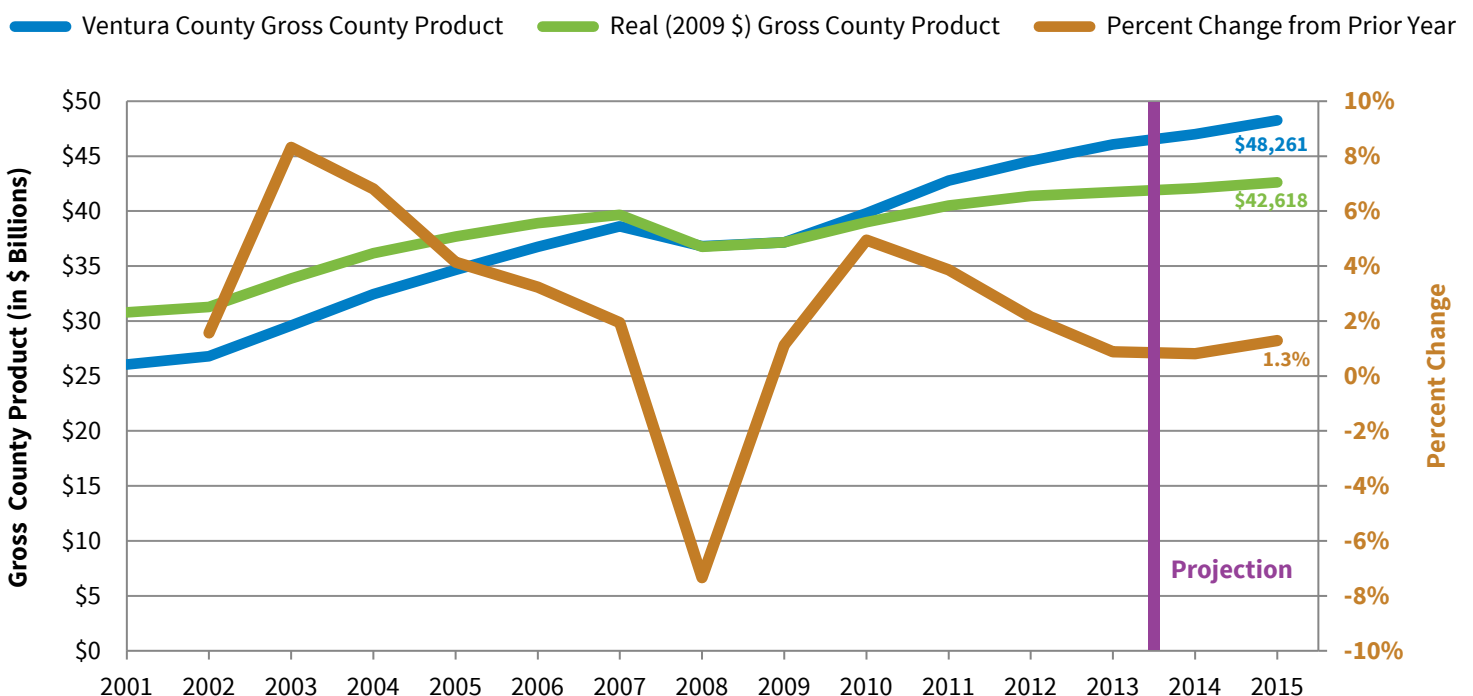
Gross product is the most common shorthand for describing the total economic productivity of a region, whether it's a nation, state or a county. It's also the chief indicator of the standard of living enjoyed by the people of a country, state or county. It is not perfect at either of these tasks — and it becomes less precise when used on smaller jurisdictions, like counties — but it is the best metric we have. On the national level, growth or decline in the gross domestic product is the most accepted gauge of whether the nation is in a period of recession or economic expansion. Because Ventura County and most regions of the United States have naturally occurring population growth, some economic growth is necessary to provide even a stagnant standard of living.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County's gross product was \$46.1 billion in 2013, an increase of 0.9 percent over the year before. That rate of growth was much smaller than it had been in recent years. For example, gross county product grew by 4.9 percent in 2010, 3.9 percent in 2011 and 2.1 percent in 2012. Time will tell whether this is the beginning of the end of the recovery, or a temporary slowdown.

The Center for Economic Research and Forecasting at California Lutheran University is projecting even slower growth, 0.8 percent, for 2014. It predicts a slight uptick in growth in 2015, to 1.3 percent.

## Recent and Projected Growth in the Ventura County Economy (2001 - 2015)





# EMPLOYMENT GROWTH

## What is the measure?

The measure is the annual increase in the number of employed people in Ventura County. It does not include the agricultural industry, which is highly seasonal.

## Why is the measure important?

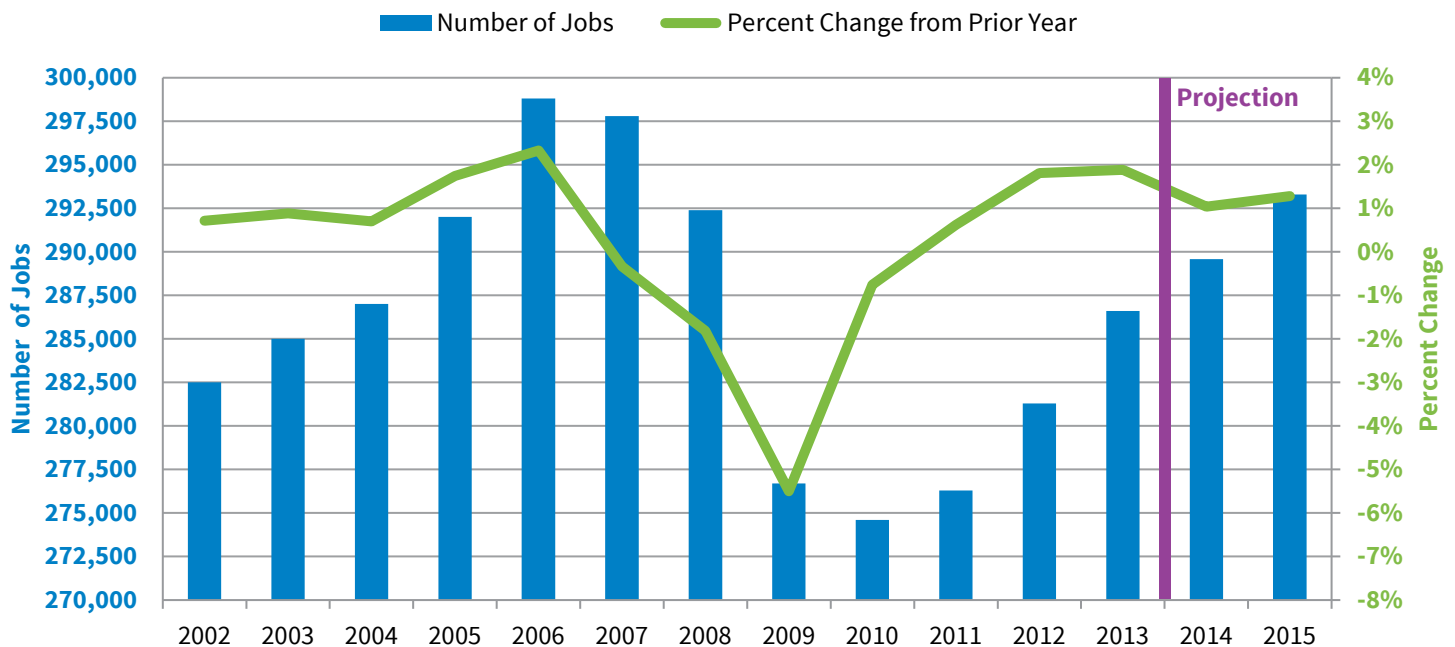
An adequate supply of jobs for its residents is the most effective means of ensuring a community's well-being and keeping its families out of poverty. If the Ventura County economy does not generate enough jobs for its residents, many people will go without work, and many others will travel outside of the area to work, which increases household expenses, traffic congestion, fossil fuel consumption and air pollution.

## How are we doing?

Despite a few years of job growth, Ventura County still has fewer jobs than it had before the recession. The CLU Center for Economic Research and Forecasting doesn't expect the county to surpass its 2008 job total until 2015.

In 2013, the county had 286,600 jobs, an increase of 1.9 percent over the year before. That was the best year for job growth during the current recovery, but it pales in comparison to the 5.5 percent job loss the county experienced from 2008 to 2009. The CLU forecasting team projects job growth of 1 percent in 2014 and 1.3 percent in 2015.

### Ventura County Employment Growth (2002 - 2015)



# EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

## What is the measure?

The measure is a breakdown of employment in Ventura County by industrial sector.

## Why is the measure important?

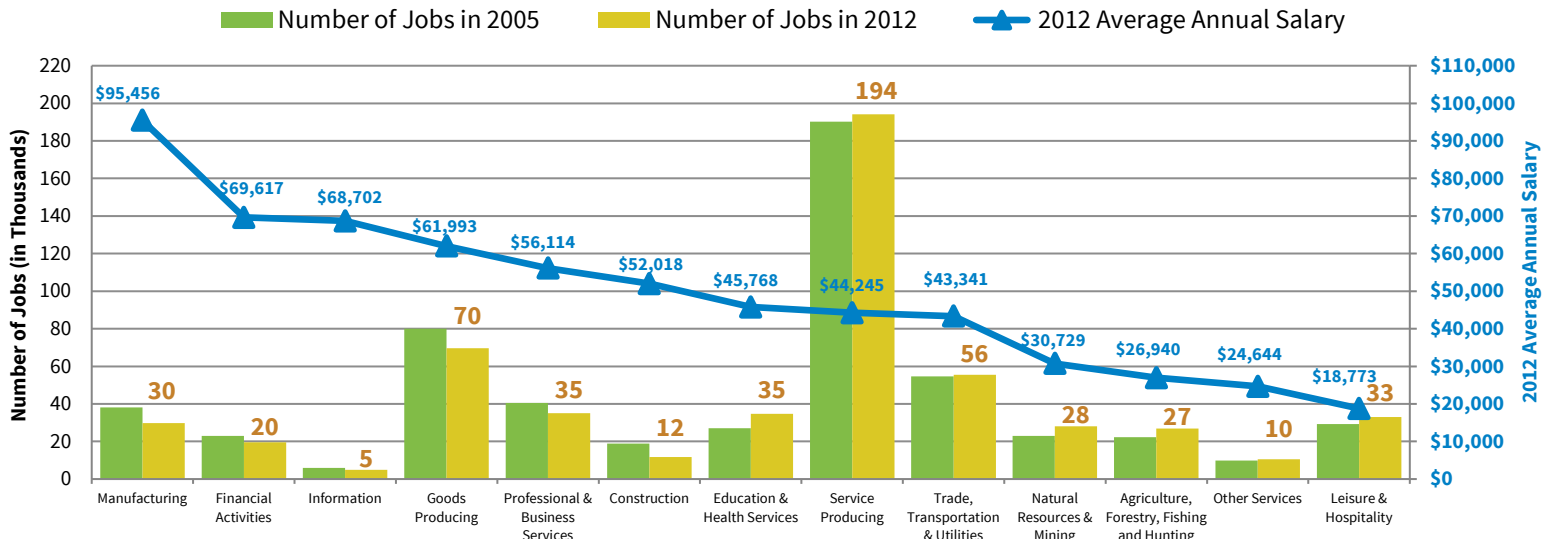
Employment by sector shows which industries are adding workers and will be the most important employers of the future. That allows people — as well as businesses, governments, schools and universities — to plan and support careers most likely to foster employment opportunities. Employment by sector also can show the quality of the jobs that are gained and lost, because pay and working conditions vary greatly by sector.

## How are we doing?

Many of the lowest-paid industries in the Ventura County economy added jobs between 2005 and 2012, including services, agriculture, leisure and hospitality, trade and transportation, and mining and natural resources. Conversely, the well-paying jobs tend to be in shrinking sectors, including manufacturing, information technology, finance and business services. This is an area of concern for Ventura County, as it points to a future of greater income inequality and lower wages for many workers.

The sector that grew the most was health care and education, which falls near the middle of the salary continuum, with an average wage in 2012 of \$45,768.

## Ventura County Employment Growth (2005 & 2012) and Average Annual Salaries (2012)



# SALARIES BY SECTOR

## What is the measure?

The measure charts the average pay in different employment sectors.

## Why is the measure important?

Salary is the most important factor in determining living standards and economic opportunities. Knowing which occupations pay well and which don't is crucial to gauging whether the jobs being created in the county can provide sustained prosperity.

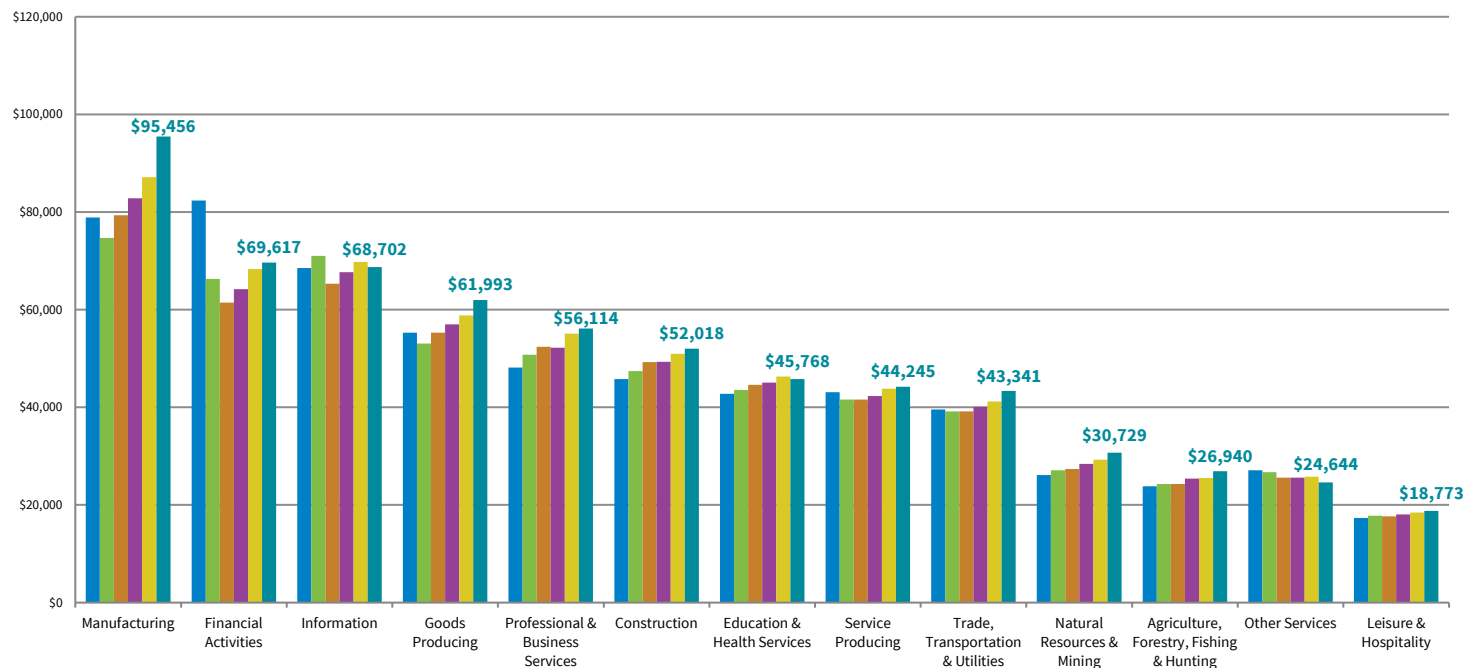
## How are we doing?

The highest salaries in Ventura County are in the manufacturing industry, where the average wage in 2012 was \$95,456. Manufacturing wages are growing fast, too, with an increase of 9.5 percent in just one year. The sector, though, is shrinking as fast as the wages are growing. Between 2005 and 2012, 22 percent of manufacturing jobs in the county disappeared.

The lowest salaries were in the leisure and hospitality sector, with an average wage of \$18,773 in 2012. As with other low-paid industries, such as services and agriculture, the hospitality sector is adding jobs.

## Ventura County Salaries by Sector (2007 - 2012)

■ 2007 ■ 2008 ■ 2009 ■ 2010 ■ 2011 ■ 2012



# HIGH DEMAND JOBS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the 10 jobs with the most job openings in Ventura County in 2012, according to the California Employment Development Department, and the median hourly wage of each of those jobs.

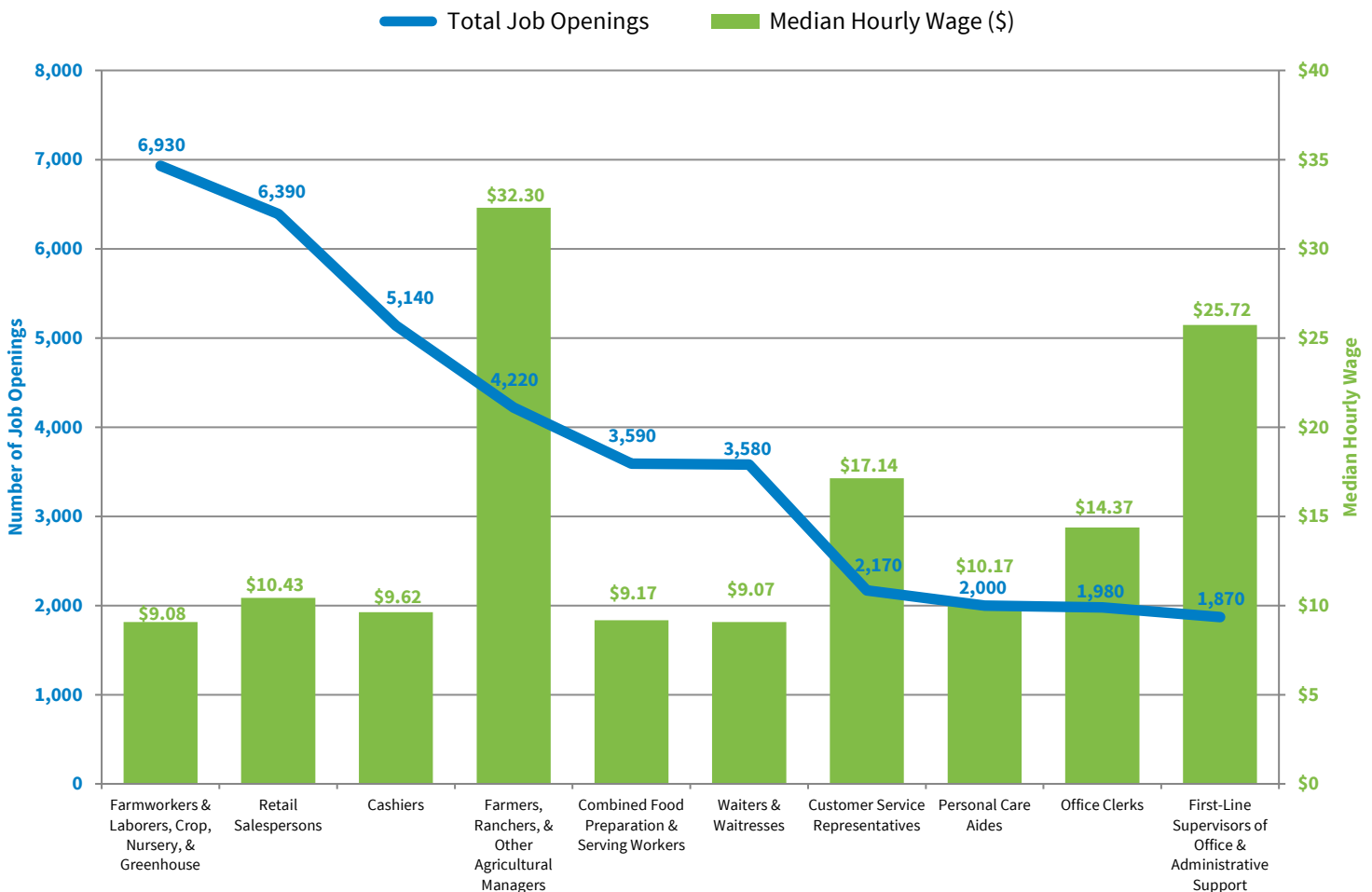
## Why is the measure important?

Knowing what industries are growing and hiring, and how much those jobs pay, is important for individuals as they choose an educational and career path. It's important for schools and other institutions that educate and train people. And it's important for policy makers and regulators, as they try to create an environment that will encourage further job growth. If growth industries don't pay particularly well, the public and private sectors need to consider how to promote growth in higher-paying industries, or stimulate wage growth in industries that are hiring.

## How are we doing?

It's one of the more discouraging signs about the future of the Ventura County economy: The industries that are hiring tend to be those that pay the least. In 2012, six of the 10 highest demand jobs paid either \$9 or \$10 an hour. Between them, those jobs accounted for 67 percent of the job demand in the 10 highest demand industries. The low-pay, high-demand jobs were: farmworkers, retail sales, cashiers, food service and preparation, and personal care. The highest paid jobs, among those in high demand, were farmers and agricultural managers, who made \$32 an hour, and office and administrative supervisors, at \$26 per hour.

**Top 10 High Demand Jobs & Median Hourly Wage in Ventura County (2012)**





# WAGES AND COST OF LIVING

## What is the measure?

The measure is the hourly wage that a full-time worker in Ventura County must earn to support a family. It represents the income needed to cover housing, food, child care, transportation, health care and miscellaneous expenses.

## Why is the measure important?

Wages are just half of a household's financial equation. The cost of living is equally important, and those costs are greater for bigger families. The fact an individual worker earns more than the minimum wage or even a "living wage" can be misleading, because many wage earners have families to support.

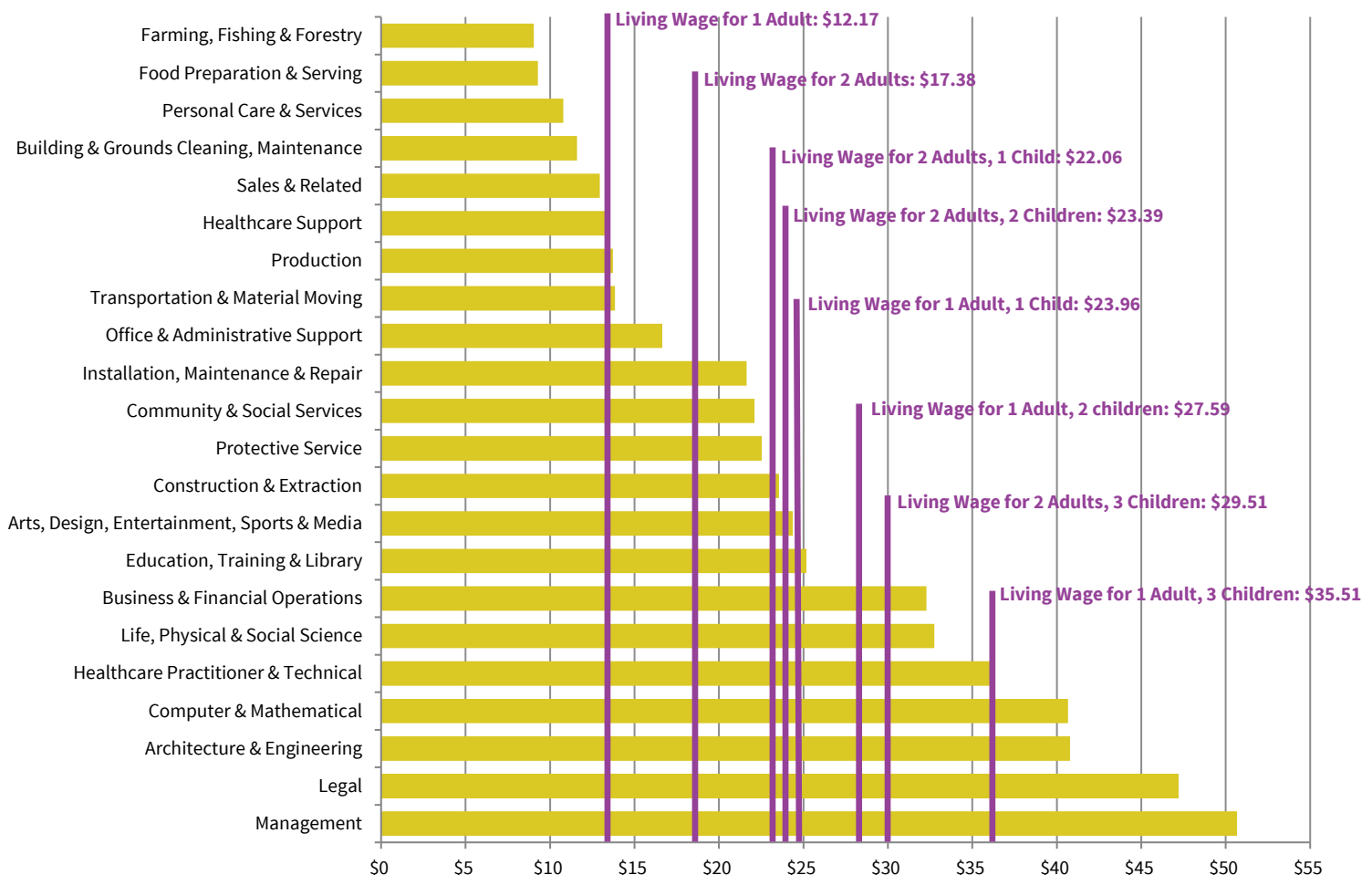
## How are we doing?

Most job sectors in Ventura County pay enough for a single person to earn a living wage of \$12.17 an hour, though, as we have pointed out elsewhere in this chapter, the jobs that pay less are in the largest and fastest-growing industries.

Once a household gets larger than one person, fewer and fewer jobs pay a true living wage. For example, to support two children, a single parent in Ventura County needs to earn \$27.59 per hour. Jobs that pay this much generally require advanced degrees or specialized skills and experience.

The living wage shown is the hourly rate that individuals must earn to support their families, if they are sole providers and working full-time (2,080 hours per year).

## Ventura County Cost of Living and Hourly Wage Comparison (2014)



# UNEMPLOYMENT

## What is the measure?

The measure is the unemployment rate, which is the percentage of unemployed workers in the total workforce. Only people who are looking for jobs are counted as part of the workforce.

## Why is the measure important?

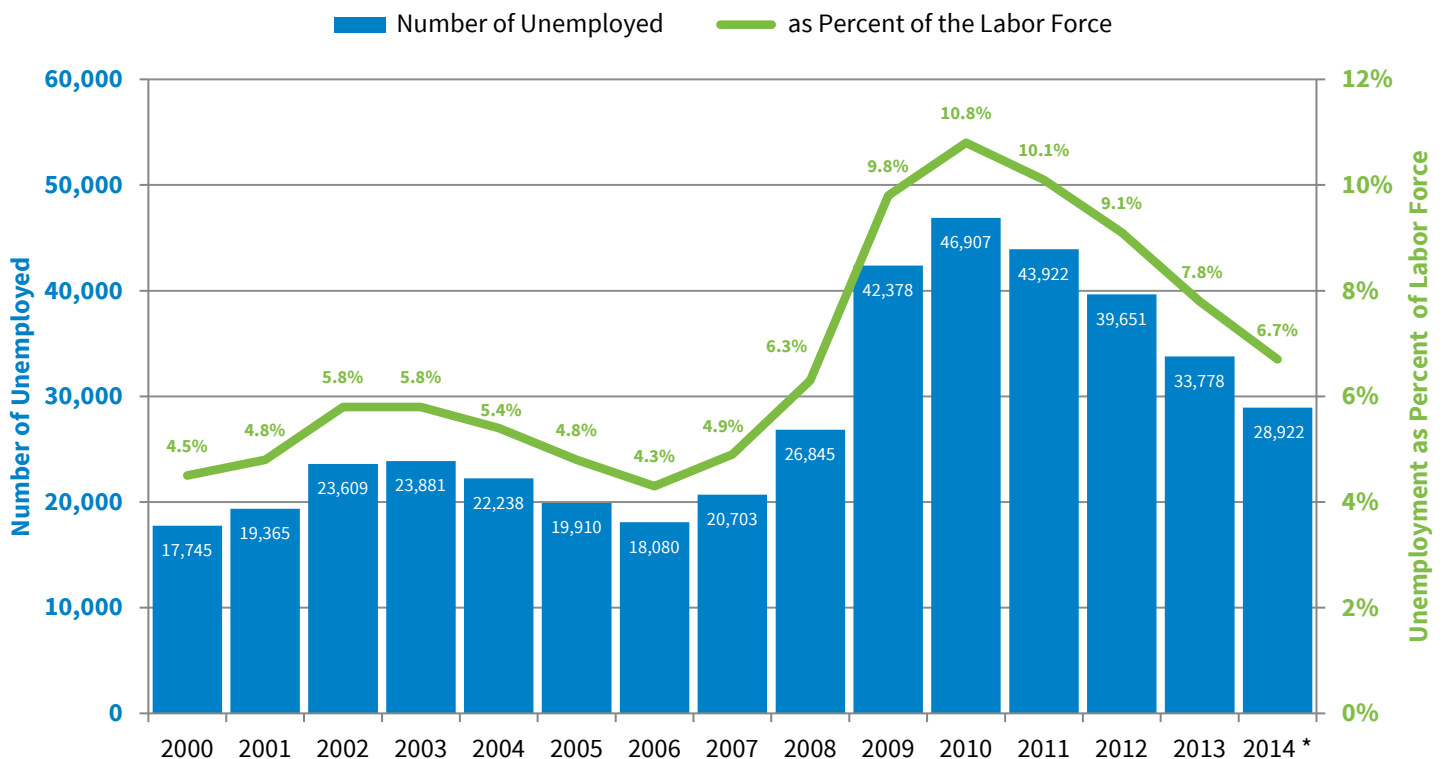
While gross product is the most comprehensive single macroeconomic indicator, unemployment best describes the impact a weak economy has on people. Employment is the primary way people participate in the economy. Without jobs, Ventura County residents are at risk of poverty, hunger and homelessness. Even short-term unemployment can do serious damage to a worker's career prospects, and long-term unemployment can be devastating.

## How are we doing?

The average unemployment rate for Ventura County in 2013 was 7.8 percent, the lowest mark since 2008, the year the recession started. The jobs picture has continued to improve, and unemployment was down to 6.2 percent for the month of June 2014. Ventura County's unemployment rate is the same as the nation's and lower than the state of California's.

Still, unemployment is at levels that before 2008 would have been considered unacceptable. And some of the improvement is illusory, the result of people giving up the job search and dropping out of the workforce. Ventura County's job market is much better than it was in 2010, but worse than it's been for most of the past 15 years.

### Ventura County Unemployment (2000 - 2014)



\*2014 data is as of June 2014; all other years are annual averages.



# GENDER DIFFERENCES IN PAY

## What is the measure?

The measure is the average salaries for men and women in various industries. It covers people over the age of 16 who work full time and are not in the military.

## Why is the measure important?

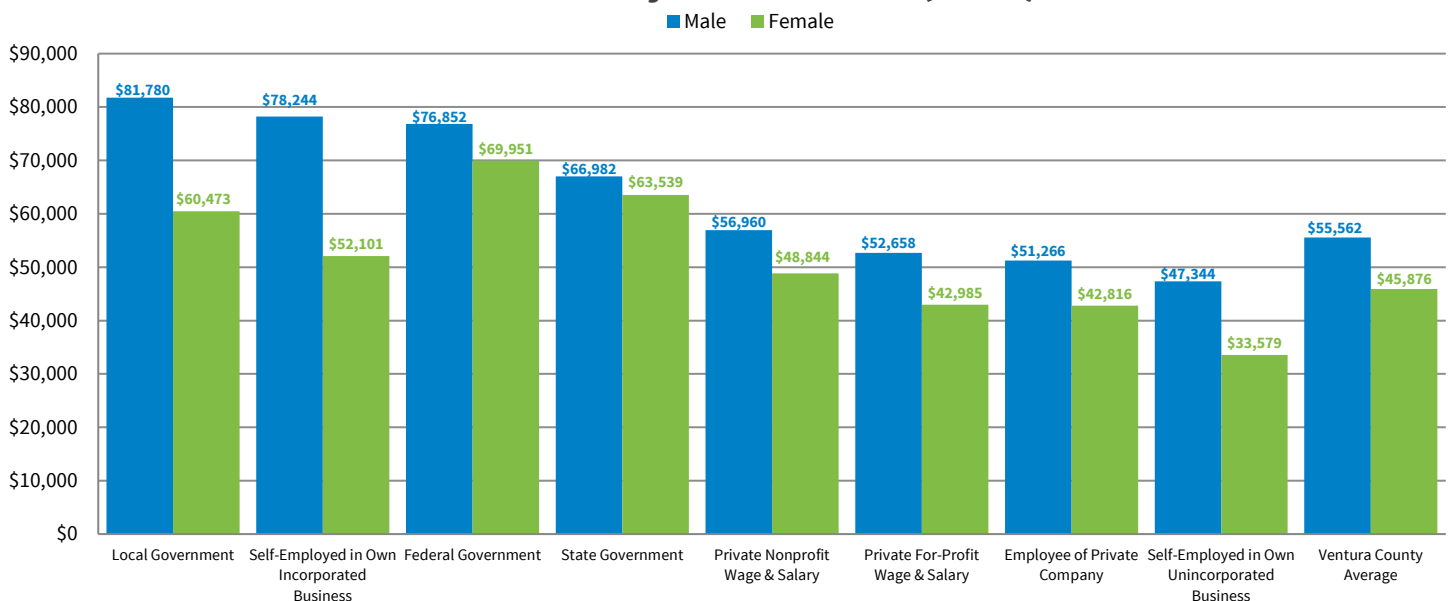
When women earn less than men, they have fewer opportunities and less ability to provide for themselves and their families. If women earn less, it could mean they're paid less to do the same jobs, or it could mean they are not hired for jobs that are as high-ranking as the ones men get. Either way, industries with large gender pay differentials may be underutilizing the talent of women, and productivity and efficiency of those industries could suffer as a result. (Additional data on the gender gap in earnings is discussed in the Education domain.)

## How are we doing?

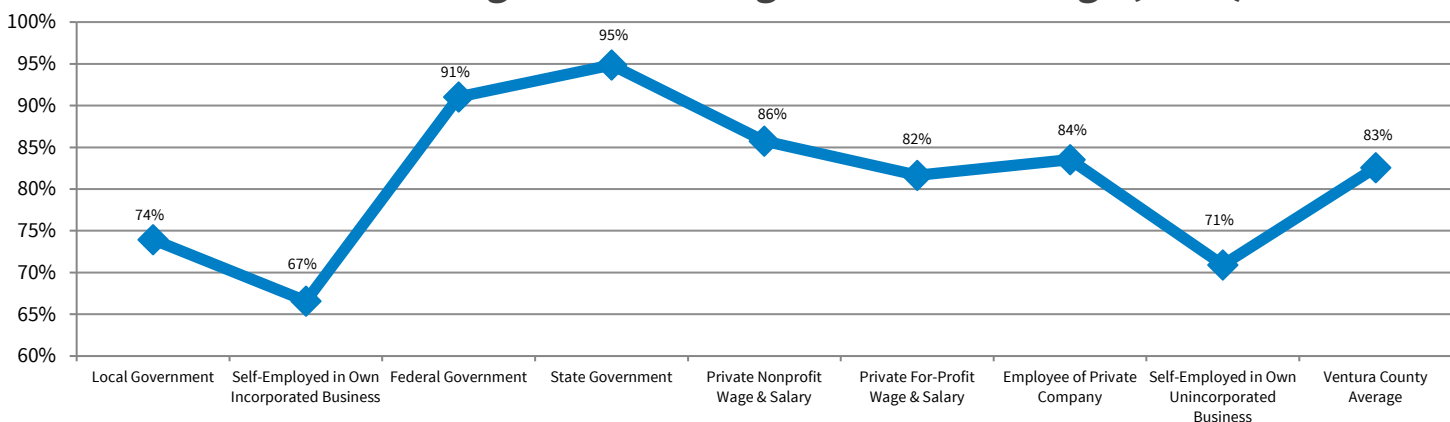
Women earn significantly less than men in every employment sector in Ventura County. Overall, the average woman made 83 percent as much as the average man in the county over the 2009-13 period. That was actually slightly better than the 79 percent figure for the 2006-10 span.

The gap was the largest among self-employed workers with incorporated businesses. Women in that sector earned just 67 percent of what men made. The smallest disparity was among state government workers. Women in state government made 95 percent as much as men – up from 85 percent during the 2008-12 span.

**Pay for Work by Gender, Median Earnings in 2013  
Inflation-Adjusted Dollars (2013)**



**Female Earnings as Percentage of Male Earnings (2013)**



# INTERNATIONAL TRADE

## What are the measures?

The measures are the value, adjusted for inflation, of goods and services exported from Ventura County, the top five exporting industries and the top gains and losses in exports.

## Why are the measures important?

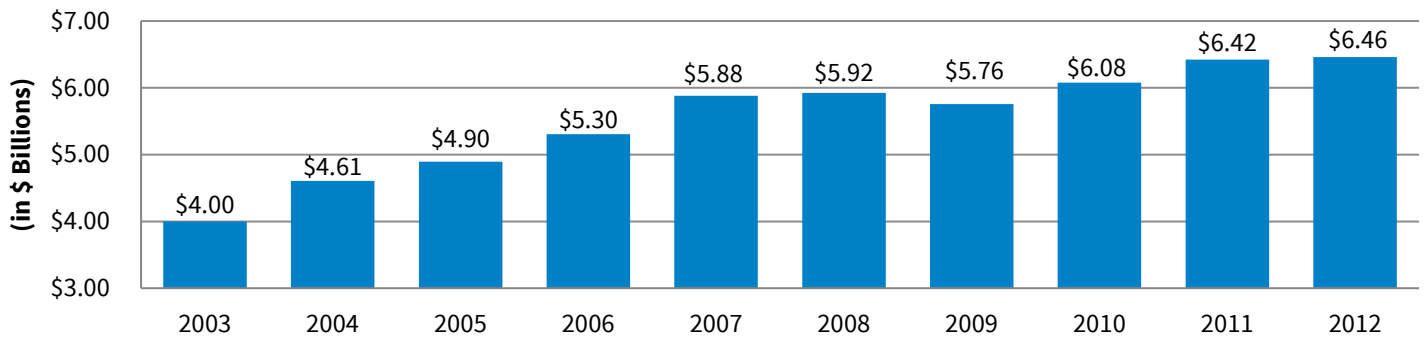
The modern economy is a global economy. In many industries, businesses in Ventura County cannot thrive if they ignore international markets. This is particularly true in manufacturing, where many goods produced locally are exported around the world.

## How are we doing?

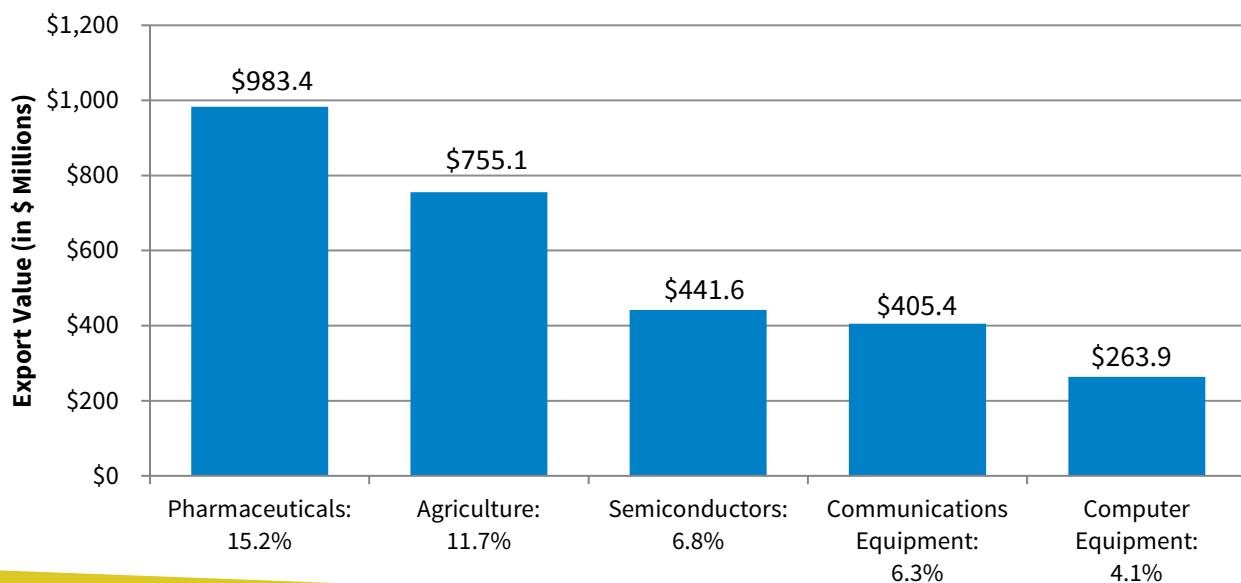
There are more goods made in Ventura County and sold in other countries than ever before. The total value of exports grew from \$4 billion in 2003 to \$6.5 billion in 2012. Manufacturing makes up a significant portion of exports: 60.5 percent in 2012.

Pharmaceuticals were Ventura County's most lucrative export in 2012, with a value of \$983.4 million. Those sales are mostly attributable to Amgen, which is based in Thousand Oaks and is the world's largest biotechnology company. Agricultural exports were second, at \$755.1 million, followed by three sectors of the technology industry: semiconductors, communications equipment and computer equipment. Despite its perch at the top of the list, pharmaceutical exports have lost ground, as Amgen has cut its workforce and moved some of its production out of Ventura County. The most dramatic growth in 2012 was in telecommunications equipment.

## Ventura County Real Exports in 2012 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars (2003 - 2012)



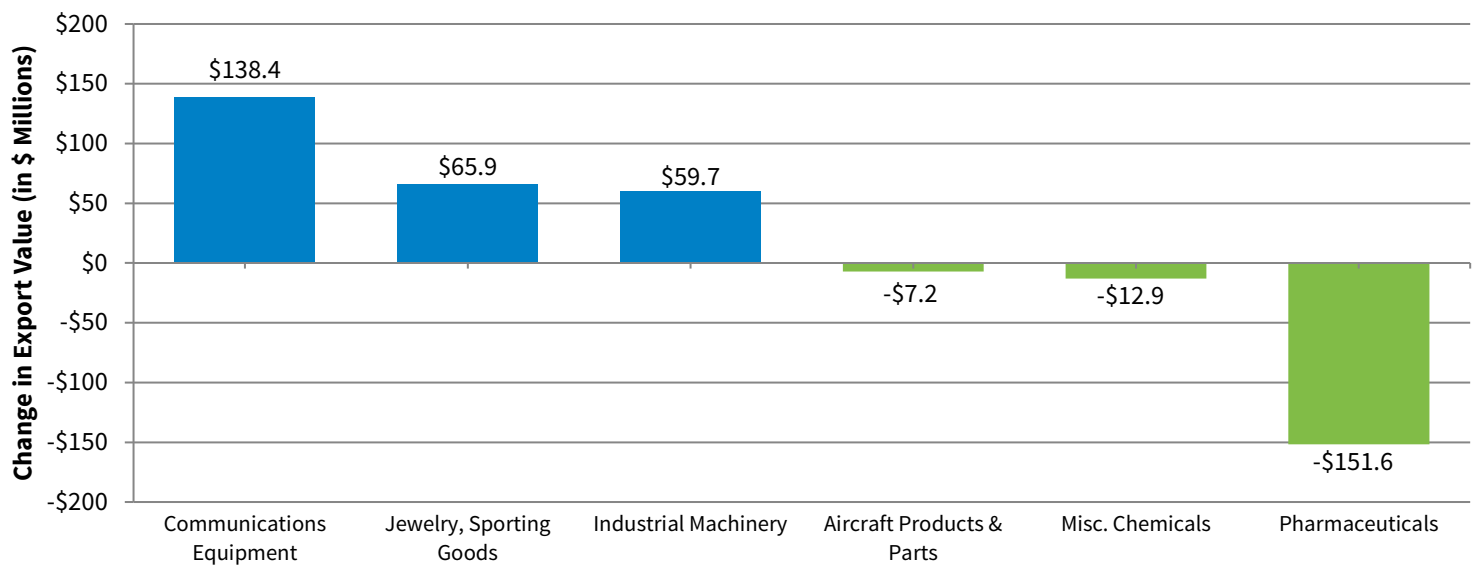
## Top Five Ventura County Exporting Industries and Percent of Total Exports (2012)







## Top Three Gains and Losses in Ventura County Exports (2009 - 2012)



# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NAVAL BASE VENTURA COUNTY

## What is the measure?

The measure is the economic impact of Naval Base Ventura County, which includes industrial output, direct payroll expenditures, taxes paid and federal aid. Indirect jobs are those jobs created as a result of local purchases of goods and services by firms directly dependent on Naval Base Ventura County.

## Why is the measure important?

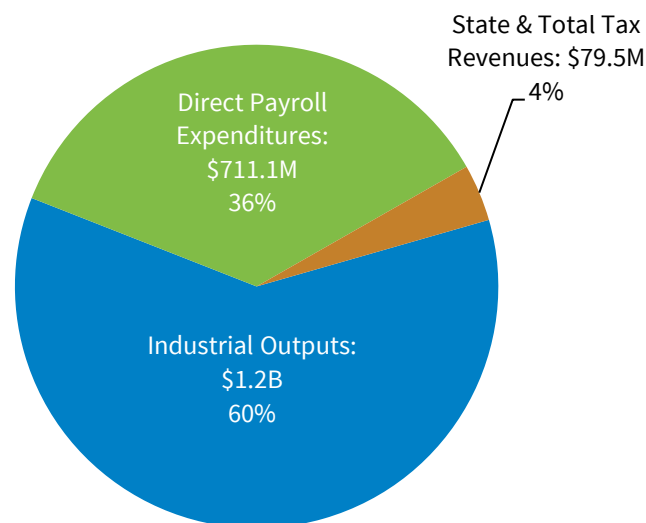
Naval Base Ventura County is one of the county's major economic engines. It is the largest single employer in the county, and it is a magnet for innovation through the private companies that contract with the base.

## How are we doing?

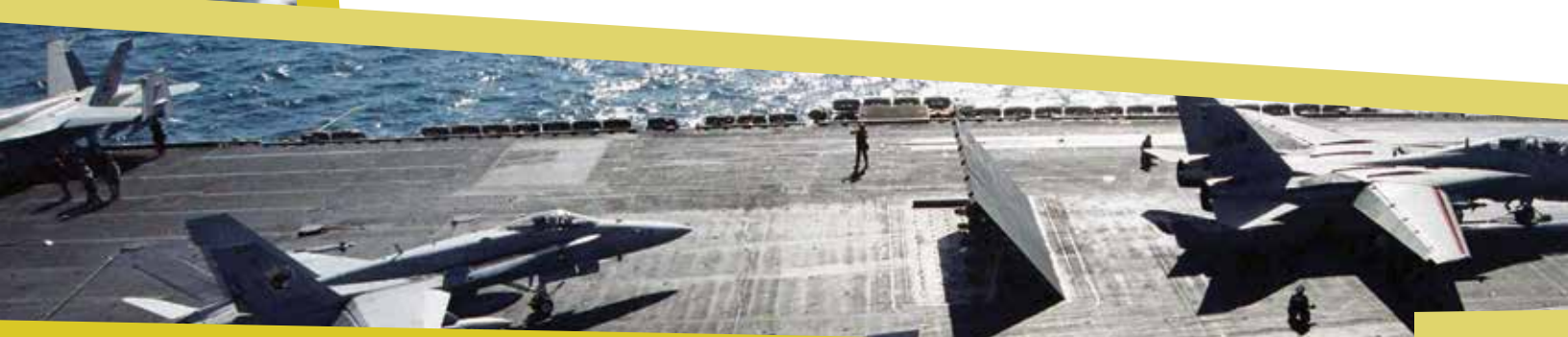
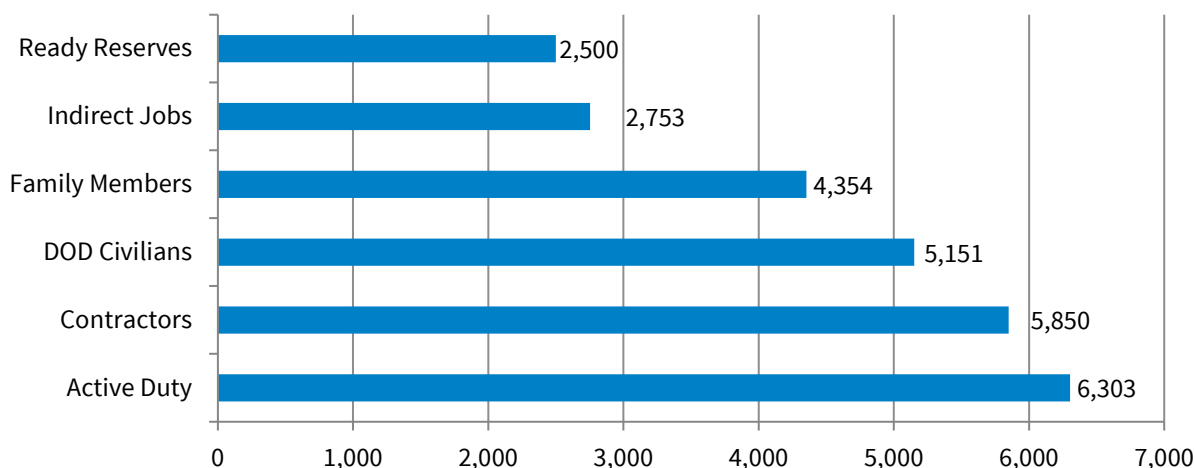
In 2013, the base contributed just under \$2 billion to the county's economy, down slightly from three years earlier. The majority of that was industrial output, at \$1.2 billion in 2013. Payroll was \$711 million, or 36 percent of the total.

The base is responsible for more than 20,000 jobs, including those of 6,303 active service members, more than 5,000 civilian Department of Defense employees and 5,850 independent contractors.

## Economic Impact of Naval Base Ventura County (2013)



## The People of Naval Base Ventura County (2013)



# ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE PORT OF HUENEME

## What is the measure?

The measure is the economic impact of the Port of Hueneme, as measured by the number of jobs and the economic activity generated by the port. Direct jobs are those generated by operations at the Port of Hueneme. Indirect jobs are those generated as a result of local purchases of goods and services by firms directly dependent upon the Port of Hueneme. Induced jobs are those jobs created due to the purchases made by individuals directly dependent upon Port of Hueneme activity.

## Why is the measure important?

The Port of Hueneme is a crucial asset to Ventura County's economy. As the only deep water port between Los Angeles and San Francisco, it is an important part of the West Coast's trade infrastructure. It handles much of Ventura County's exported produce and other goods, and it receives imported automobiles, bananas and other products.

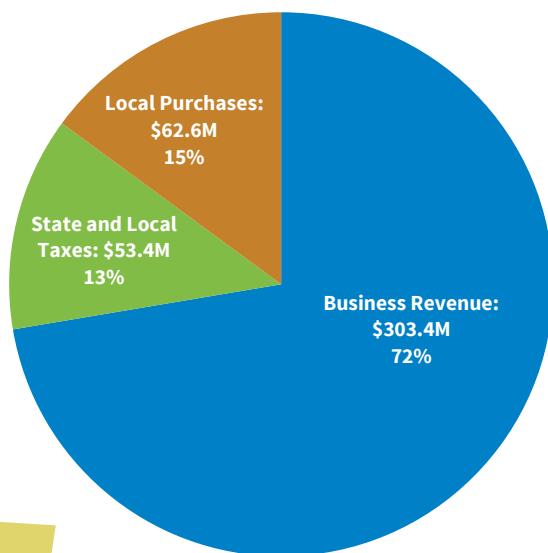
## How are we doing?

The Port was responsible for 5,939 jobs in 2013, including 2,394 direct employees. For every direct job the Port creates, an additional 1.5 indirect and induced jobs also are generated, for a total of 2.5 jobs. Induced jobs are in retail, government, healthcare, transportation and other sectors that exist to provide goods and services to firms and workers directly dependent upon the Port.

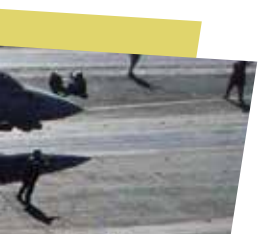
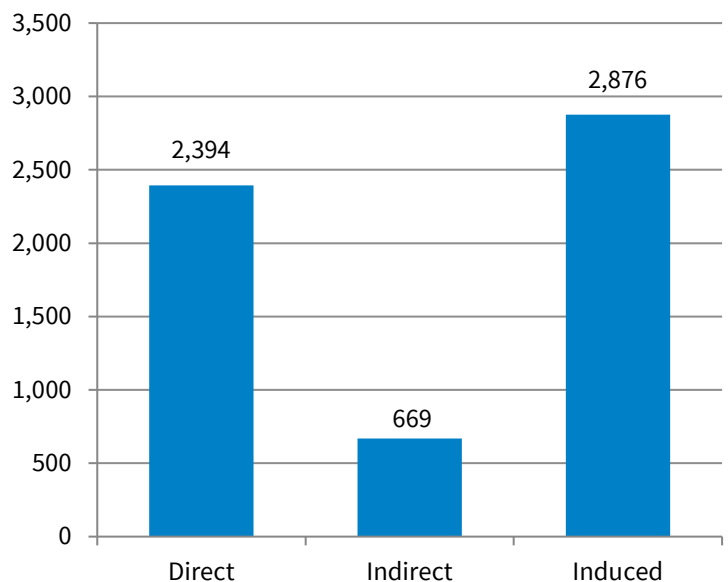
The Port's 2,394 direct jobs are the ones generated by operations at the marine terminals, and those are the jobs most dependent upon shipping activity. Two-thirds of those jobs are held by Ventura County residents. Another 2,876 jobs are induced.

Business revenue at the Port of Hueneme exceeded \$303 million in 2013, leading to \$53 million in local and state taxes and \$62.6 million in local purchases by firms dependent on marine activity. Purchases by those firms supported 669 indirect jobs in and around Port Hueneme.

### Economic, Revenue and Tax Impact (in \$ Millions) from Port of Hueneme Marine Terminals (2013)



### Jobs Related to Port of Hueneme Marine Terminals (2013)









# Education

One of the most important priorities for a community, or for a family, is the education of its children. Parents will uproot their lives and sacrifice luxuries to move to an area with better schools, or to send their children to a private school. Businesses rely on schools to graduate educated workers, and workers leverage additional schooling into higher incomes for their entire working lives. All of society benefits when citizens and voters are educated and informed.

A well-educated populace has been a major public policy goal for centuries, and in modern America it is more critical than ever. For approximately the past 20 years, school administrators, teachers and outside experts largely have

remade the methods and materials of teaching. Instruction no longer focuses on the teacher standing in the front of the room but instead on what students sitting at their desk learn and are able to achieve as a result of their classroom experience.

A second wave of reform is under way as schools across the country begin to teach to the Common Core State Standards, commonly known as Common Core. Forty-three states have signed on to the initiative, which means students in those states now learn the same concepts in each grade. In California, Common Core has been implemented fully for the first time in the 2014/15 school year.



# PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of students enrolled in Ventura County public schools from kindergarten through 12th grade.

## Why is the measure important?

State funding, the source of most of a local school district's budget, is based in part on the average daily attendance at each campus in the district. The Local Control Funding Formula is the new funding model for California schools. In addition to funding for average daily attendance, funding depends upon the grade span of the enrolled students and the number of students classified as English learners, low-income and foster youth. Many costs of operating a school vary with the number of students enrolled, but some costs, such as those related to buildings and maintenance, are fixed. A district with declining enrollment therefore can find itself with less to spend on teacher salaries, books and other essentials. Districtwide trends in enrollment are also important because they allow school districts to plan when and where to build new schools and to arrange appropriate educational programs.

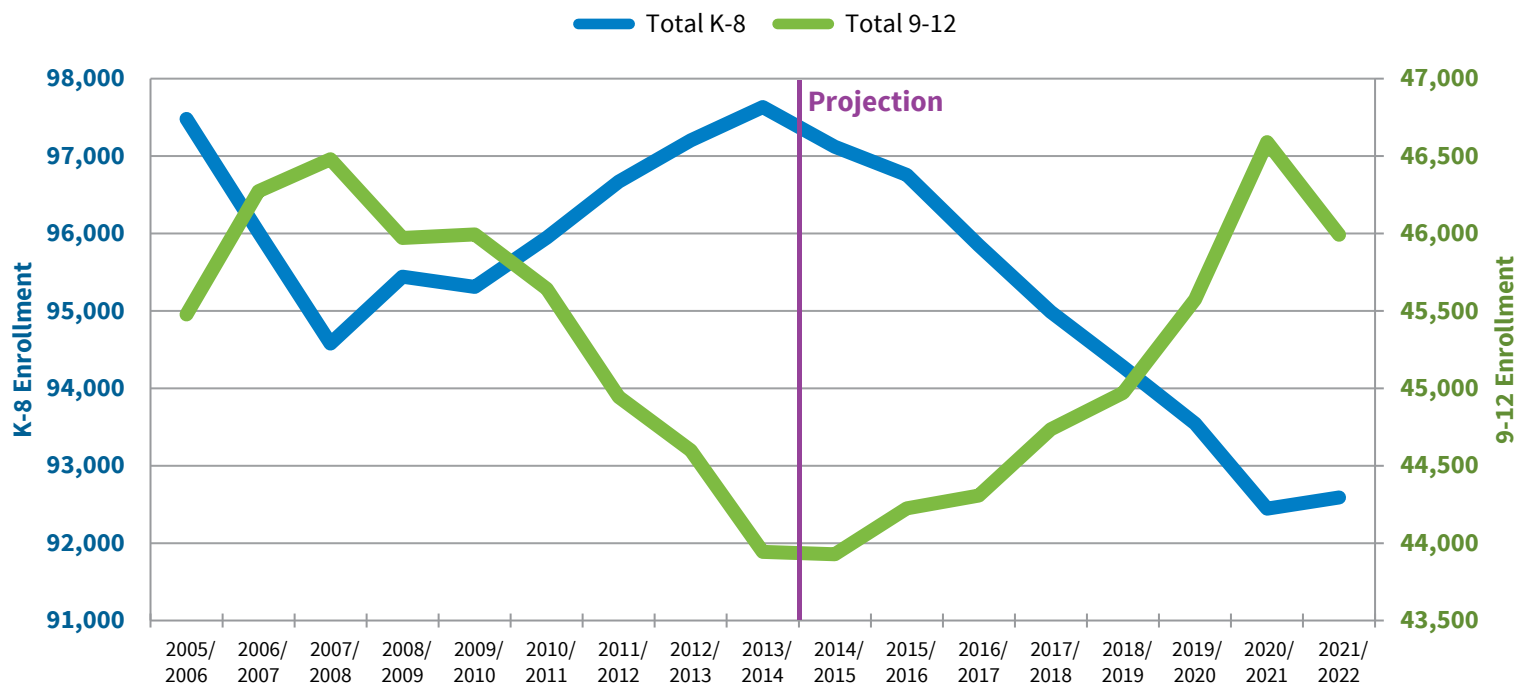
## How are we doing?

Public school enrollment declined slightly between 2005 and 2013, a drop of 0.8 percent over eight years. That slow downward trend should continue for the immediate future, with a predicted drop of 2.3 percent from 2013 to 2022.

Enrollment in K-8 schools and high schools are inversely correlated; a spike in childhood population will first result in higher enrollment in elementary and middle schools, and later in high schools, as the children age. In the past couple of decades, Ventura County has not seen the type of sustained baby boom that would bring growing enrollment at all school levels.

Elementary and middle school enrollment peaked in the 2013/14 school year, and high school enrollment hit its low point the same year. High school enrollment should grow and K-8 enrollment should shrink until 2020, when the pattern will reverse itself again.

### Ventura County Public School Enrollment (2005/06 - 2021/22)



# EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL

## What is the measure?

The measure is the amount of money spent per student by selected school districts in Ventura County. This is in large part dictated by the state of California, which provides the bulk of school funding. Districts also get funding from the federal government, which targets most of its funds to schools with high poverty levels.

## Why is the measure important?

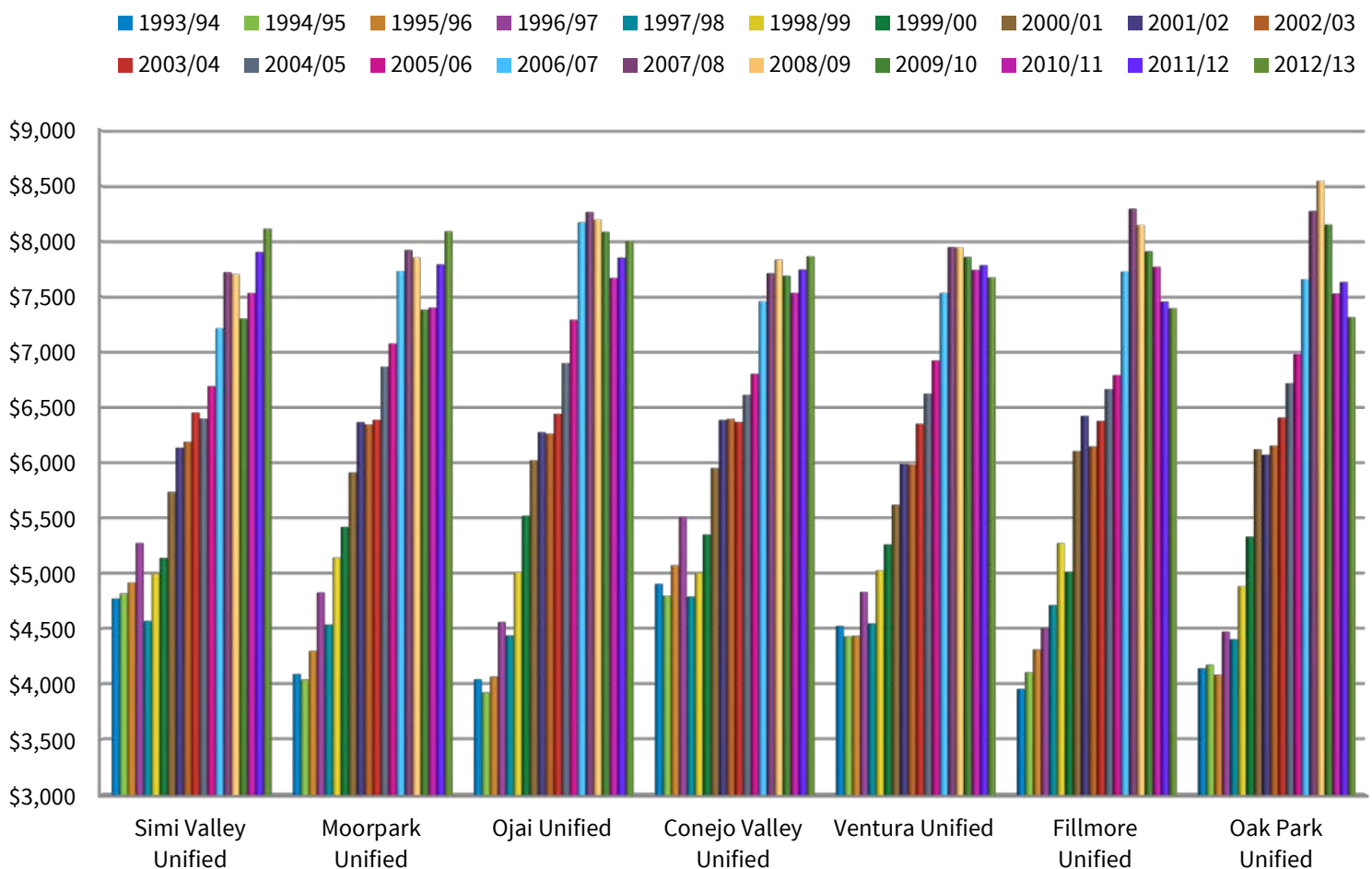
While funding isn't directly correlated to school quality, money is a necessary input to turning out well-educated students. Almost everything a school district needs — teachers, administrators, books, computers, buildings — costs money.

## How are we doing?

Spending in Ventura County school districts increased significantly from 1999/2000 to 2007/08 and then dropped by a smaller amount. In the Ventura Unified School District, for example, per-student spending went from \$5,261 in 1999/2000, to \$7,945 in 2007/08, to \$7,671 in 2012/13. Even after five years of recession-driven budget cuts, spending was higher in 2013 than it had been in any year before 2006/07. The figures are not adjusted for inflation, but the increase in the early 2000s was greater than the pace of inflation.

Differences exist in spending among the districts, but the relative standing of the districts varies from year to year. There is no clear pattern tying spending differences to the location of the district, the quality of the schools or any other obvious factor.

**Annual Per-Pupil Spending (1993/94 - 2012/13)**





# AVERAGE CLASS SIZE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the average number of students per class in public schools in Ventura County and statewide. The California Department of Education could not provide data for the 2009/10 school year, so the chart below excludes that time period.

## Why is the measure important?

The research on how much students are helped by small class sizes is mixed, but there are certain clear benefits. Particularly in primary grades, smaller class size enables teachers to identify a student's unique learning needs before peers leave that student behind. In the upper grades, teachers can provide more specific instructional feedback when there are fewer students. Smaller class sizes also make for a better working environment for teachers and might help a school district recruit employees.

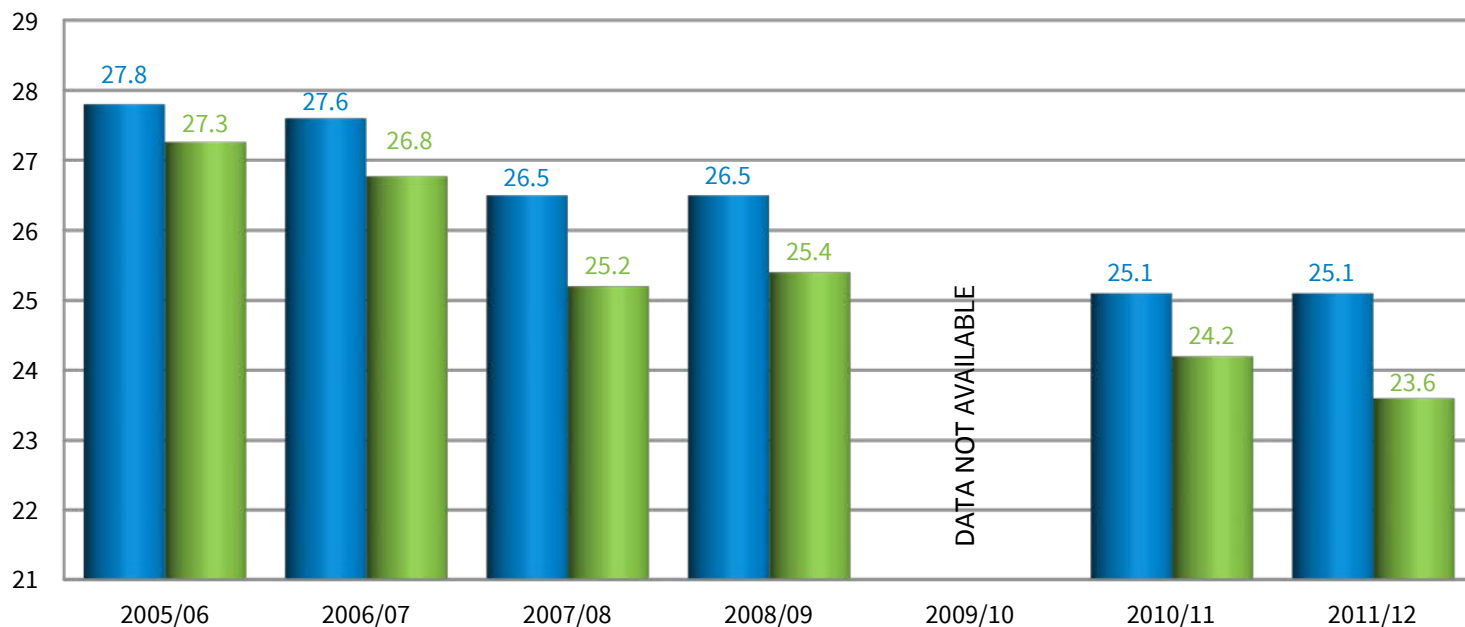
## How are we doing?

The average class sizes in Ventura County schools declined between 2006 and 2012, going from 27.8 students to 25.1. Statewide, classes shrank at a faster rate, going from 27.3 students in 2006 to 23.6 in 2012.

Class sizes shrank while school budgets were being cut in 2008, 2009 and 2010, and they continued to contract after the recession ended and funding began to grow again. One explanation for this is the federal stimulus package, which paid local school districts to avoid teacher layoffs in 2009 and 2010.

**Average Class Size in Ventura County and California  
(2005/06 - 2011/12)**

■ Ventura ■ California





# HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of students who drop out of public high schools in Ventura County between the 9th and 12th grades. The rate is the percentage of students who dropped out in each specific ethnic group.

The way schools in California report dropout rates changed in 2010. Before that year, many districts only counted students as dropouts when the district knew they had dropped out of school. The new method, known as the “cohort rate,” tracks the group of students at a school or district over their four-year high school career. Students who transfer into the school are added to the cohort, and those who transfer out are subtracted. The dropout rate is the percentage of students who leave the school without a high school diploma or the equivalent after the end of the fourth year, and who did not transfer to another school.

## Why is the measure important?

High school dropouts are at an extreme and lifelong disadvantage in the workplace. Even in industries that do not require a college degree, a high school diploma is usually the minimum level of education for the type of jobs that result in long-term prosperity.

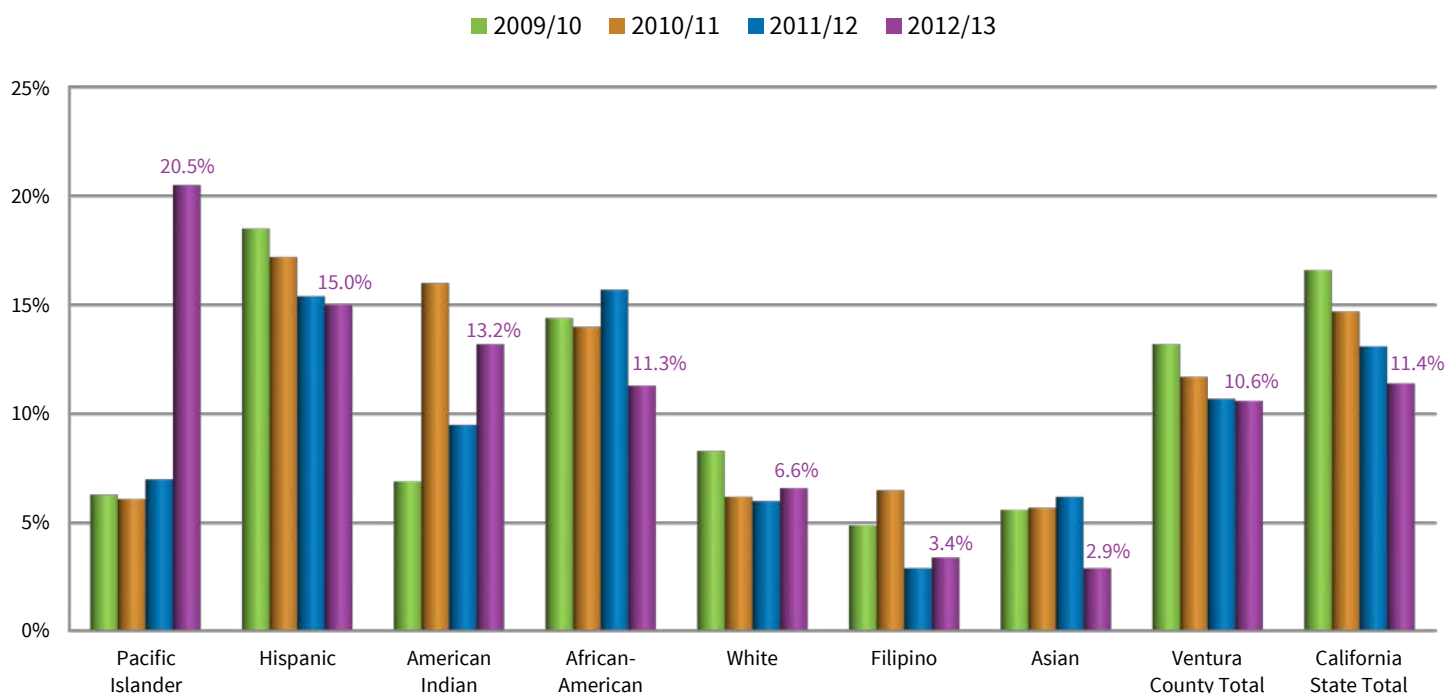
## How are we doing?

The dropout rate in Ventura County is lower than that of the state of California as a whole, and it is declining steadily. Still, a significant number of high school students drop out before they have the chance to graduate, and the numbers are even higher for Latino and African-American students.

In the class of 2012/13, 10.6 percent of students in Ventura County dropped out at some point during their high school years; statewide, the figure was 11.4 percent. Both numbers have dropped for three straight years. In 2009/10, the four-year dropout rates were 13.2 percent in Ventura County and 16.6 percent in the state.

It appears that California high schools are doing something right when it comes to keeping their students in school. However, 2009/10 was the first year the state began comprehensively tracking each student and calculating precise dropout rates for each high school class. This makes it hard to predict if the change is a genuine trend.

## Ventura County Public Schools (9 - 12) Cohort Dropout Rates (2009/10 - 2012/13)



# ENGLISH LEARNERS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of public school students in Ventura County who are classified as “English learners,” which means they speak a language other than English at home and would benefit from enhanced English-language skills to succeed in their school’s core academic programs.

Note: For 2010/11, 415 local education agencies did not complete the CALPADS Spring 1 data collection, therefore this number is unusually low.

## Why is the measure important?

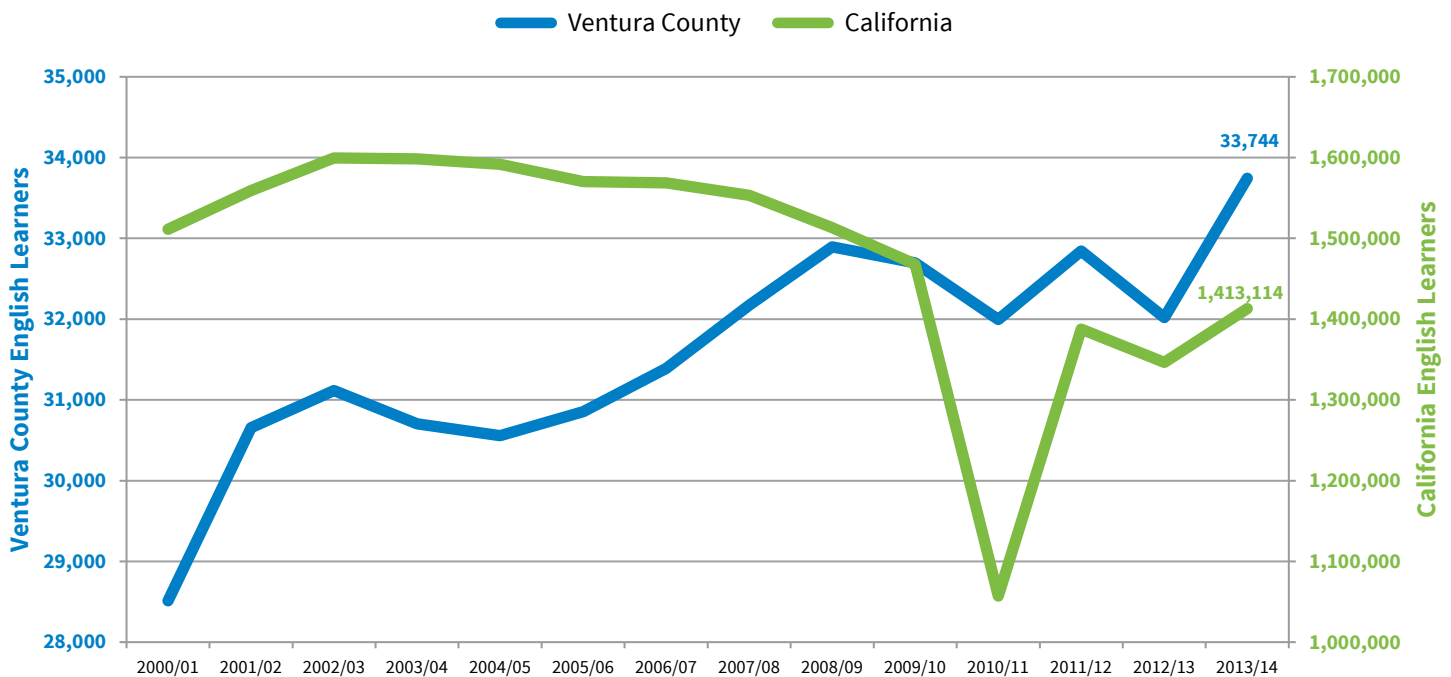
Speaking, reading and writing English fluently are important skills for students if they are going to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Students who don’t speak English well have an extra burden in school: they are trying to learn the language at the same time they try to learn math, history, science and other academic subjects. This can hold them back in one or more areas, and it presents a significant challenge to their schools and teachers.

## How are we doing?

There were 33,744 English learners in Ventura County public schools in 2013/14, more than ever before. The total has gone up and down in the past few years, but has grown by about 10 percent over the past decade. The population is in constant flux; as students improve their English and graduate out of special programs, they are replaced by new students with limited English skills.



**Number of Public School Students Classified as English Learners  
(2000/01 - 2013/14)**



# CHILDHOOD GROWTH AND DISPARITIES

## What is the measure?

The measure is an index known as the “Misery Index,” which is made up of eight socioeconomic indicators, applied to 11 areas (called Neighborhood for Learning or NfLs) in Ventura County. The eight indicators are: the poverty rate among children age 5 and under; the percentage of women-led households with children 5 and younger who are below the poverty line; the percentage of adults 25 and older without a high school diploma; the percentage of people who speak English “less than very well”; the portion of schoolchildren eligible for subsidized lunches; the portion of students classified as English learners; and the percentage of students who tested at “below proficient” for math and language arts. The percentages are added together and weighted equally for the index.

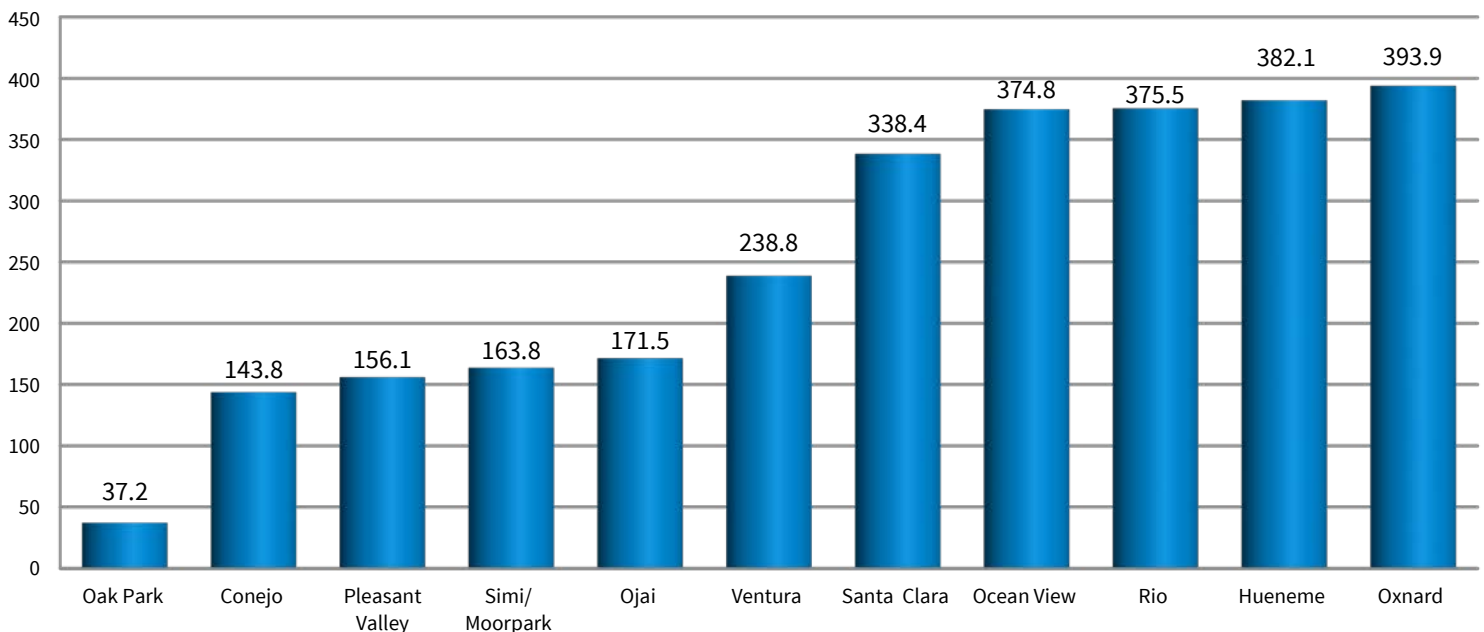
## Why is the measure important?

Schools are important to a child’s education and development, but they are not all-powerful. Children do not enter school on a level playing field. In some neighborhoods, they are likely to have grown up poor and speak a language other than English at home. These factors, and the rest that make up the index, have long-lasting effects on a child’s success in school and prospects later in life.

## How are we doing?

This index illustrates the deep socioeconomic divides in Ventura County. At one end of the spectrum is Oak Park, where more than 98 percent of the adult population has a high school diploma, and not a single child under the age of 6 lived below the poverty line in 2011. Oak Park’s score on the index — the sum of the percentages on eight different risk measures — was 37.2, less than one-third the score of the next area, the Conejo Valley. In Oxnard, El Rio and Port Hueneme the total index was more than 10 times as high as Oak Park. In El Rio, for example, 45.9 percent of households led by a woman, with children 5 or younger, were living in poverty.

**“Misery Index” for Ventura County  
Neighborhoods for Learning (NfL) (2011)**



# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## What is the measure?

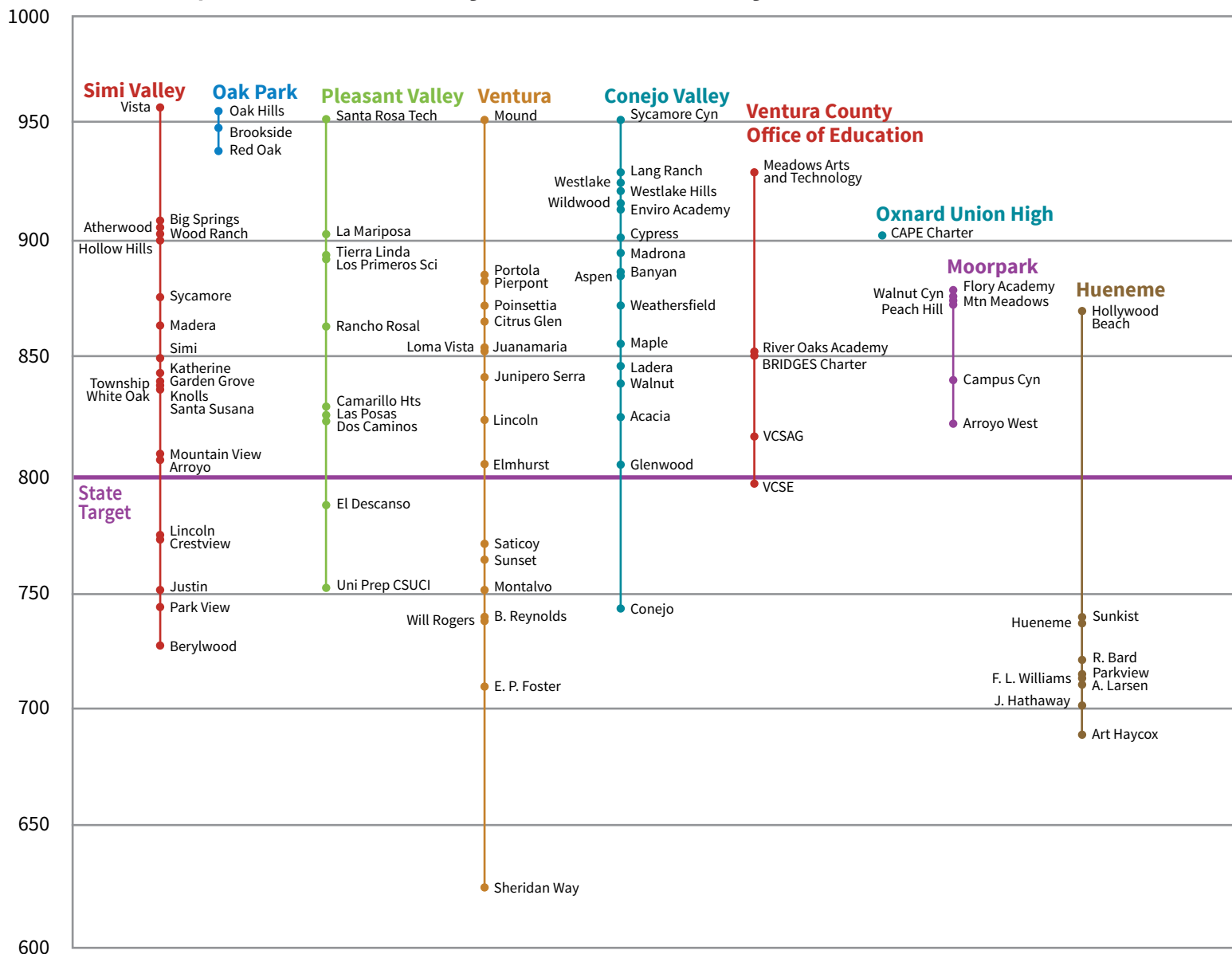
The measure is the Academic Performance Index score of schools in Ventura County. The schools are divided into elementary schools, middle schools and high schools.

For years, the Academic Performance Index, or API, was the state of California's primary tool for evaluating public schools. The way the state calculates API is changing, though, as is the material that standardized tests are based on, as schools adopt Common Core standards. The state did not calculate API scores in 2014 and probably will not do so in 2015, either. The index is likely to return in 2016 in a different form. For the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years, students are still taking standardized tests, but the results aren't being tabulated or released.

The API remains the best way to measure the performance and progress of schools through the 2012/13 school year. It was calculated from a battery of standardized tests, given annually in grades 2 through 11, in the subjects of English and math. Students in grades 8 through 11 also were tested in history, and those in grades 5 and 8 through 11, in science.

The API was scored on a scale of 200 to 1,000. If all of a school's students scored in the top 20 percent, when compared to all students tested in the state, the school would have a perfect API of 1,000. If every student scored in the bottom 20 percent, the school would have the lowest possible API of 200. The state's target score for every school was 800, and schools below that level had to reach annual growth targets or face the possibility of sanctions from the state.

## 2012/13 Ventura County Public Elementary School API Scores





## Why is the measure important?

Standardized tests will be based on Common Core content standards for public schools, which spell out exactly what students are expected to learn each year. Though there is debate about whether these tests accurately measure students' achievement, or whether they encourage teachers to "teach to the test," at present they are the only state-level systematic way that schools are gauged on their ability to instill knowledge and skills.

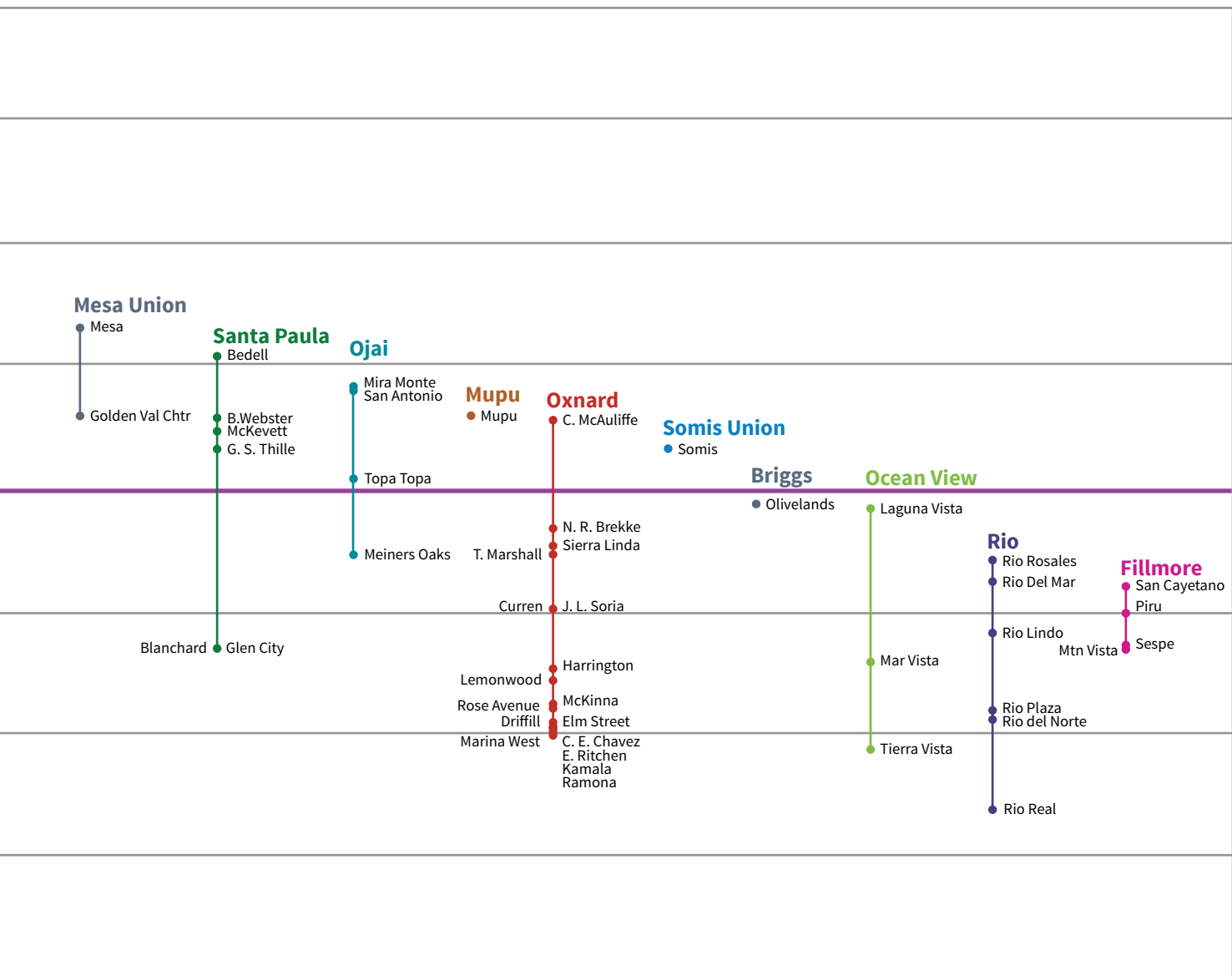
In 2016, standardized tests will make up no more than 60 percent of a school's API score. The state will require local districts to maintain "Local Control and Accountability Plans" to measure their progress, and API will make up a small part of those plans.

## How are we doing?

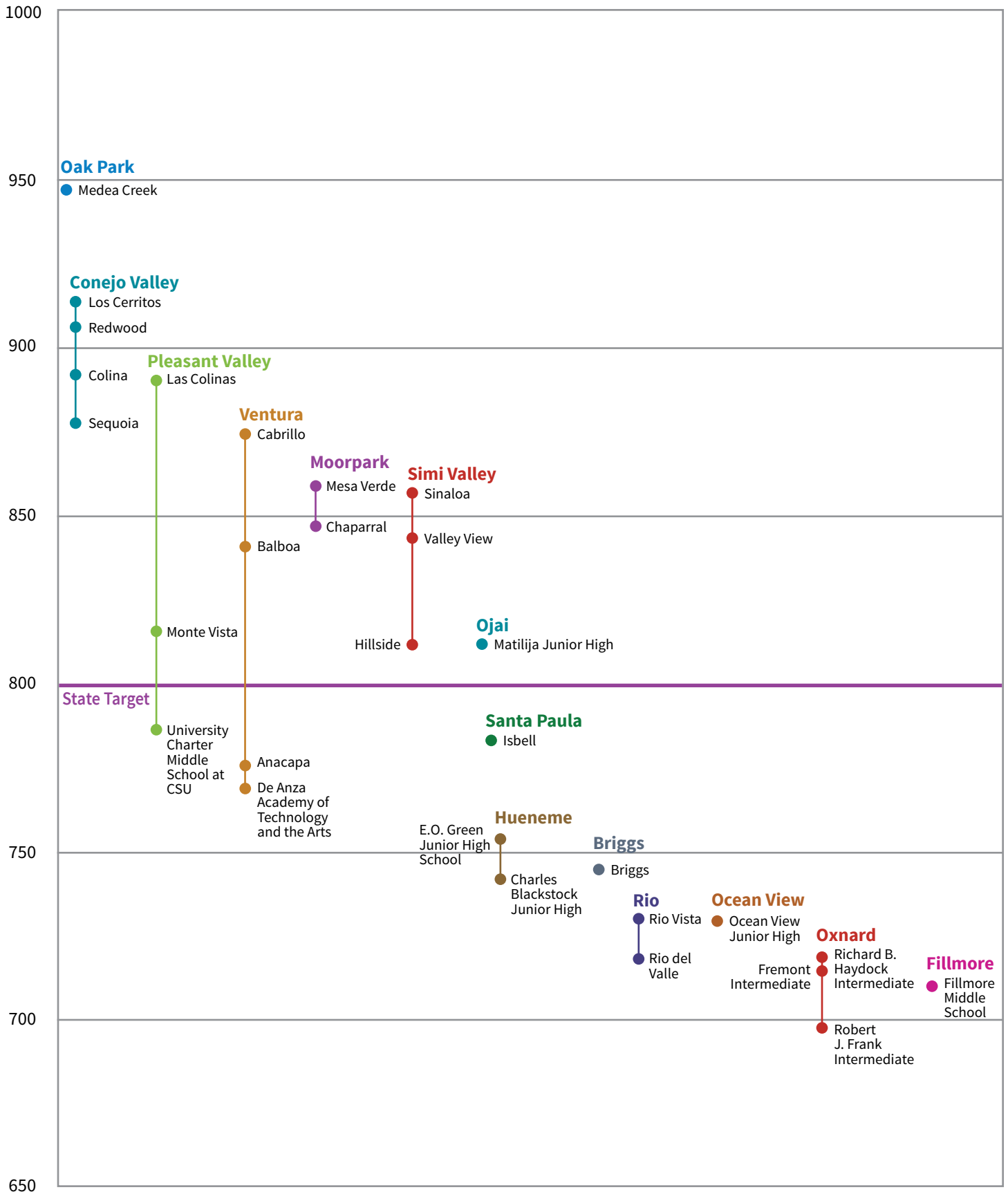
The performance of Ventura County schools on the API varied tremendously. The differences often lie along demographic, ethnic and economic lines. For example, Oak Park had the highest performing schools in the county, and poorer communities like El Rio, Fillmore and South Oxnard had the lowest performing schools. These gaps in performance persist throughout the state and the nation, and they have remained wide even as scores have improved and curriculum standards have become more stringent.

In the 2012/13 school year, five school districts had every school score above the state benchmark of 800: Oak Park, Moorpark, Mesa Union, Mupu and Somis. Mupu and Somis have only one school, though, and Mesa Union has two.

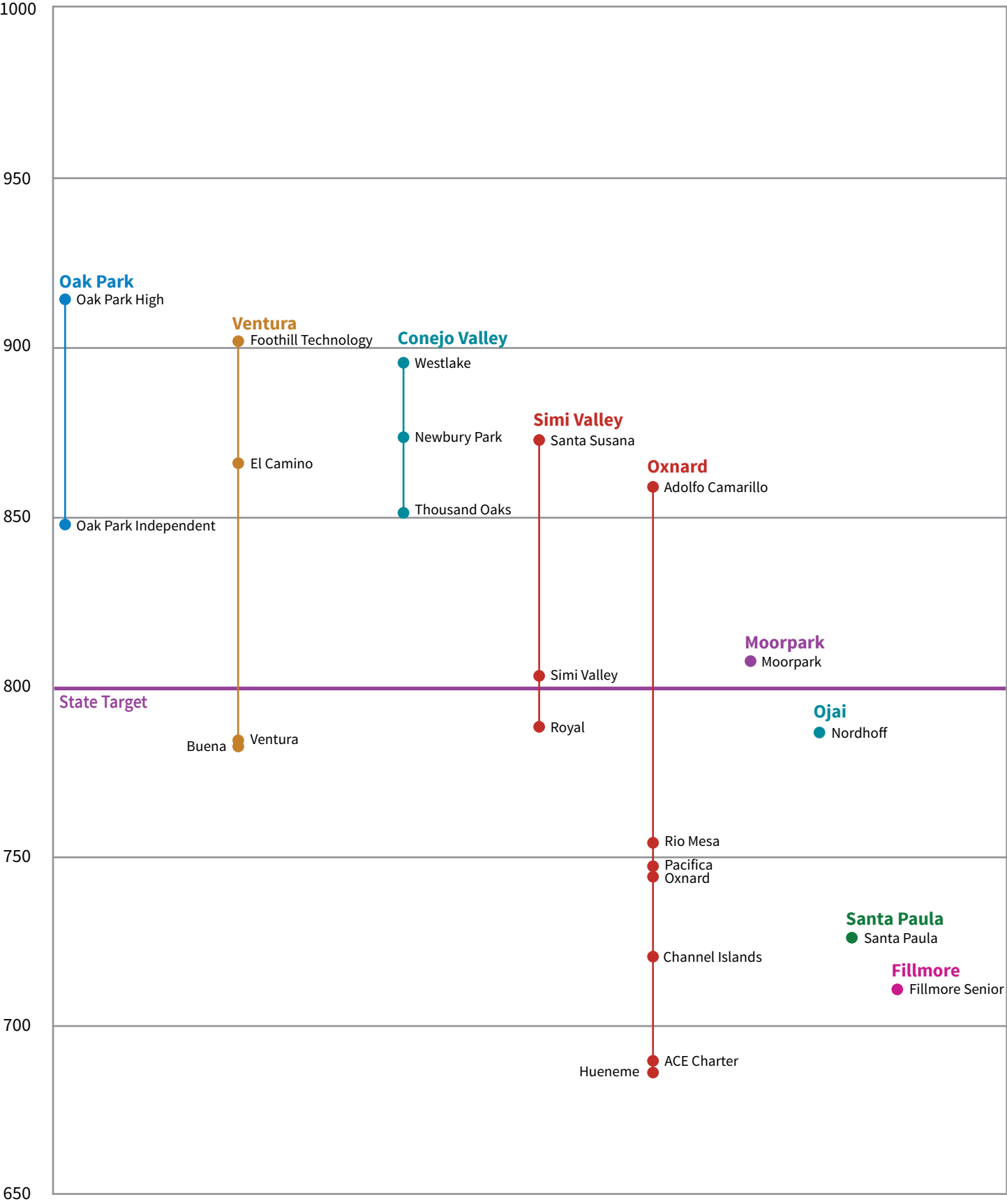
## 2012/13 Ventura County Public Elementary School API Scores



## 2012/13 Ventura County Public Middle School API Scores



# 2012/13 Ventura County Public High School API Scores



# COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of high school juniors in each school district who pass the Early Assessment Program (EAP) exams in math and English. The EAP measures students' readiness for the curriculum in the California State University system. The percentage of students who pass an EAP exam is not the same as the exam's pass rate, because not all students take the test.

## Why is the measure important?

In the CSU system, 60 percent of freshmen arrive on campus in need of remedial courses in math and English before they can do college-level work. It's a problem shared by universities nationwide. This lack of preparedness keeps colleges from teaching the advanced material they specialize in, and it contributes to the nation's college dropout rate, which is among the highest in the industrialized world. Among Latinos and other ethnic groups, the portion of students prepared for college is even lower than in the general population. This indicates that schools are doing a poor job of preparing students of certain ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, which has disturbing implications for this generation's future economic and social equality.

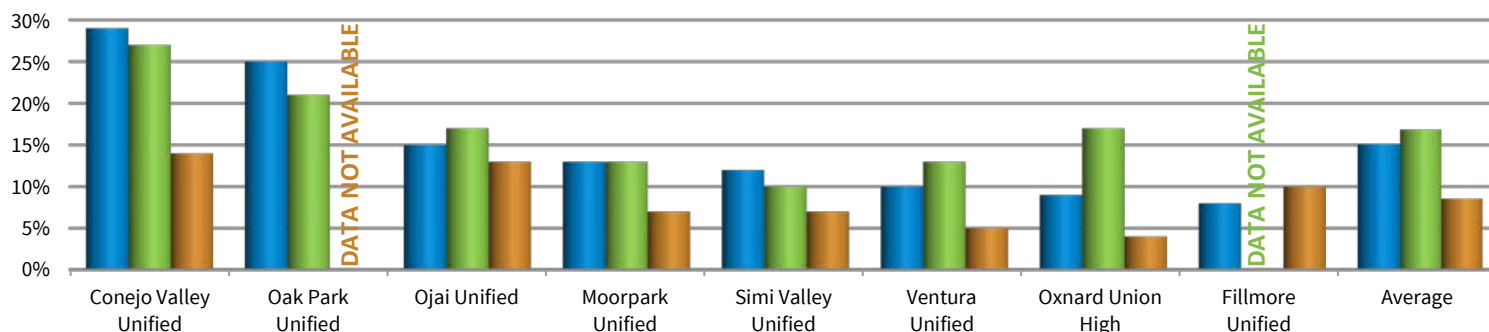
## How are we doing?

Most high school juniors in Ventura County are unprepared for college-level work. In 2013, there was not a single school district in which 50 percent of the juniors passed even one of the EAP exams. The Oak Park and Conejo Valley districts came the closest, at 46 percent and 43 percent, respectively, on the English exam. In the Oxnard district, 16 percent of juniors passed the English exam, and in Fillmore, only 8 percent of juniors passed. Performance on the English exam, with 30 percent of students in the county passing, was better than performance on the math exam, which 15 percent of students passed.

College preparedness appears highly correlated with race and socioeconomic status. Schools in wealthier areas scored much better than those in poorer areas, and at all schools, Latinos did worse than white students. In 2013, 38 percent of non-Hispanic white students in Ventura County passed the English exam, and only 15 percent of Hispanic students passed. The gap in math was smaller but still present: 17 percent of non-Hispanic white students passed, compared to 9 percent of Hispanic students. The gap on the English exam may be exaggerated by the fact that hundreds of students every year are classified as "English language learners," and virtually none of them pass. Those students are more likely to be Hispanic than white, as Spanish is by far the most common language spoken by English learners in Ventura County.

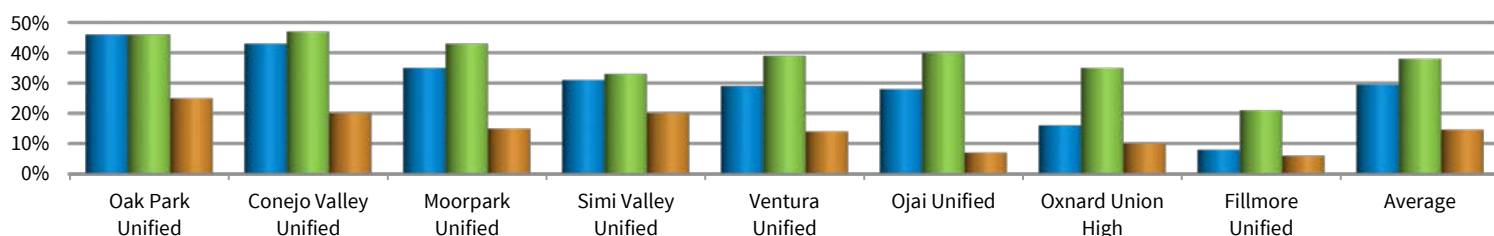
### Percent of Ventura County Students Passing the EAP Math Exam (2013)

■ All Students ■ White, Non-Hispanic ■ Hispanic



### Percent of Ventura County Students Passing the EAP English Exam (2013)

■ All Students ■ White, Non-Hispanic ■ Hispanic





# EARNINGS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND GENDER

## What is the measure?

The measure is the median annual earnings by Ventura County residents, sorted by their education level and their gender. It includes all county residents 25 or older, whether they work full time or part time.

Additional data on the gender earnings gap is presented in the Economy domain.

## Why is the measure important?

For both men and women, education is the most important single determinant of future prosperity. However, some research indicates the benefits for women are not as pronounced as for men.

## How are we doing?

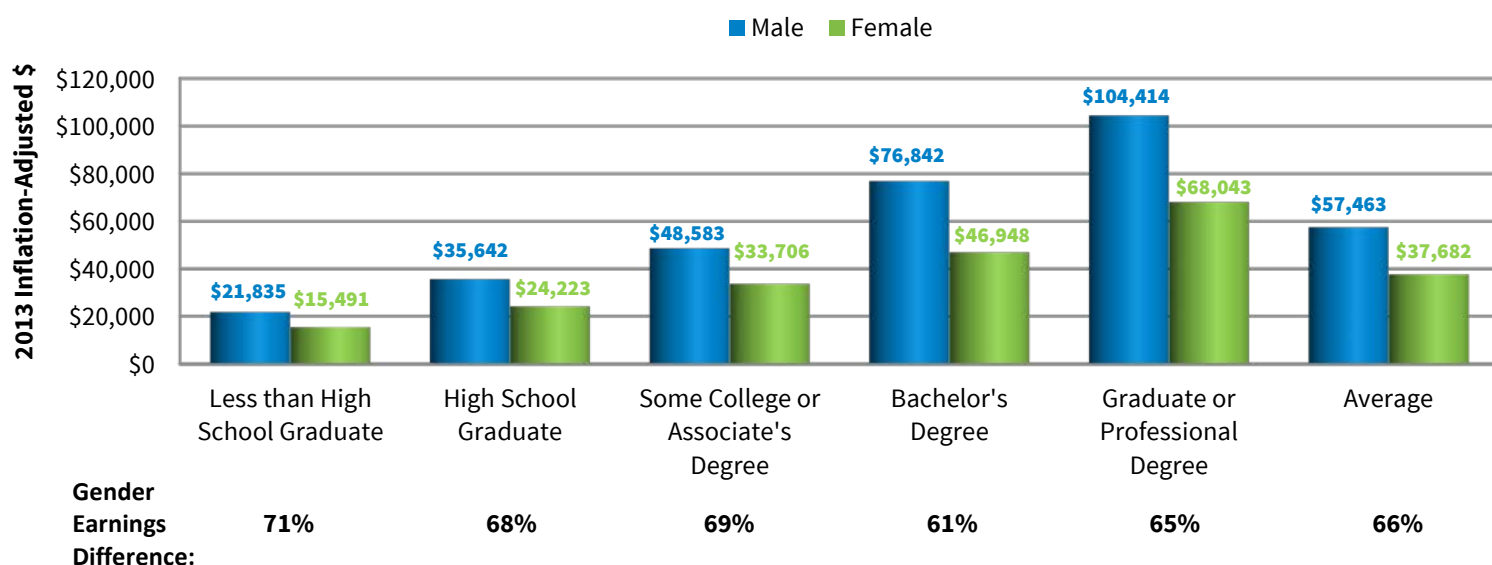
Education, at every level, pays off for a lifetime. In Ventura County, a high school diploma means about 60 percent greater income per year than dropping out before graduation. Workers with bachelor's degrees make about double what high school graduates who never attended college make.

These differences are present for both men and women, though the educational gaps are slightly bigger for men. The gaps between men's and women's earnings, on the other hand, are very wide — much wider in Ventura County than in the nation as a whole. Using U.S. Census data, in 2013, women made 72 cents for every dollar that men made. Other methods of measuring wages put the national figure at anywhere from 81 cents to 95 cents on the dollar, but a gap of some size is found every time the matter is studied.

In Ventura County, in 2013, the average woman without a high school diploma made 71 cents for every dollar earned by a man without a diploma. Among high school graduates, the figure is 68 cents; among people with some college education, it is 69 cents; among people with bachelor's degrees, it is 61 cents; and among those with advanced degrees, it is 65 cents.

These statistics don't attempt to control for differences in the hours worked by men and women or differences in the jobs they do.

**Ventura County Median Earnings by Gender and Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years + (2013)**



# COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

## What are the measures?

The measures are enrollment in Ventura County's community colleges and four-year universities.

## Why are the measures important?

Attending college, especially a four-year school, dramatically impacts an individual's lifetime earnings. Community colleges offer important job training and mid-career education, in addition to providing education to students who plan to transfer to a four-year college.

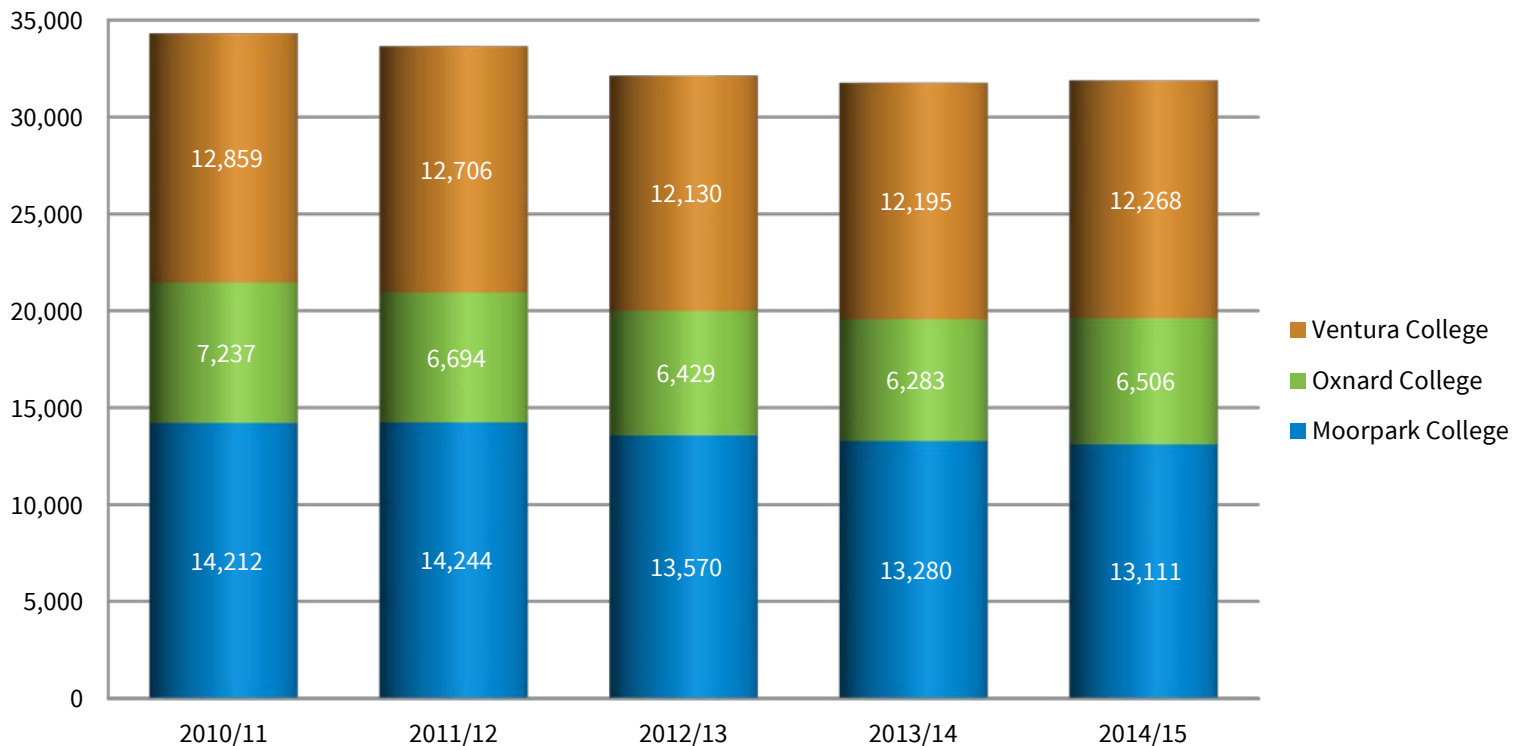
## How are we doing?

Enrollment at Ventura County's three community colleges declined every year from the 2010/11 school year to 2013/14, then ticked back up very slightly in the fall of 2014/15, with Oxnard College and Ventura College showing an enrollment increase, and Moorpark College showing a small decrease. In the fall of 2010/11, there were 34,308 students at Moorpark, Ventura and Oxnard colleges, and in the fall of 2013, there were 31,758, a drop of 7.4 percent. In the fall of 2014/15, enrollment across the three colleges totaled 31,885, a decrease of 7 percent from 2010/11.

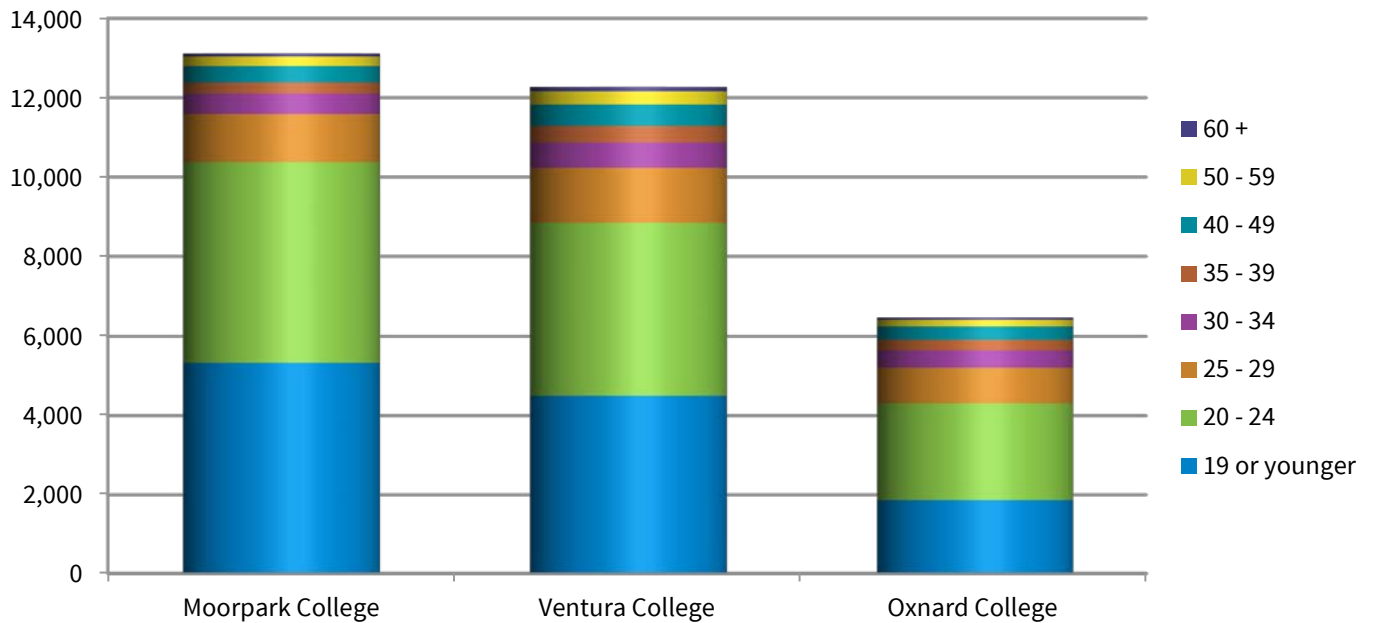
Community colleges were hit hard by budget cuts in the aftermath of the 2007 - 2009 recession, and many campuses had to eliminate classes and put caps on class sizes. The recession is over, though, and community college enrollment has just started to recover. Employers, college administrators and others are working to better establish community colleges as steps on the road to quality jobs.

On the other hand, Ventura County's four-year colleges are booming. Enrollment at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks grew by 31.5 percent between 2008 and 2013. At CSU Channel Islands, outside of Camarillo, the student population went up 45.8 percent in the same five-year period. The region's smallest college, Thomas Aquinas College near Santa Paula, also grew in that period, by a total of 7.6 percent.

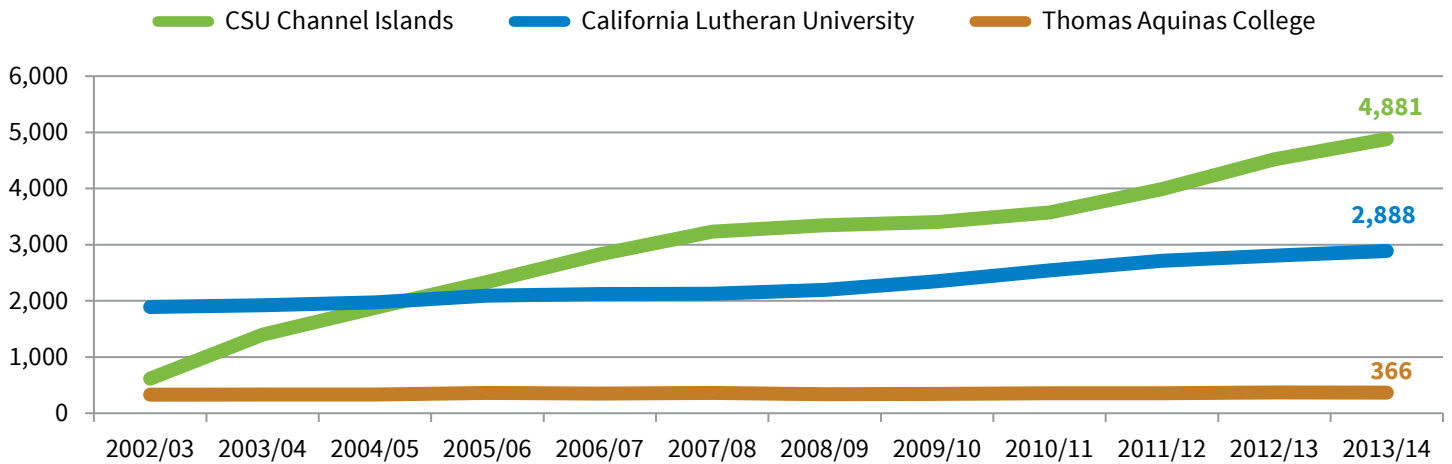
**Ventura County Community College Enrollment  
(Fall Term, 2010/11 - 2014/15)**



## Ventura County Community College Enrollment by College & Age (Fall Term, 2014/15)



## Four-Year College Undergraduate Enrollment in Ventura County (2002/03 - 2013/14)









# Environmental Quality

Ventura County's natural environment might be its greatest resource. The 43 miles of coastline, much of it pristine, are the driving factor behind the tremendous demand for housing and the region's popularity among tourists. The fertile valleys and plains are the bedrock of a \$2 billion-a-year agricultural industry. And the scenic hillsides, natural rivers and snow-capped mountains all contribute to the region's enviable quality of life.

There's tension, though, between the need to protect the environment and the fact that it attracts people and businesses en masse to Ventura County. Striving to keep the area clean and beautiful, and to balance that with the need to welcome residents, visitors and jobs, is one of the chief aims of concerned citizens and the federal, state and local governments.

In this section, we look at four indicators to sum up the state of the environment: ocean water quality, temperature change, air quality and wildlife corridors. Groundwater is another concern, particularly during a drought as deep as the current one. The quality of groundwater is more difficult to assess, because there are so many different groundwater basins in the county. But depletion of underground water is a constant worry for farmers. Low water tables mean high chloride levels, which can reduce crop yields and damage plants.



# OCEAN WATER QUALITY

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of days that Ventura County beaches were posted as unsafe for public use because of bacterial contamination, for reasons other than rainfall. The county Environmental Health Division tests for three types of bacteria: fecal coliform, total coliform and enterococcus, all of which are associated with sewage, animal waste and other pollutants.

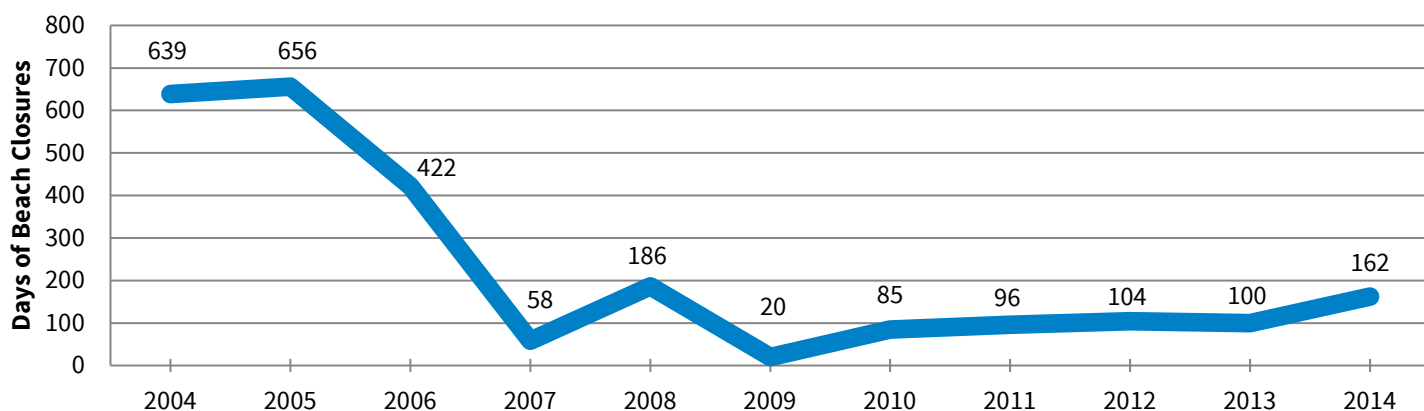
## Why is the measure important?

Ventura County's beaches can be collection pools for a variety of hazardous bacteria and other contaminants. Storm drains and natural streams empty into the ocean, taking with them any pollutants that get caught in the runoff, whether natural or man-made. Polluted water off of Ventura County's beaches is a health hazard, putting swimmers and surfers at risk of illness or rashes. It also endangers the county's economic health, as closed beaches can depress the tourist trade in seaside neighborhoods.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County consistently has the cleanest ocean water in Southern California, and it has gotten dramatically cleaner over the past decade. In 2005, the county Environmental Health Division closed beaches 656 times for excessive bacteria levels; in 2013 that number was down to 100. Almost all of the improvement came between 2005 and 2007, when the number of closures dropped 91 percent in two years. In 2014, beaches were closed 162 times, a 62 percent increase over 2013. There has been an uptick in beach closures over the past five years, after the county hit an all-time low of 20 closures in 2009. This is potentially concerning, but even after this increase, beach closures are much rarer than they were a decade ago.

**Closure Days for Water Quality -  
All Ventura County Beaches (2004 - 2014)**



# TEMPERATURE CHANGE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the change in average temperature in Ventura County since 1934. The number is the average monthly mean temperature for the year as collected from the NOAA Ventura County tracking stations available at the time.

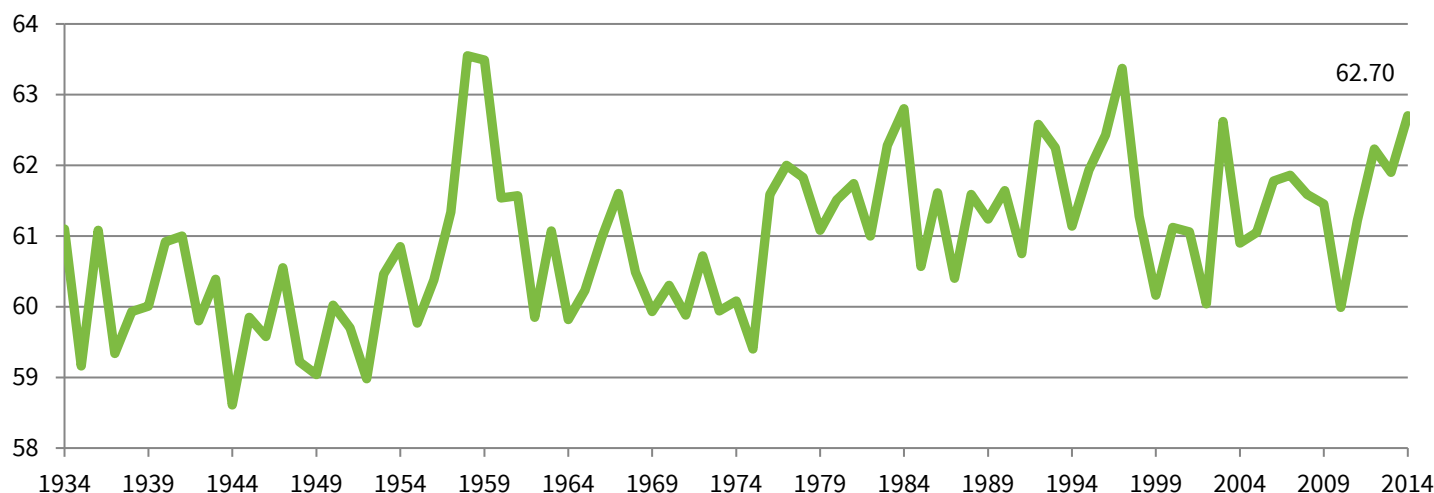
## Why is the measure important?

A change in average temperature of a few degrees might seem small, but it would mean major changes to our environment, economy and way of life. To cite a few examples: the crops that could be grown efficiently in Ventura County could change; land that's considered buildable could become off limits; and fires and floods could each become more common and more dangerous. As a coastal community, Ventura County is particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels that would come with significant increases in global temperatures.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County's average annual temperature was 62.7 degrees Fahrenheit in 2014, making it the third warmest year since 1960 and the fifth warmest since 1934. The long-term trend is one of gradual warming in the county. Since 1976, the average annual temperature has been below 60 degrees only once; from 1934 to 1975 it was below 60 degrees 43 percent of the time.

**Ventura County Average Temperature (1934 - 2014)**



# AIR QUALITY

## What are the measures?

The measures are the concentration of ozone in the atmosphere, measured in parts per million (ppm); the number of days per year in which the regional air basin exceeded state standards for ozone; and the number of days per year in which the regional air basin exceeded the state standard for particulate matter.

## Why are the measures important?

Ozone, a molecule consisting of three oxygen atoms, is essential and also dangerous. In the upper atmosphere — specifically, the lower part of the stratosphere known as the “ozone layer” — it acts as an essential filter of harmful radiation. In the lower atmosphere, where it is produced by automobile emissions and other man-made and natural emissions, it is hazardous in high concentrations. Ozone can cause eye and throat irritation, coughing, chest tightness and headache, and it can also reduce lung capacity.

Particulate matter is a mixture of metal, soot, soil, dust and liquid droplets, small enough to be inhaled into the lungs. Excessive exposure to particles 10 microns in diameter or smaller, referred to as PM10, is associated with hospitalizations for respiratory illness and heart disorders, including asthma. PM10 exposure is also associated with increased risk of premature deaths, especially in the elderly and people with cardiopulmonary disease.

## How are we doing?

These measures show gradual, long-term improvement in some aspects of air quality, but also some areas in which the region has backtracked. Ozone levels in Ventura County and

in the South Central Coast Air Basin (which covers Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties) have dropped, but levels of particulate matter have not.

Ozone levels follow a seasonal pattern, peaking in the spring and summer and bottoming out in the winter. Between 2009 and 2014, the average ozone levels in Ventura County declined, and the gaps between the high and low points also shrunk.

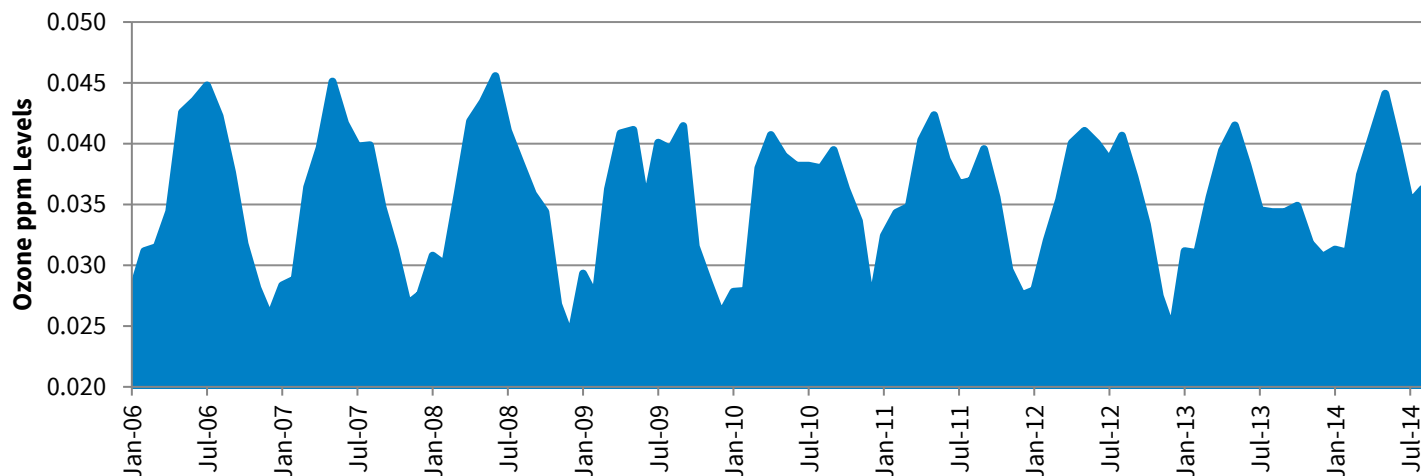
The frequency with which the tri-county air basin exceeds state and federal ozone standards has dropped almost to zero. In 2013, ozone levels topped the state standard three days and the federal standard seven days; back in 1986, ozone levels topped the federal standard almost half the time. The federal standard is based on the average of measurements taken over an eight-hour period, while the state standard is based on a one-hour period.

Particulate matter is another story, and one that so far doesn't have the same happy ending. The South Central Coast Air Basin consistently rates worse than the state as a whole in PM10 measurements. In 2013, the air basin was over the 24-hour PM10 standard on 98 days, compared to the average of 42 days for all air basins in California.

In the tri-county region, this represents a return to the 1980s, when the air was much dirtier. The number of days that the region exceeded PM10 standards hit 139 in 1989 and then dropped to 32 in 1994. From 1994 to 2006, the region was about the same as the state average, but in 2006 its days of exceeding the standard began to grow again.

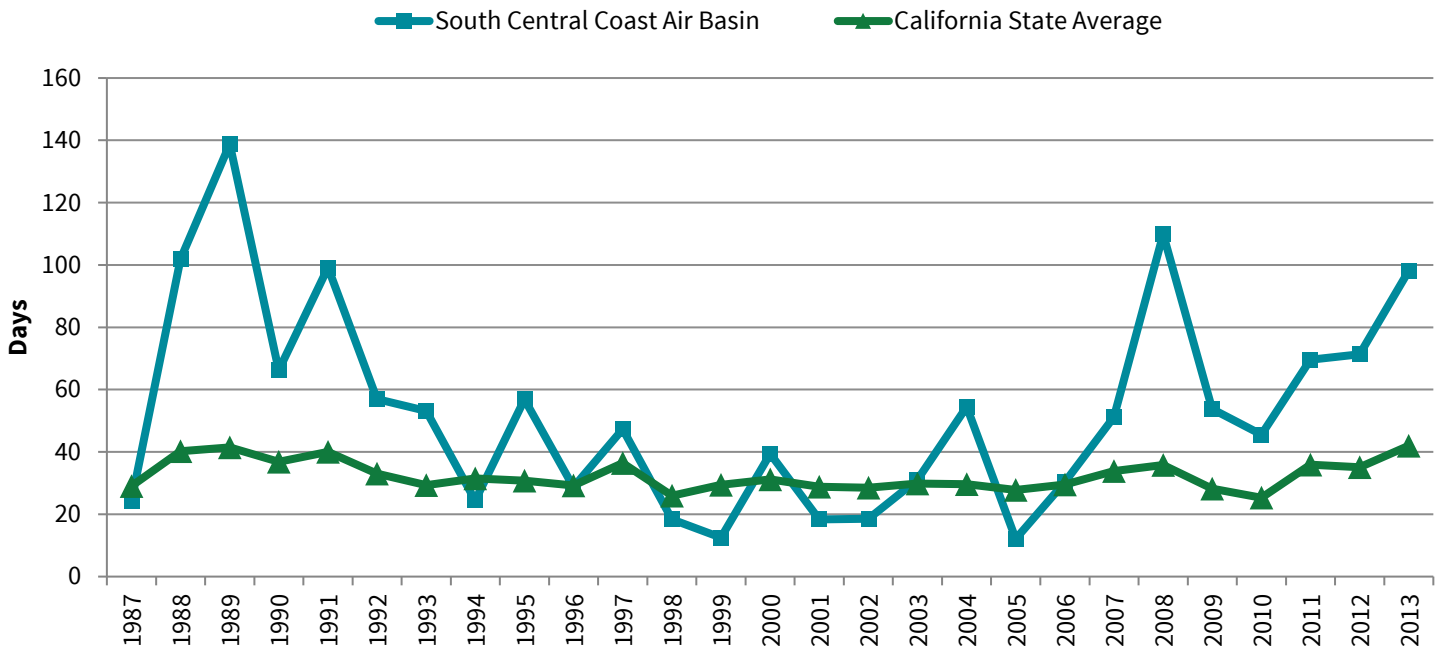
It should be noted that standards for air quality have grown stricter over the years, so the fact that the region exceeds standards more often does not mean that the air is actually dirtier. The PM10 standard was tightened in 2003, which in part could explain the recent increase.

**Monthly Average of Ventura County  
Ozone ppm Levels (2006 - 2014)**

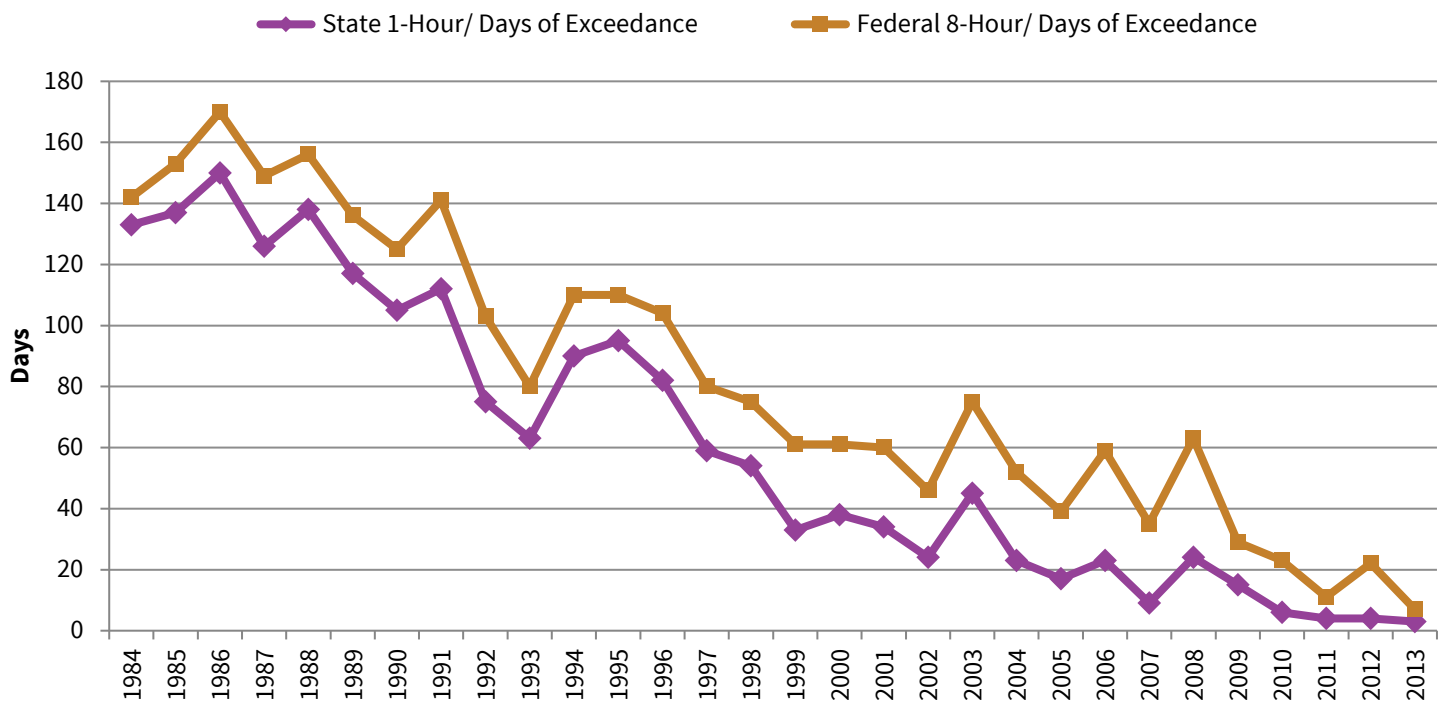




## Estimated Number of Days Above the 24-Hour PM10 Standard (1987 - 2013)



## Number of Days Where South Central Coast Air Basin Exceeded Ozone Limits (1984 - 2013)



# WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

## What are the measures?

The measures are a map of the areas in Ventura County important for the movement of wild animal species, according to a study in 2014 by the nonprofit group South Coast Wildlands, and the number of acres of protected wildlife linkages in Ventura County.

Linkage means “connection area” between two natural areas or an established system of connected wildlands.

## Why are the measures important?

Wild animals must move freely to survive. Ventura County lies at the border of Southern California’s suburban sprawl and its remaining wildlands, so wildlife corridors — pathways through urban areas that allow animals to travel from one wild area to another — are essential. In recent years, government agencies and private builders have started to incorporate these corridors into their development plans, but space to roam remains scarce for many species.

## How are we doing?

Most of Ventura County’s populated areas lie between the Santa Monica Mountains to the south and the Los Padres National forest to the north. The most important wildlife corridors run north to south, between those two regions.

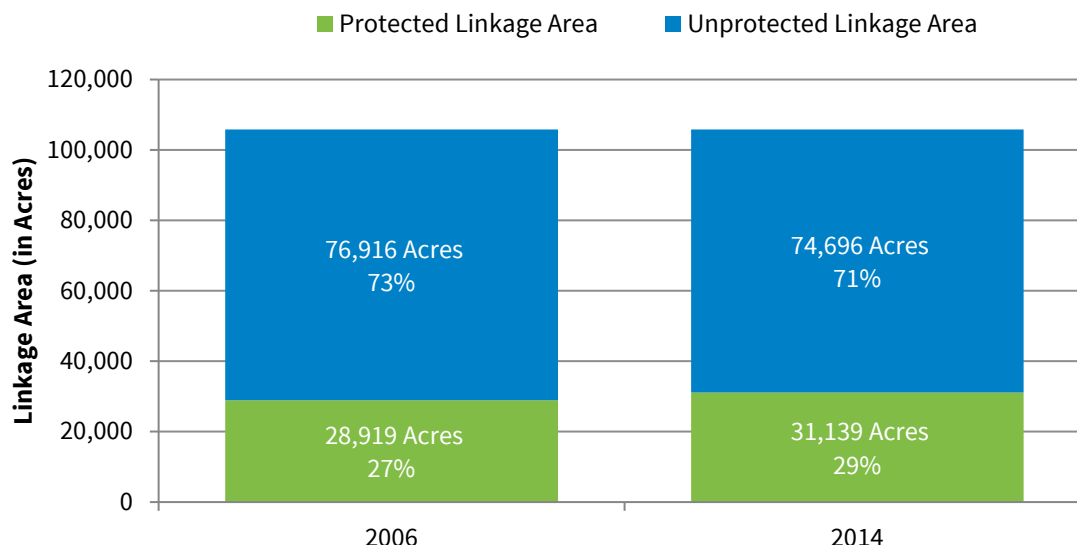
Simi Valley is bracketed by these corridors: one to the east, where mountain passes separate Ventura County from the San Fernando Valley, and one to the west, in the Tierra Rejada Valley. In West Ventura County, wildlife corridors lie along the Santa Clara River and its tributaries.

Many animal species use these corridors, including the small population of mountain lions that live in and around the Santa Monica Mountains. Mountain lions have been spotted frequently in areas along Highway 118 in Simi Valley and Highway 101 in the Conejo Valley, according to a report prepared for Caltrans in 2011. In 2013, a mountain lion was struck and killed by a car on Highway 101 near Liberty Canyon, in Agoura Hills.

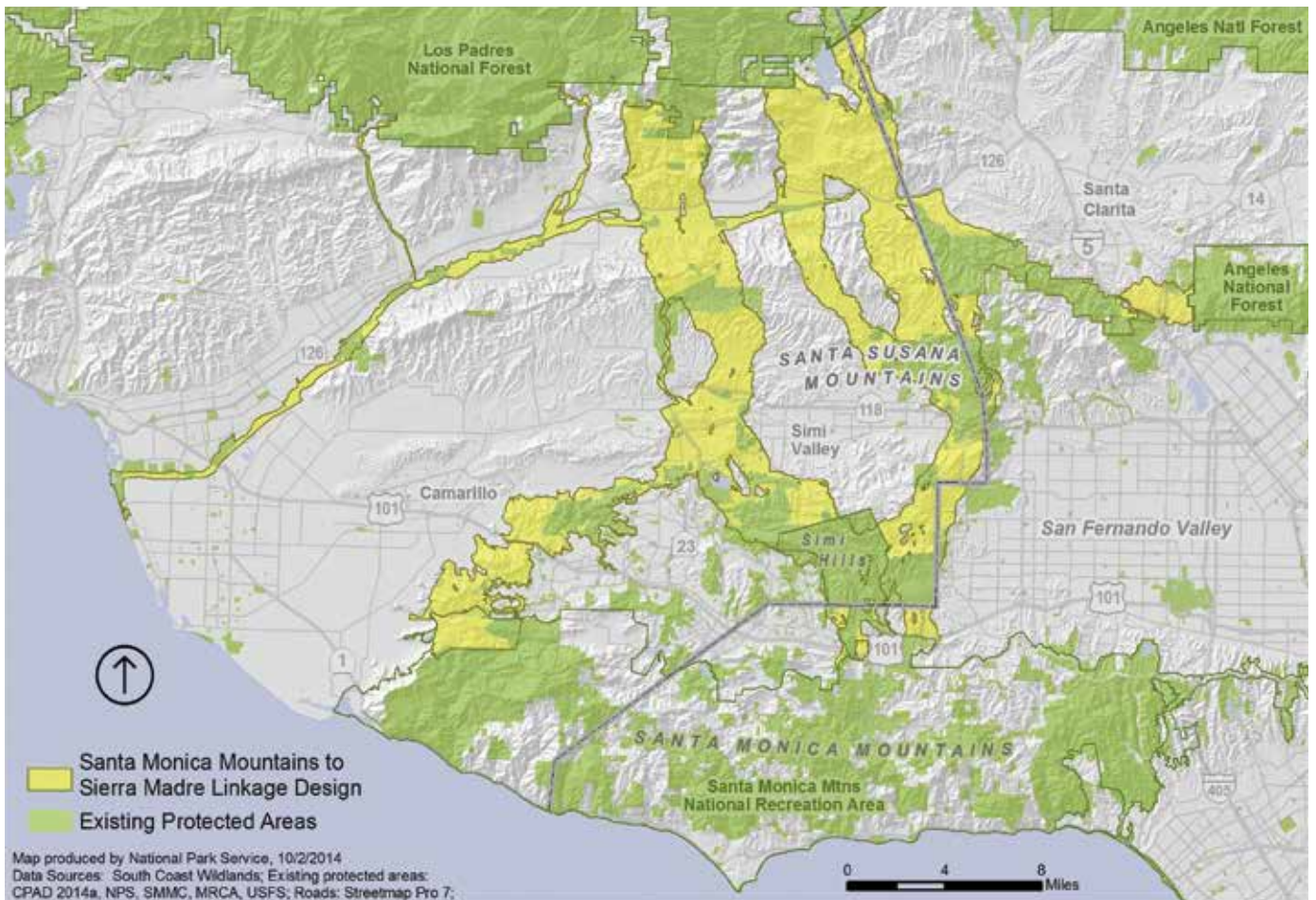
The idea of an underpass at Liberty Canyon, to allow mountain lions to cross under the freeway, was first brought to Caltrans in the 1990s. It looks like it may finally become a reality. In July 2014, Caltrans applied for a federal grant to pay for the underpass.

In 2014, 29 percent of the wildlife linkages in Ventura County were protected, up from 27 percent in 2006. It’s a small change, but a step in the right direction.

**Acres of Ventura County Protected Linkage Areas  
(2006 - 2014)**



## Ventura County Protected Linkage Areas (2014)









# Land Use & Housing

Land use and housing policy have long dominated Ventura County's politics. In past decades, they've engendered some of the region's fiercest political battles. Careers were made or lost on particular development proposals.

In recent years, these battles have died down, and it appears Ventura County residents have reached a consensus, or at least a truce, on growth. Nearly the entire county is covered by some version of SOAR, or Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources. Under SOAR, most development proposed for land zoned as open space or agriculture that lies outside of a city's development boundaries must be approved by a vote of the public.

These policies have amounted to a significant barrier to development, at least in the greenbelts that separate Ventura County's cities. Only a handful of developers have won SOAR votes, and only one SOAR vote has resulted in a major development that's likely to be built: East Area One, a property near Santa Paula owned by the citrus and avocado grower Limoneira. Voters in Santa Paula decided in 2008 to allow up to 1,500 homes there, and Limoneira plans to break ground sometime in 2015.

The terms of Ventura County's growth truce will be put to the test in the near future. Many of the first SOAR laws are set to expire in 2020, and the group that sponsored them plans to put every SOAR ordinance in the county up for renewal on the 2016 ballot.

Whatever happens with SOAR, the demand to develop new housing in Ventura County will persist. During the housing crash of 2007/08, home prices plummeted in Ventura County, as they did in much of the country. But, perhaps because of Ventura County's slow-growth policies, the boom and the bust were both less pronounced here than in many parts of California.

Home prices hit bottom in 2009, and stayed there for three years. Since then, a gradual real estate recovery has taken hold. Developers are building again, and this time, their focus is on multifamily building. Even during the depths of the recession, Ventura County had a shortage of rental housing, as rents grew and vacancies stayed low.



# ACRES OF URBAN & BUILT-UP LAND

## What is the measure?

The measure is the amount of land in Ventura County devoted to urban purposes, defined as land occupied by structures with a density of at least one unit for every 1.5 acres.

## Why is the measure important?

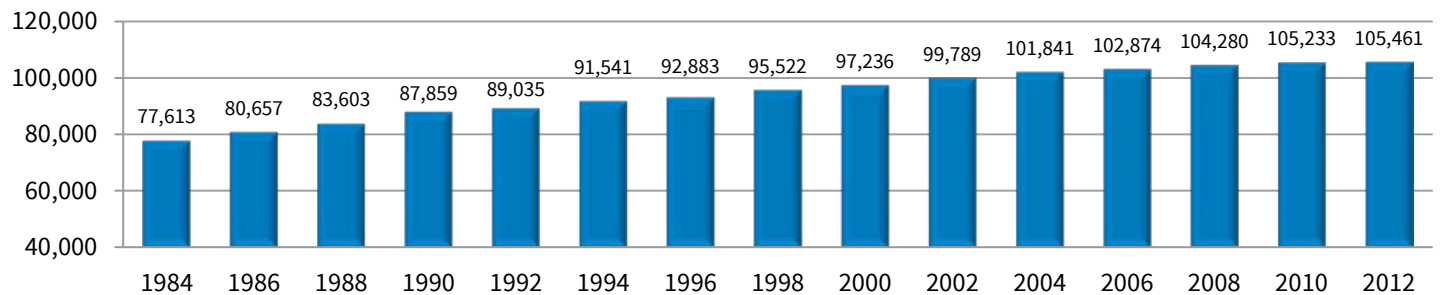
As population and economic activity increase, the need for urbanized land increases as well. Governments and developers have two choices: increase the density of land that's already urbanized, or urbanize more rural land. More urban area means more room for economic activity and more land for people to live on. But as urban areas expand, the amount of farmland and open space decreases, threatening the viability of agriculture and potentially diminishing the local quality of life.

## How are we doing?

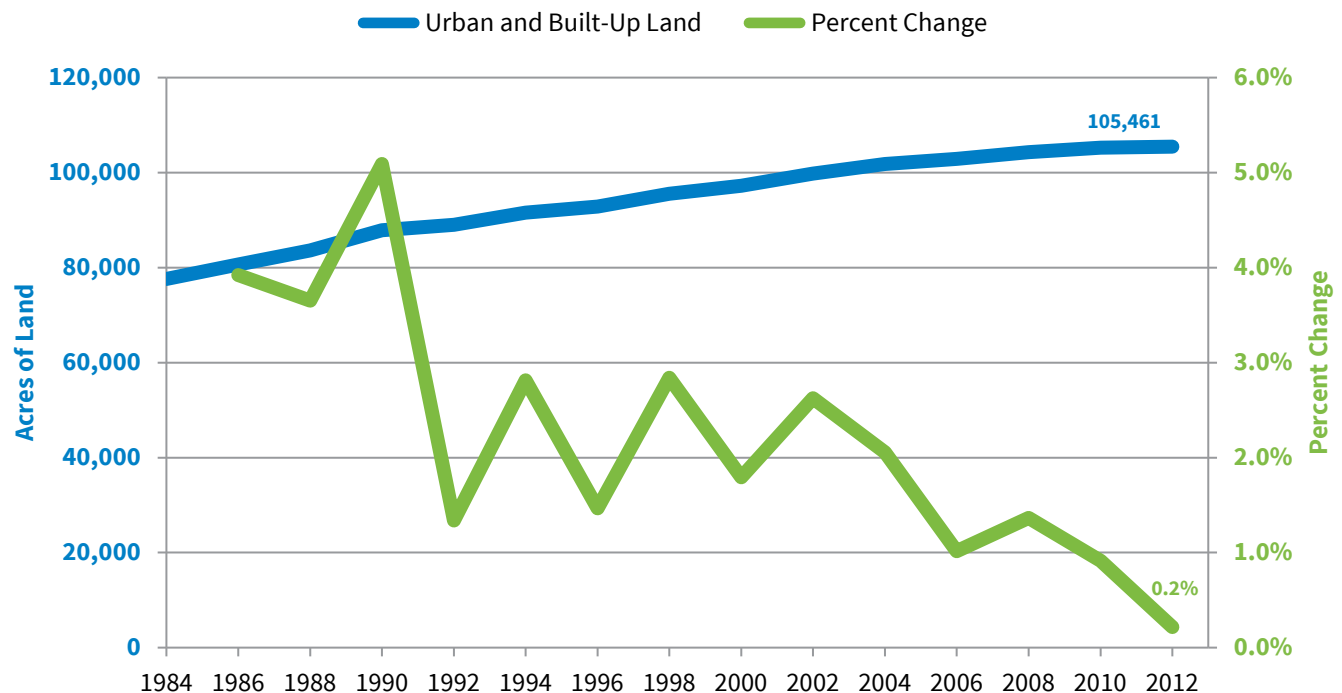
The urbanization of Ventura County's rural areas slowed down greatly when the recession hit, and by 2012 it hadn't really started up again. In 2012, there were 105,461 acres of developed land in the county, an increase of just 1.1 percent since 2008. By comparison, between 2000 and 2004, there was a 4.7 percent increase in the amount of urbanized land.

There are two main drivers of urbanization: the economy and local land use regulations. During the 1990s, before the county's SOAR laws, the region was converting rural land at a much faster clip than it did during the 2000s real estate boom.

### Acres of Urban and Built-Up Land in Ventura County (1984 - 2012)



### Percent Change of Acres of Urban and Built-Up Land in Ventura County (1984 - 2012)



# NEW HOUSING STARTS

## What is the measure?

The measure, known as “housing starts,” is the number of building permits issued each year by local governments for new housing units. It does not necessarily reflect the number of housing units that actually are built in a given year.

## Why is the measure important?

Though its population is growing slowly, Ventura County still has an ever-expanding need for housing. New homes are needed to fill this demand, and to replace old housing stock that falls out of use or is converted to other purposes. Housing starts are also a measure of the health of some sectors of the economy. The more capital available to lenders, developers and builders, and the more confidence they have in the region’s economic future, the more new units they will propose to build.

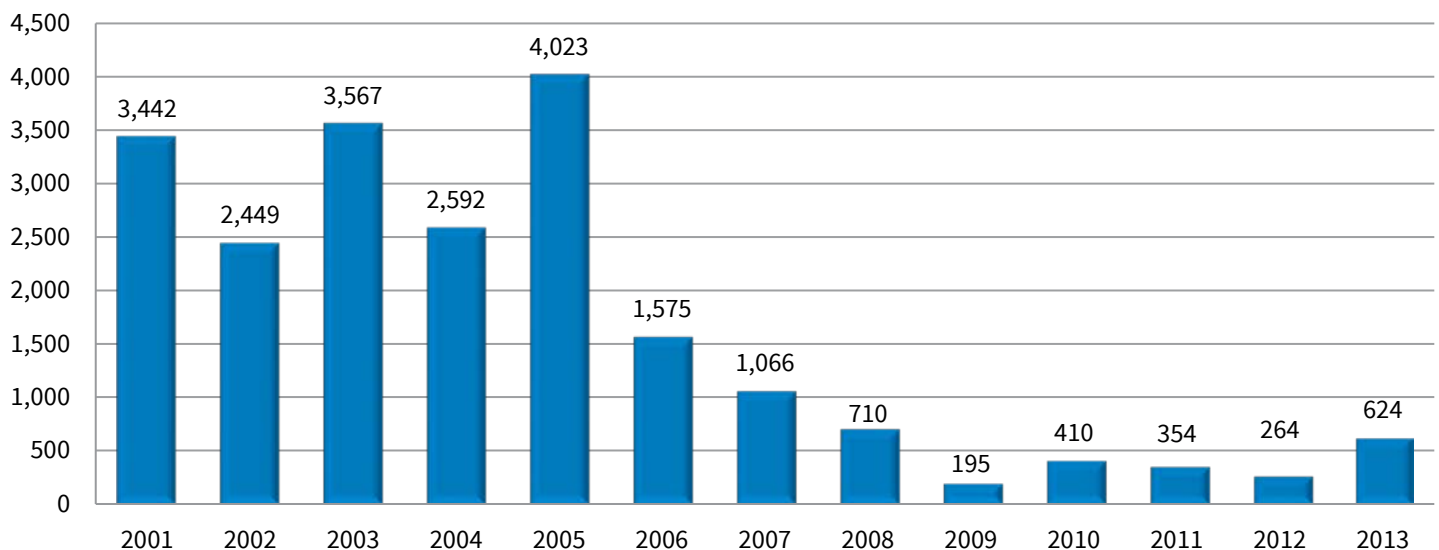
## How are we doing?

Residential building has started again after it ground almost to a complete halt during the recession. In 2013, governments in the county issued 624 permits for new homes. That was a 136 percent increase from the previous year, and more than a threefold increase from the low point of 195 permits in 2009.

Housing starts remain far below their levels during the housing boom. In 2005, permits were issued for 4,023 new homes — more than the total issued from 2007 to 2013.

The decline actually started in 2006, when the economy was still relatively healthy. Yet, the biggest driver of housing starts is the state of the economy. Builders build when they think people will buy or rent homes if offered at the right prices. The recent increase in housing starts signals that, at least in the real estate industry, there is optimism about Ventura County’s immediate future.

**New Housing Units Permitted in Ventura County (2001 - 2013)**



# HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of homes that are occupied by their owners, compared to those that are occupied by renters.

## Why is the measure important?

Home ownership is one of the defining elements of the American Dream and promoting it has been a goal of U.S. public policy for generations. Homeowners often feel more connected to, and invested in, their communities compared to renters, and neighborhoods full of homeowners are often safer than those with more renters. Home ownership also has been an important way for working-class families to accumulate enough wealth to ascend into the middle class.

However, home ownership does have its drawbacks, and a homeownership rate that is too high can be one sign that a market is peaking. Buying a home is a substantial risk, and a family's savings and credit can be decimated if they can no longer afford their mortgage and are unable to sell the home. Homeowners also sacrifice mobility; they can't move as easily as renters, so if they become unemployed, it's harder to relocate to a better job market.

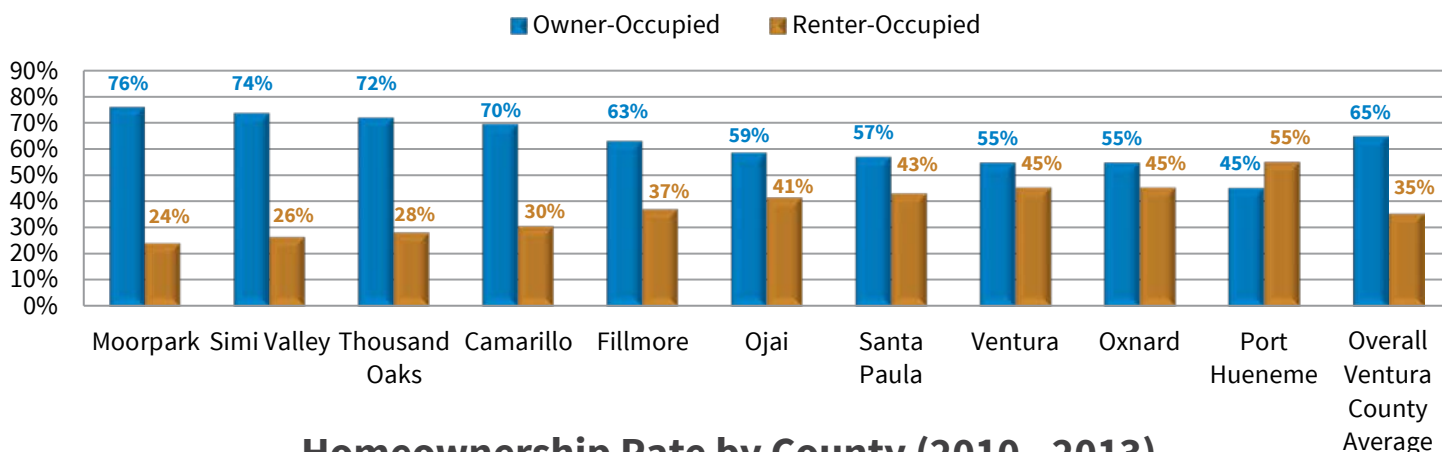
## How are we doing?

Ventura County's rate of homeownership is unusually high, considering the cost of buying a home in the county. In 2013, 64.9 percent of homes in Ventura County were owner-occupied, higher than every county in Southern California except for Riverside, where prices are much lower. Ventura County's homeownership rate was virtually the same as the national rate, and significantly higher than the California rate of 55.3 percent.

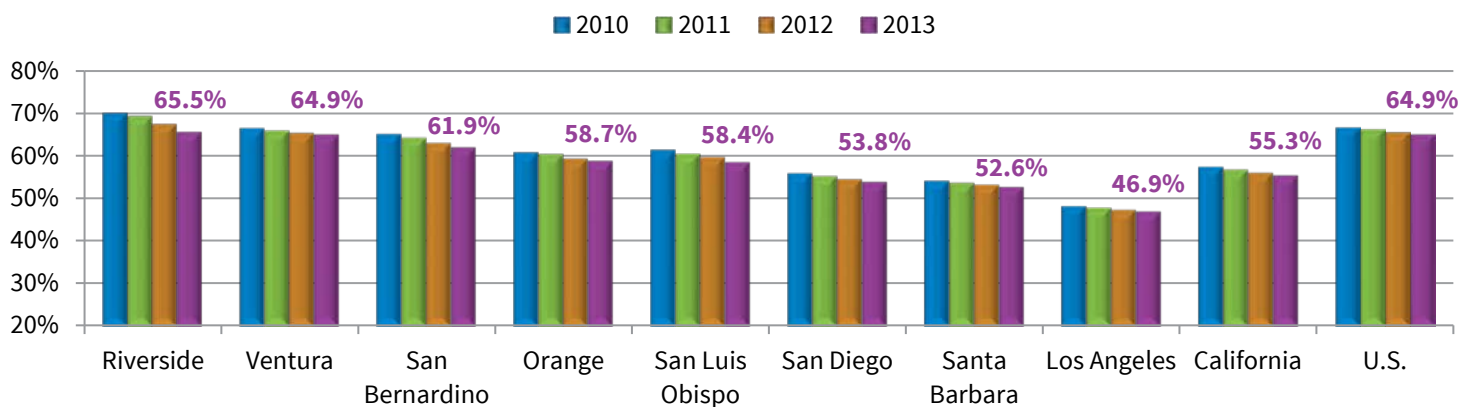
The county's homeownership rate hit almost 70 percent in 2005, at the height of the real estate boom. It has dropped even as home prices have gone down, because banks and the federal government have changed their credit rules and made mortgages much harder to obtain.

West Ventura County has a lower rate of homeownership than East County. Oxnard and Ventura's rates were 55 percent in 2013, and Fillmore was 63 percent; the same year, the rate was 76 percent in Moorpark, 74 percent in Simi Valley and 72 percent in Thousand Oaks. The likely explanation for this is twofold: first, East County cities have higher median incomes; and second, the West County has a younger population, and younger people are more likely to rent.

## Percentage of Owners and Renters in Ventura County (2013)



## Homeownership Rate by County (2010 - 2013)





# MEDIAN HOME PRICE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the price of the median home sold in a given time period, including new and existing houses and condominiums. The median is the point at which half of all sales were for higher values, and half were for lower values.

## Why is the measure important?

A home is by far the biggest investment that most people will make, and home equity makes up the bulk of many homeowners' net worth. Declining home values can erase that equity and even carry it into negative territory, a condition known as being "underwater." Homeowners who are underwater are at risk of losing their homes in foreclosure if they can't afford their mortgages.

Bad news for people who already own homes is often good news for those who are in the market to buy one. Falling values bring home ownership within the reach of families who previously couldn't afford to buy.

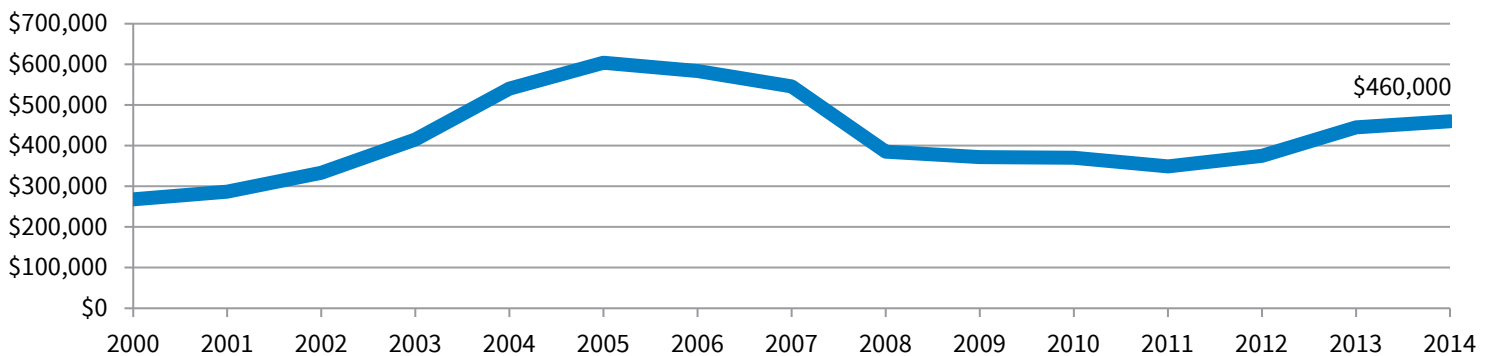
## How are we doing?

Ventura County home values rose in 2013 and 2014, and did so in a way that appears more sustainable than the rising prices of the early 2000s bubble. The median price in September 2014 was \$460,000, an increase of 3.4 percent over the previous year. In September 2013, the median was up 18.7 percent over the year before.

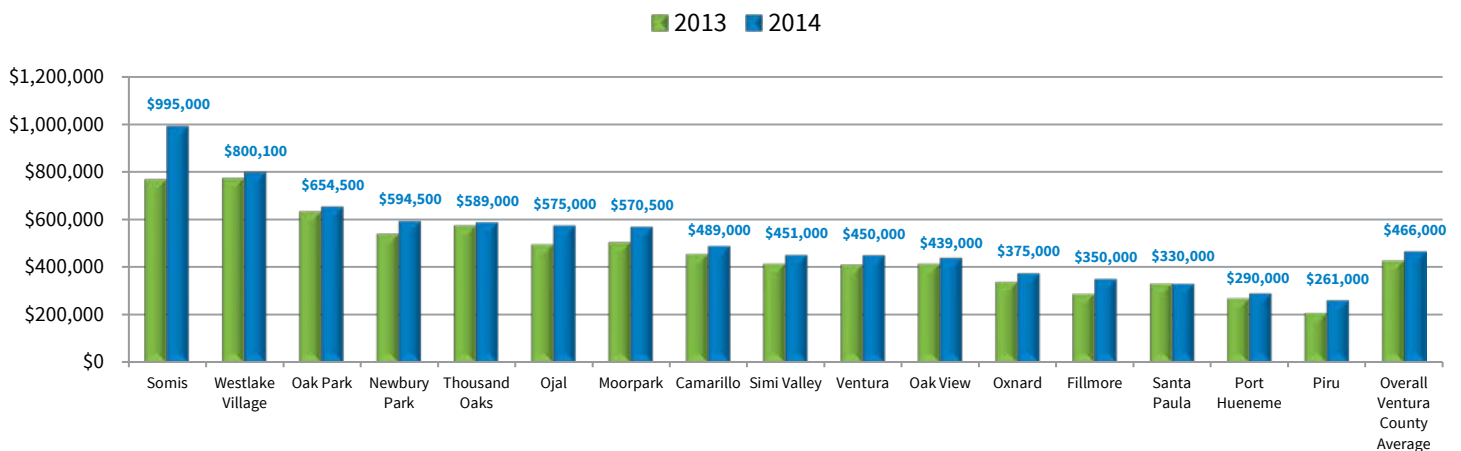
Home values remain far below their pre-recession peak. In 2005, the county median home price topped out at \$604,000. By 2011, it had dropped by more than 42 percent to a low of \$349,000.

Home prices are generally higher in the eastern part of Ventura County than in the west. The lowest median prices in 2014 were in Piru (\$261,000), Port Hueneme (\$290,000) and Santa Paula (\$330,000). The highest median prices were in Somis (\$995,000), Westlake Village (\$800,100), and Oak Park (\$654,500).

**Ventura County Median Home Price, September  
(2000 - 2014)**



**Ventura County Median Home Price by City (2013 - 2014)**



# NOTICES OF DEFAULT

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of homeowners in Ventura County that were served notices of default. A notice of default is an official notification that the owner is behind on mortgage payments, and is the first step in the foreclosure process.

## Why is the measure important?

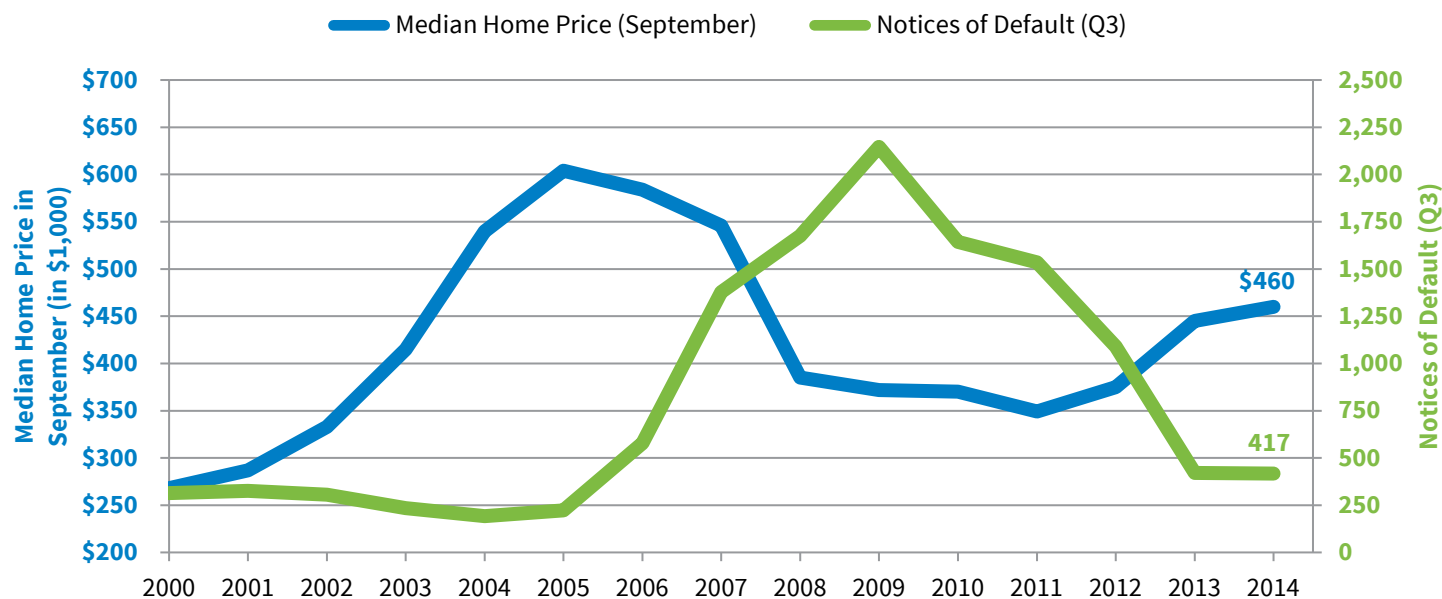
Homeowners who fall behind on their mortgage payments are at risk of losing their home to foreclosure. That can leave a family with nowhere to live, especially in a community like Ventura County, where a tight rental market limits housing opportunities. Even if the family finds other housing, a foreclosure can bring disruption to adults and children, who must adapt to a new place to find work or go to school. Foreclosures also harm a borrower's credit rating, which can hamstring a family's effort to get back on its feet. What's more, a large number of foreclosures can distort the real estate market and drive the value of all homes downward.

## How are we doing?

The foreclosure crisis is over. In the third quarter of 2014 there were 417 notices of default filed in Ventura County, a decline of 80.6 percent from the third quarter of 2009. Foreclosures are still more common than they were during the housing boom: in 2005, there were fewer than 250 notices of default in a typical quarter. With prices rising, homeowners could always refinance their loans or sell their homes to escape a mortgage they couldn't afford. Once the bubble burst, the bills started coming due, and thousands of families lost their homes.

Notices of default are inversely correlated with home prices. Now that prices have stabilized, and started to rise gradually, notices of default and foreclosures should become even less common.

**Ventura County Median Home Price, September  
& Notices of Default, Q3 (2000 - 2014)**



# MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

## What are the measures?

The measures are average rents and vacancy rates in market-rate apartment buildings in Ventura County, as tracked by Dyer Sheehan Group, Inc. For vacancy rate, a weighted average of all apartments is used, regardless of size.

## Why are the measures important?

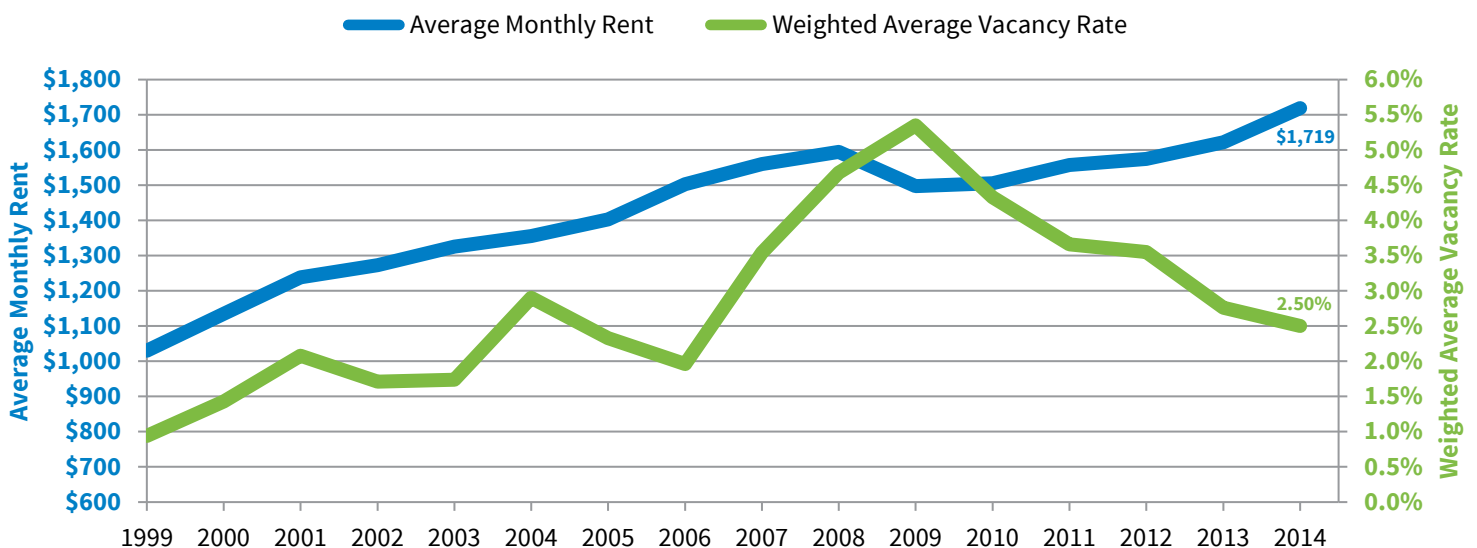
Even in Ventura County, where homeownership rates are relatively high, hundreds of thousands of people rent their homes. And the number is growing, as homeownership rates decline and developers and investors turn away from single-family homes and toward the multifamily market. Rent is the single largest expense for most households, and renters, more so than owners, are vulnerable to unexpected increases when the market changes.

## How are we doing?

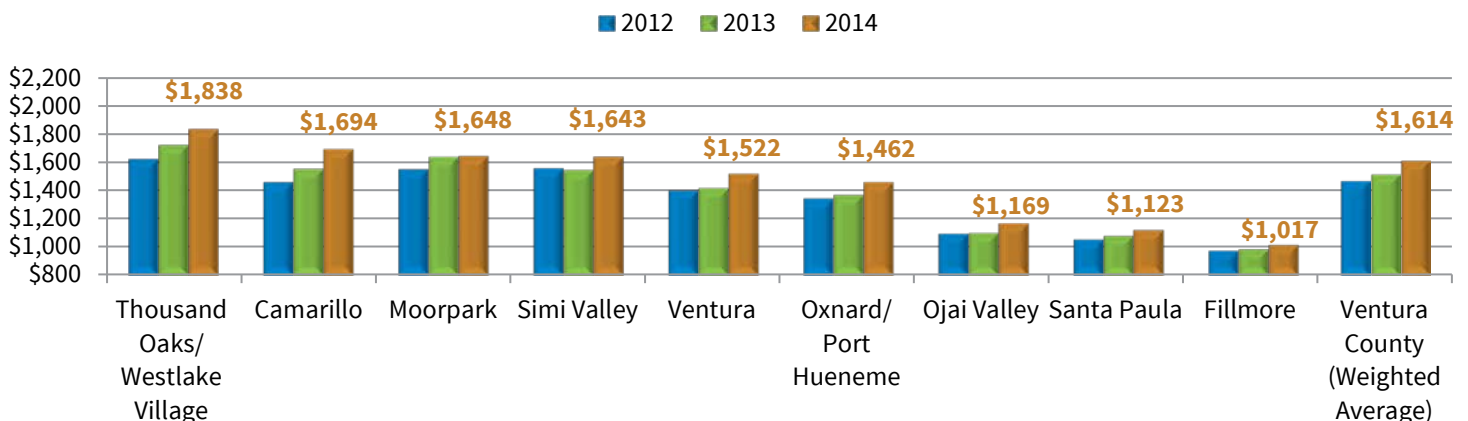
Ventura County residents pay a lot for apartments, and they also have a hard time finding vacant ones. Those two factors are related, of course, as high demand and a relatively low supply mean high prices.

The average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Ventura County was \$1,719 in July, 2014. It has steadily marched upward over the past decade, with only a 6 percent decline between 2008 and 2009. Multifamily rents today are 27 percent higher than they were in 2004, growing by an average of 4 percent every year, the weighted average vacancy rate for rental housing was 2.5 percent in 2014. That's the lowest it has been for the past seven years. In 2006, the weighted vacancy rate was only 1.96 percent.

### Average Ventura County 2 Bedroom Multifamily Rents & Weighted Average Vacancy, July (1999 - 2014)



### Average Monthly Multifamily Rent by City, July (2012 - 2014)



# HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of households that can afford to purchase the county's median-priced home. The calculation assumes a 10 percent down payment and a 30-year loan at prevailing interest rates. If the mortgage payment is less than 30 percent of the household's income, the home is considered affordable.

## Why is the measure important?

The median home price is the typical shorthand for looking at the cost of a home, but it takes into account only half of the equation that homeowners must face. The housing affordability index is a better way to calculate the true cost of housing, because it factors in the money that people have available to spend on that median-priced home.

If families who live and work in Ventura County cannot afford the homes here, and they want to share in the dream of ownership, they must commute from a cheaper location or squeeze into a space that's too small for their needs. Either way, the resulting traffic congestion and overcrowding affect the entire region's quality of life.

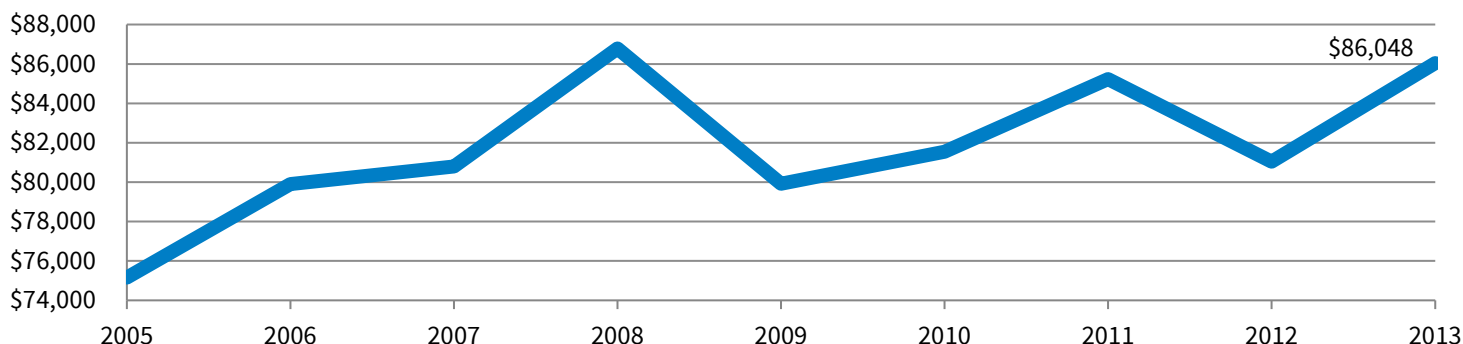
## How are we doing?

Ventura County is one of the least affordable parts of Southern California, which makes it one of the least affordable in the nation. In the first quarter of 2014, only 29 percent of households could afford the county's median-priced home. That was a precipitous decline from one year earlier, when the rate was 42 percent. It was also far lower than the national rate of 59 percent, and slightly lower than the California rate of 33 percent. In Southern California, only Orange County, at 19 percent, was less affordable than Ventura County.

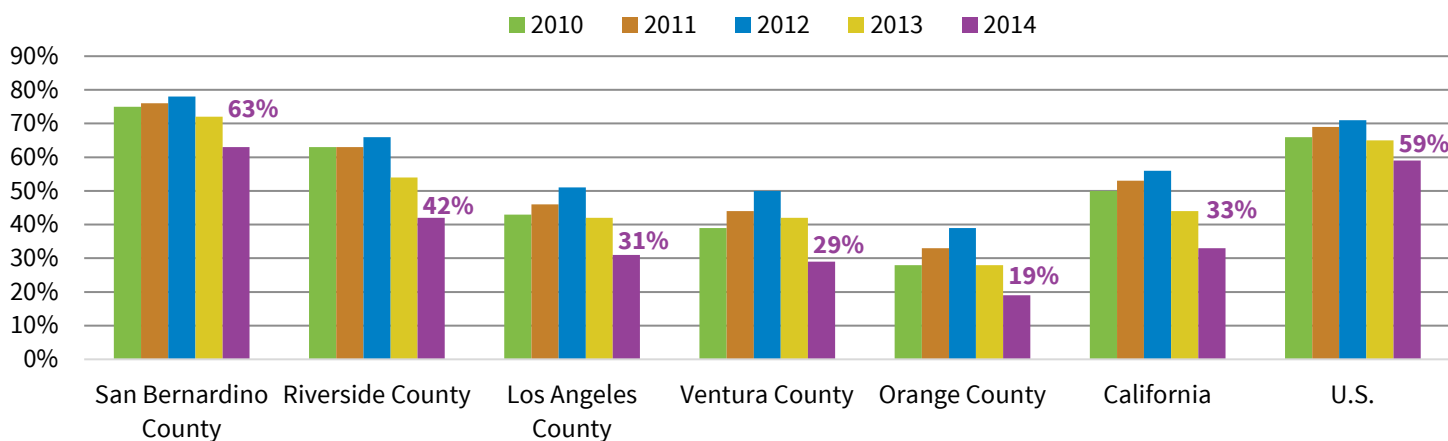
Ventura County's housing affordability hit 50 percent in 2012, but the real estate market has recovered since then, and rising prices have pushed homes out of reach for thousands of families.

Interestingly, Ventura County combines a very low affordability rate with a relatively high homeownership rate. There are two possible explanations for this: a lot of people live in homes they can't really afford; or, a lot of people bought their homes decades ago, when prices were lower, and could never afford to buy here today. Both are undoubtedly true.

## Median Family Income in Ventura County (2005 - 2013)



## Housing Affordability Index (Q1 2010 - 2014)





# Natural Resources

In its natural resources, Ventura County is a land of both plenty and paucity. An abundance of fertile land provides some of the world's finest produce. The ocean supplies recreation, food and shipping lanes for products from around the world. The county's northern reaches have productive oil wells and hills and plains that are well suited to collecting solar energy.

But perhaps the most important resource of all, water, is scarce and growing scarcer. The western United States is in its worst drought in decades, and California is its epicenter. Residents, businesses, developers and farmers are all asked to get by with less water.

Water isn't the only resource that Ventura County must do its best to conserve. The very fuel of modern life — oil, natural gas, coal and other hydrocarbons — produces harmful emissions and has changed the chemistry of the atmosphere

and the climate of the planet. As a coastal area, Ventura County has much to lose if climate change causes sea levels to rise significantly.

It is possible to minimize or mitigate the impacts of our resource consumption. We can use energy more efficiently, or choose renewables and nonpolluting sources. We can recycle much of our post-consumer and industrial waste. We can set aside undeveloped land to be preserved as wildlife habitat, open space or parks.

In this section, we focus on seven ways to measure the county's supply and use of natural resources: electricity consumption; solar power installations; rainfall; water supply and the severity of the drought; oil and gas production; water consumption; and the amount of trash sent to the county's landfills.



# ELECTRICITY USE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the amount of residential energy consumption in Ventura County, in kilowatt-hours per year.

## Why is the measure important?

The vast majority of our electricity comes from sources that harm the environment in some way. Most of California's electricity is generated by burning natural gas.

Though it produces fewer harmful emissions than coal, which is the leading fuel for power generation nationwide, natural gas combustion still releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and contributes to climate change. Hydro-power dams, another source of electricity in California, cause other ecological damage, including diminished fish populations.

Apart from ecological damage, California's power grid is often overtaxed, and conserving power can help ease the strain on the system, preventing blackouts and obviating the need for more power plants.

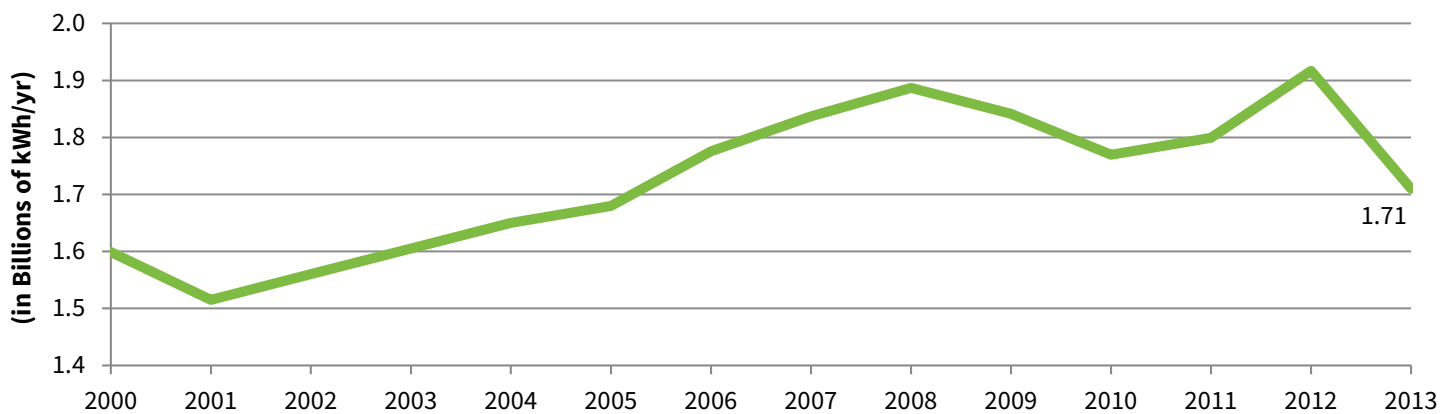
## How are we doing?

Consumption of electricity, like consumption of many other goods, tends to fluctuate with the economy. During a recession, people save money by buying fewer power-hungry electronics, and they also tend to live in smaller homes, which use less energy to light, heat and cool.

In Ventura County, consumption rose during boom times for the county and the nation, peaked in 2008, and declined as the recession set in. The recent trend seems to reflect the recovery in the economy; consumption bottomed out in 2010 and by 2012 it was at its highest recorded level.

In 2013, though, the pattern reversed itself. Despite a growing economy, residential electricity consumption in Ventura County dropped by 10.6 percent from 2012 to 2013. That was the biggest one-year dip since at least 2000, and it brought usage to its lowest point since 2005. Conservation, investment in more efficient infrastructure and consumer goods, and an increase in solar panel installations seem to be the likeliest explanation. With only one year of decline on record so far, it's difficult to say whether the trend will persist.

**Ventura County Residential Electricity Consumption (2000 - 2013)**





# SOLAR POWER INSTALLATIONS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of solar energy systems installed in Ventura County using the California Solar Initiative, a program that offers rebates for installing solar to customers of Southern California Edison, among other power companies.

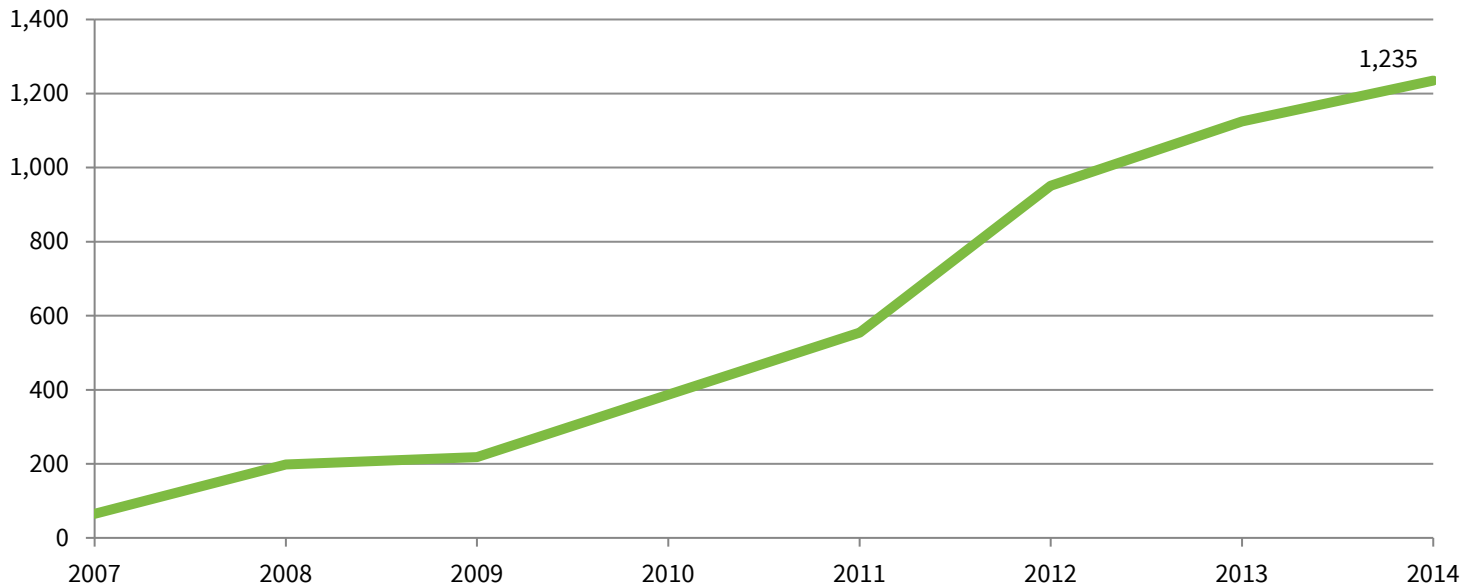
## Why is the measure important?

Solar power is one of the cleanest energy sources available. It is becoming more popular among both homeowners and businesses, as its costs grow more competitive with traditional power sources and new options emerge for financing solar arrays.

## How are we doing?

There were 1,235 new solar energy systems installed in Ventura County in 2014, an 18-fold increase since 2007. The solar trend does not appear to be a fad; there has been an increase in the number of installations in each of the past seven years. Growth slowed at the beginning of the recession, in 2008 and 2009, but it took off again in 2010 and hasn't slowed down since.

**Ventura County Solar Energy Installations Using the California Solar Initiative Program (2007 - 2014)**



# RAINFALL

## What is the measure?

The measure is the amount of rainfall per year, in seven different cities in Ventura County. The figure for each city is calculated by averaging the rainfall collection stations in that city.

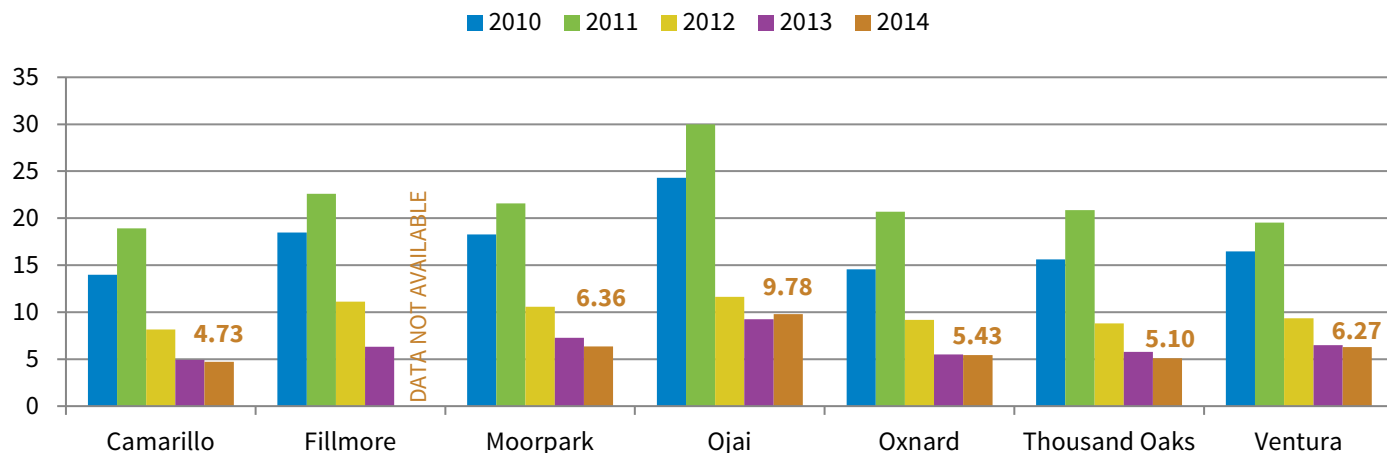
## Why is the measure important?

Rainwater is essential for the survival of people, crops and wildlife in Ventura County. Rain provides much of our drinking water, by way of lakes and rivers and by recharging our groundwater supplies. Even irrigated crops need some rainfall for agriculture to be a viable business. And without adequate rain, the wilderness areas of the county become more susceptible to wildfires.

## How are we doing?

The past few years have been among the driest on record in Ventura County. In 2011, before the current drought started, most of Ventura County got at least three times as much rain as it did in 2014. In Ojai, for example, the average in 2014 was 9.78 inches, and in 2011, it was 29.98 inches. The average in Oxnard in 2014 was 5.43 inches, compared to 20.71 in 2011.

Average Inches of Rainfall (2010 - 2014)





# DROUGHT

## What is the measure?

The measure is the portions of California that are in various stages of drought, ranking from “moderate” to “exceptional.” The classifications are listed in the U.S. Drought Monitor, which is produced by researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

## Why is the measure important?

Water is among our most vital natural resources. When it becomes scarce, supplies can be restricted for residents, businesses and farmers. The water we do have can be of lower quality. The price of produce can go up. And our ability to build more housing or new commercial projects to grow our economy can be impaired.

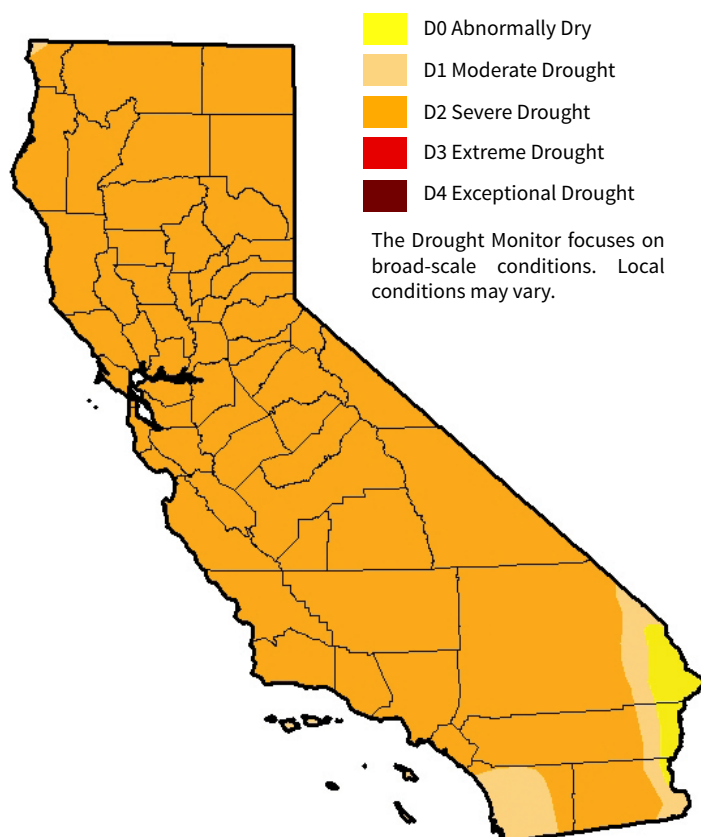
## How are we doing?

By August 2014, all of Ventura County was in a state of “exceptional” drought, the most severe level in the U.S. Drought Monitor’s classification system. At the start of 2014, the county’s drought level was “severe,” the midpoint of the system’s five drought levels. It moved into “extreme” drought in the spring and “exceptional” by the start of summer.

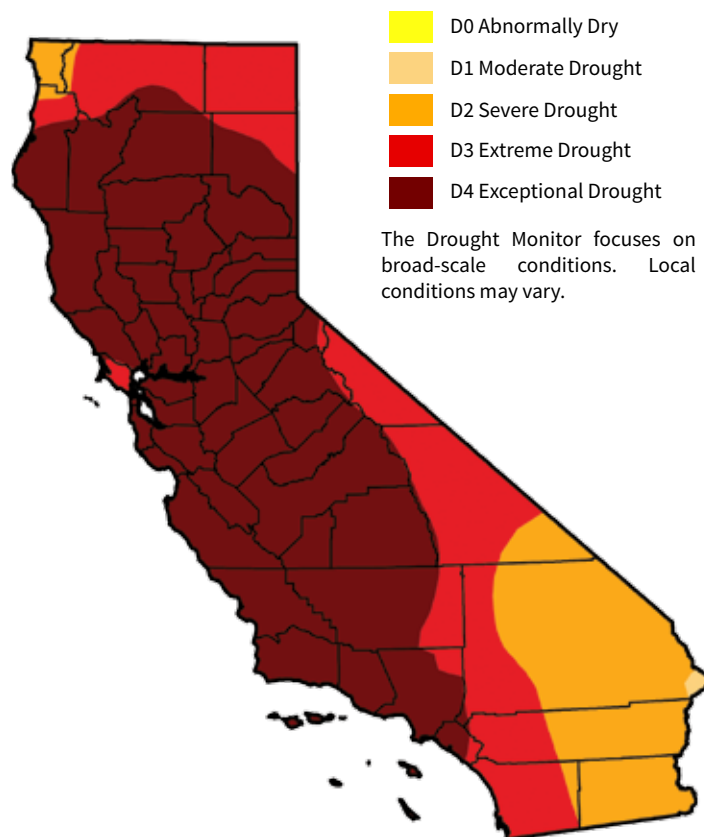
A year earlier, in August 2013, the drought was widespread but not all that critical — all of the state was in some form of drought, but nowhere was the drought classified as “exceptional,” and in only 11 percent of the state was it seen as “extreme.” By May 2014, 76 percent of the state’s land was in an “extreme” or “exceptional” drought, and by August, 82 percent of the state met those conditions.

The naturally driest areas of California, the southeastern deserts, are showing the least impact from the drought. Drought levels are measured by comparing rainfall to traditional averages, and the driest areas are not as far below their averages as the rest of the state.

August 6, 2013



August 5, 2014



# OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION

## What is the measure?

The measure is the amount of crude oil and natural gas extracted from Ventura County between 1980 and 2014.

For this indicator, we used the abbreviation BBL to represent a barrel of oil, defined in the United States and Canada as 42 U.S. Gallons. MCF is an abbreviation denoting a thousand cubic feet of natural gas.

## Why is the measure important?

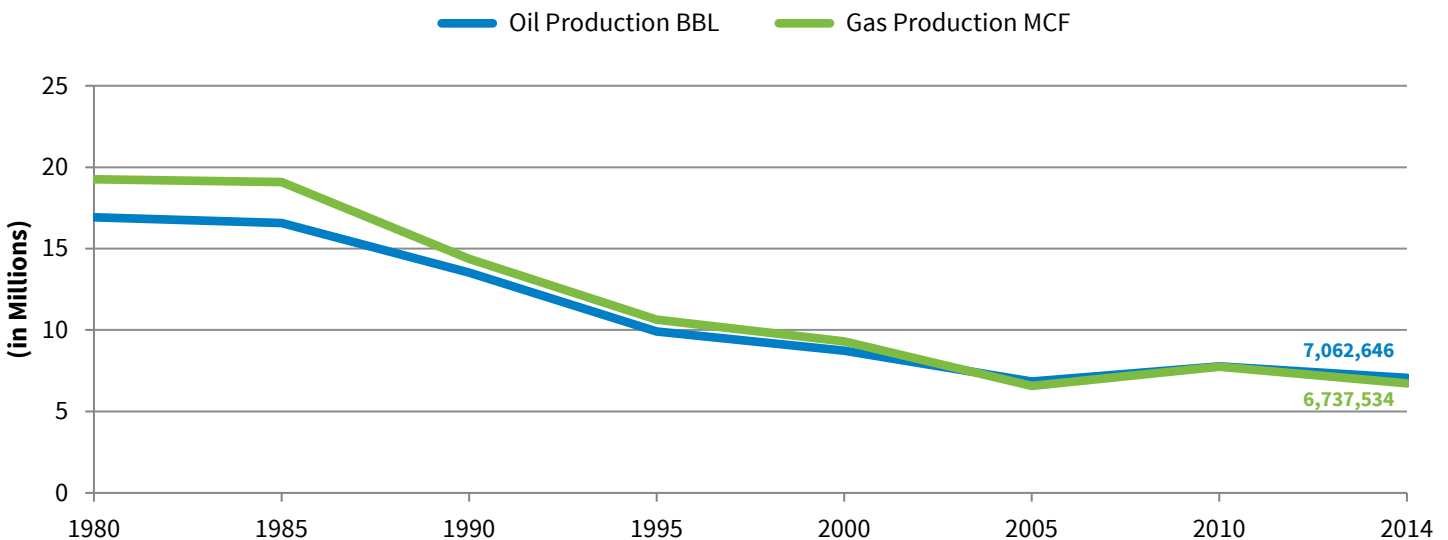
Ventura County has long been an important oil-producing region; oil accelerated the development of Ventura, Santa Paula, Fillmore and other West County cities. Oil and gas are, of course, crucial to the world economy, and their production and sale boost Ventura County's economy. Petroleum extraction has a serious environmental impact, so it is important that drilling in the county be done responsibly and monitored for any spills or other problems.

## How are we doing?

The United States is in the midst of an oil and gas boom, but its effects in Ventura County have been fairly mild. In 2014, the county produced less than half as much oil and gas as it did during a typical year in the early 1980s. Production began to drop sharply in 1985, and it bottomed out in 2005. Since then, drilling picked up a bit – oil production rose 14 percent from 2005 to 2010, and gas production rose 18 percent during the same time period. In 2014, the county produced 7,062,646 BBL of oil, nine percent less than in 2010, and 6,737,534 MCF of natural gas, 13 percent less than 2010.

It is likely that the increase after 2005 is due to hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” and other new extraction techniques. There is no comprehensive data available on fracking, but major oil companies have disclosed using the method in both onshore and offshore wells in Ventura County.

**Oil & Gas Production in Ventura County (1980 - 2014)**  
(in BBL and MCF)



# WATER USE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the amount of water used by residential and business customers of water districts in Ventura County. Usage is expressed both in citywide totals and per capita figures. Data was not available from all water agencies and some cities are served by multiple providers. The figures do not include water sold for agricultural uses.

## Why is the measure important?

Like the rest of Southern California, Ventura County, when taken as a whole, does not generate enough water for its population. Parts of the West County rely solely on local ground water and river water, but in the East County, as well as Camarillo and Oxnard, local supplies are typically supplemented by water from either Northern California or the Colorado River. All of those sources are scarce due to the drought and in early 2014, the State Water Project cut its allocation to cities and local water districts to zero. Later in 2014, the State Water Project increased the allocation to 5% of entitlements.

So far, water providers have made do with their reserve supplies, but those are running low, too. As the drought deepens, residents have no choice but to use less water.

## How are we doing?

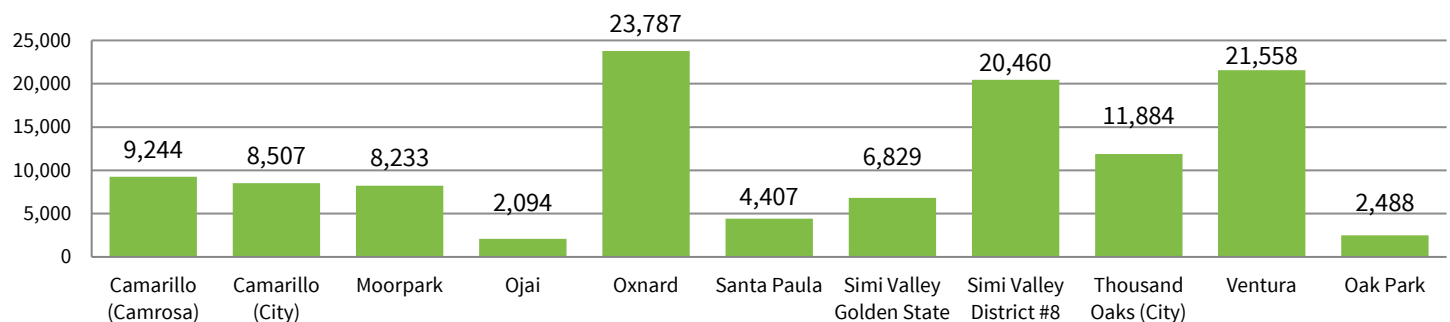
Water usage varies greatly in Ventura County's cities. Areas with larger lots and warmer weather use more water for landscaping, and both of those factors mean water usage tends to be higher in the East County than the West. On the business side, certain types of industrial businesses use more water than the average commercial building.

The Camrosa Water District, which serves parts of eastern Camarillo and the Santa Rosa Valley, had the highest per capita water usage in the county in 2012, at 295 gallons per person per day. Oxnard had the lowest per capita usage, at 106 gallons per day.

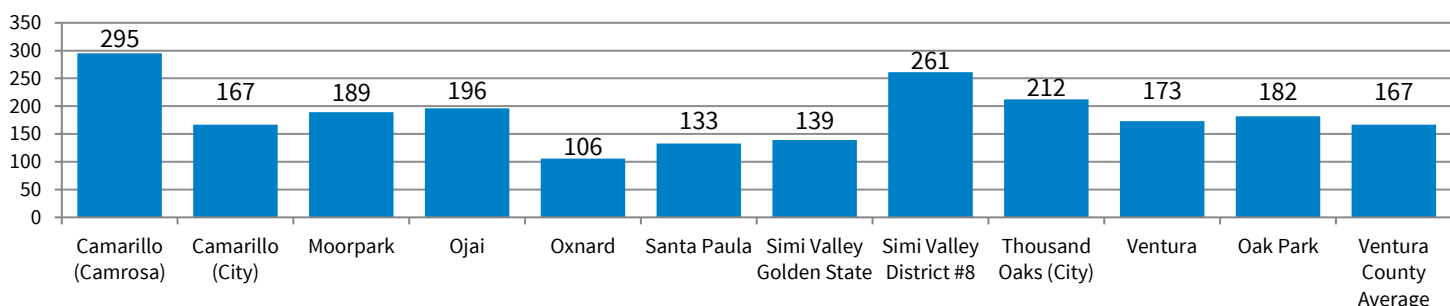
Camrosa and Simi Valley District #8 were the outliers with the highest per capita use. Only Oxnard, Santa Paula and the portions of Simi Valley served by Golden State Water were below the Ventura County per capita average of 167 gallons per person per day. Camarillo City water district mirrored the average.

Oxnard uses by far the most total water, but Oxnard is also the county's largest city, and it has the lowest per capita usage. The City of Camarillo and the Camrosa Water District deliver nearly the same gross volume of water, but Camarillo City customers consume 44 percent less on a per capita basis, perhaps due to the fact that Camrosa customers in the Santa Rosa Valley are further inland and tend to have larger lots.

### Annual System Gross Water Use in Acre/Feet (2012)



### Average Water Use Per Capita Per Day in Gallons (2012)



# LANDFILL DISPOSAL RATE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the disposal rate for Ventura County's 10 cities and the unincorporated areas of the county. The disposal rate is the number of pounds of trash per day sent to landfills for each person in the city or county.

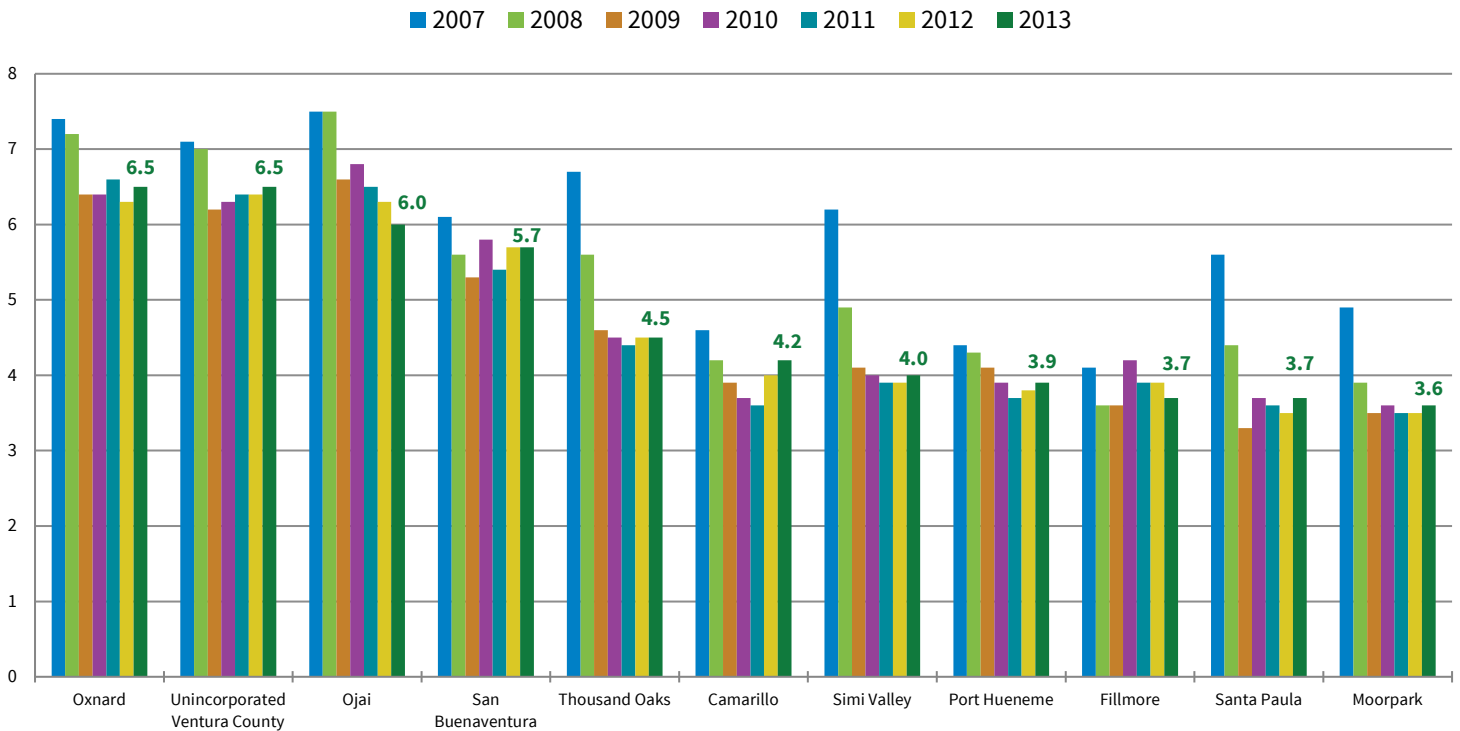
## Why is the measure important?

Space in landfills is a finite resource. When a landfill reaches capacity and is covered, the land is highly likely to be contaminated and unsuited for future development or recreation. Space aside, putting waste into landfills harms the environment because discarded items can leach toxic substances into the air, ground or water, and can continue to do so for hundreds of years.

## How are we doing?

The state of California has spent decades encouraging, and often requiring, its citizens and businesses to recycle. That effort has been successful, in that recycling rates are much higher than they were decades ago. But it's not clear that the strategy is still bearing fruit. From the 2011 to 2013 time period, the only cities to reduce disposal rates are Ojai and Fillmore.

Per Capita Disposal Rates in Pounds/Person/Day (2007 - 2013)





# Public Health

Public health is concerned with the health of the community and with factors that can be influenced by public policy, education and other collective efforts. The delivery of health services and the provision of health insurance have changed significantly since our last report. Technology continues to increase care options, and national changes such as electronic health records and the Affordable Care Act are impacting who has coverage, where they get services and how doctors track their patients' health. California now offers the Covered California Exchange, altering the way consumers purchase health insurance.

In this section, we've focused particularly on measures related to children's health. This is because children are

especially influenced by their environments, and because the long-term social burden associated with health problems that develop in childhood tend to be greater than the costs associated with problems that develop in adulthood.

Our research shows a community that in many ways is growing healthier, but one that still has a long way to go. Childhood obesity, a problem that's been worsening for decades, appears to have leveled off, though it remains common. Teen pregnancy is less common than it was 20 years ago, but is still quite prevalent. And diseases like whooping cough, which could be eradicated by vaccines, are making a comeback.



# LIFE EXPECTANCY AND INCOME INEQUALITY

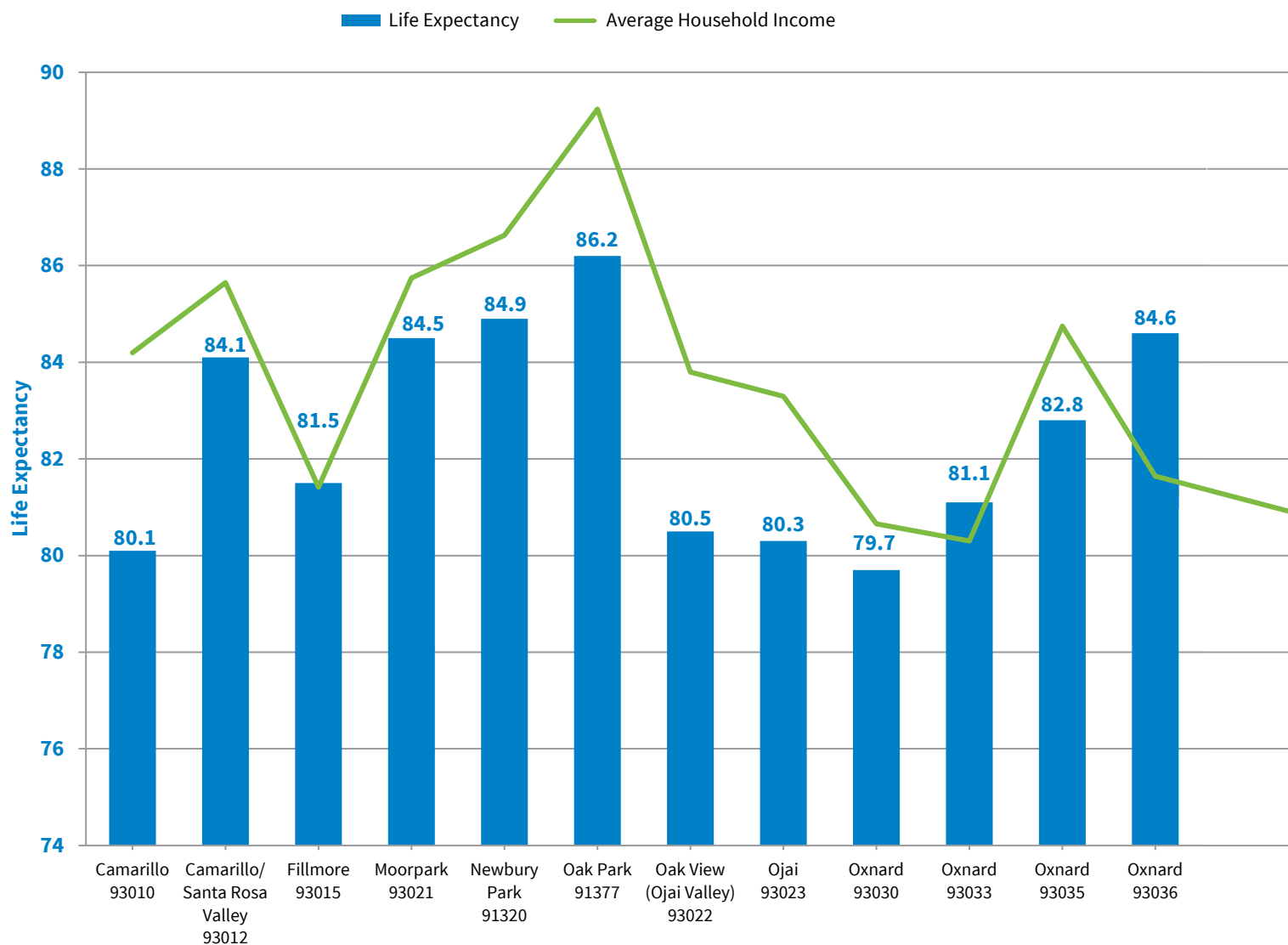
## What is the measure?

The measure is the average life expectancy in 23 different ZIP codes across Ventura County, and the average household income in each ZIP code. Life expectancy refers to the average anticipated life span of someone born today. Note: This indicator uses data from two different years. Life expectancy was not available for 2011.

## Why is the measure important?

Long life isn't the only thing that matters in health care and public health, but it's near the top of the list. Life expectancy is a common shorthand used to describe comparative health in different countries and different parts of the same nation. Comparing life expectancy to income reveals the extent to which richer people have better health outcomes than poorer people.

Ventura County Life Expectancy (2010) & Average Income (2011)

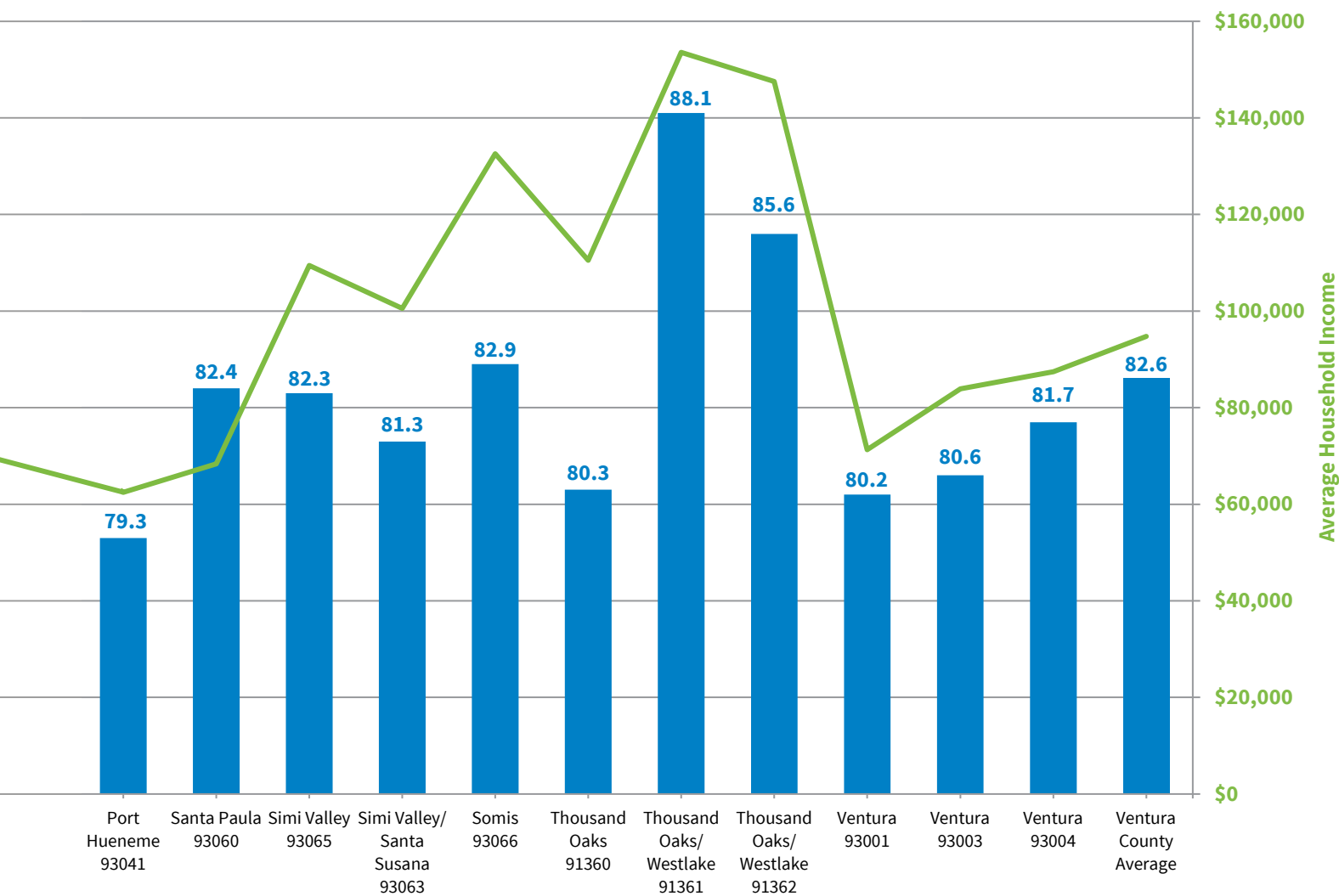


## How are we doing?

The average lifespan for people born in Ventura County in 2010 was 82.6. In 2011, the average household income was \$94,777.

Looking only at the countywide figures conceals disturbing inequalities in both health and income. In part of Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village, the average life expectancy was 88.1 years; in parts of Oxnard and Port Hueneme the average was 9 years less, at 79 years. Average household income ranged from more than \$150,000 in Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village and Oak Park to less than half that in other parts of the county.

Even more disturbing is the clear correlation between income and life span. The wealthiest ZIP code, in Thousand Oaks and Westlake Village, also had the longest average life expectancy, and the poorest ZIP code, in Port Hueneme, was also at the bottom in life expectancy. There are exceptions: a ZIP code in Thousand Oaks and one in Camarillo each had relatively low life expectancy and relatively high average incomes.



# HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE BY AGE & SOURCE

## What are the measures?

The measures are the percentage of Ventura County residents without health insurance, and the various sources of coverage for those who are insured. The data is grouped by age. As in the next section, this data does not include people insured through the Affordable Care Act, which took effect in 2014.

## Why are the measures important?

The Affordable Care Act made major changes to American health care, but the basic delivery system remained the same: Most people obtain private insurance through their employers. A patchwork of government and private insurers covers people who don't have employer-provided insurance. Knowing who is covered by which entities helps government and the private sector allocate the right amount of resources to the right insurance providers. It also lets citizens know how much of the tab for insurance the taxpayers are picking up.

## How are we doing?

Medicare provides universal coverage to senior citizens, so almost everyone over the age of 65 has insurance. Children are very likely to be insured, too, because they are eligible for more government programs than adults are, and because their parents are likely to make paying for their insurance a high priority. In 2013, 91.9 percent of Ventura County residents under the age of 18 had insurance. That was slightly better than the statewide rate of 91.7 percent. Just under half of the insured children in the county had coverage through a parent's employer. Another 28.3 percent of the insured children were covered through Medicaid or other public programs.

The people least likely to have health insurance are adults between the ages of 18 and 34. In 2013, 68.4 percent of Ventura County residents in that age group were insured. About 68 percent of the insured, or 46.6 percent of the total population in that age group, had insurance through their employers. Medicaid and other public programs covered 9 percent of the insured, and 7.6 percent purchased their own insurance on the private market.

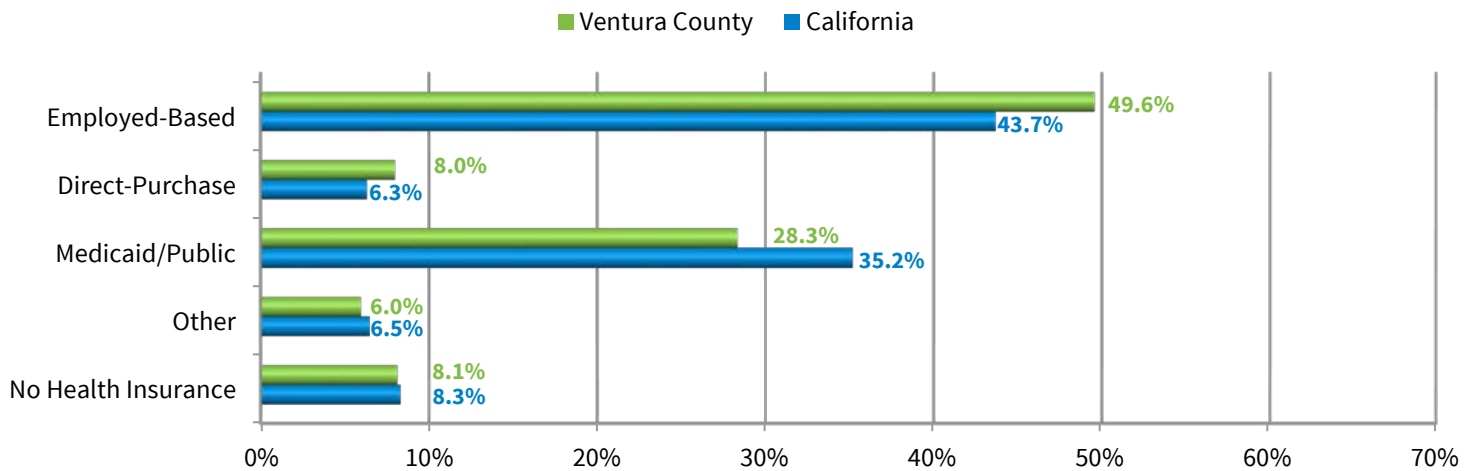
Among adults aged 35 to 64, 82.9 percent of county residents were insured in 2013. Most of those — 60.6 percent — were covered through an employer. Another 9.3 percent of the insured bought insurance on the private market, and 4.6 percent used Medicaid or another public program. Most people hit their peak earnings while in this age range, so it makes sense they would be the least likely to rely on public insurance.

As with the data on coverage rates in each city, this information does not reflect changes in the health care industry brought on by the Affordable Care Act. It is now federal law that everyone must have health insurance of some kind. However, the penalties are relatively light, and the most recent nationwide surveys indicate a substantial number of Americans are still without insurance. Gallup polls showed a peak in the uninsured rate of 18 percent in the third quarter of 2013, before most Affordable Care Act provisions had taken effect, and a decline to 13.4 percent by the second quarter of 2014, after the law went into effect.

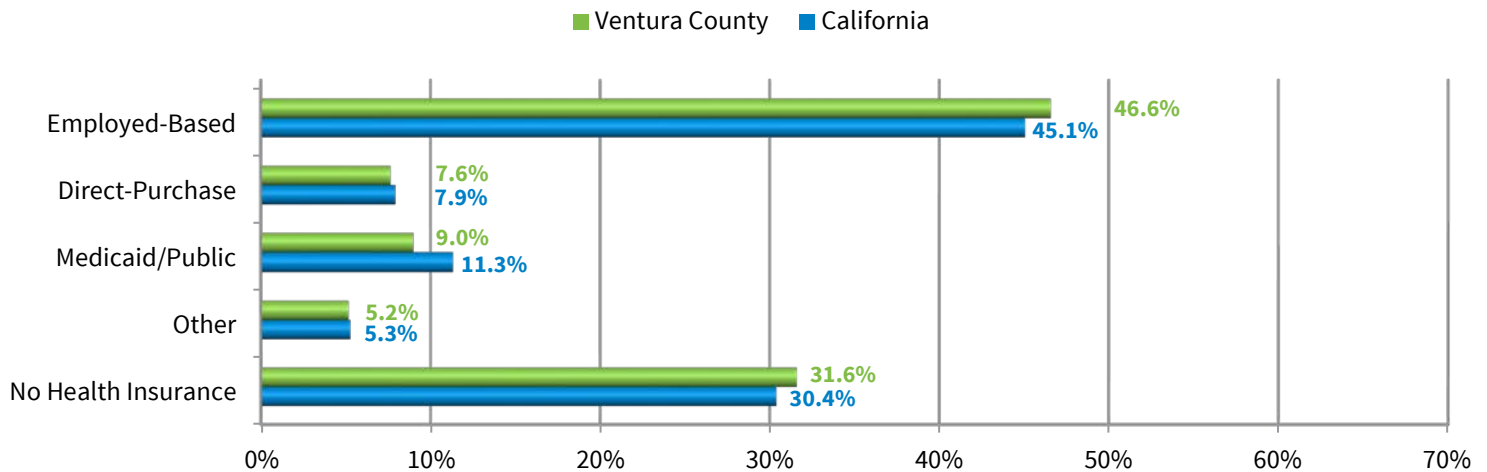




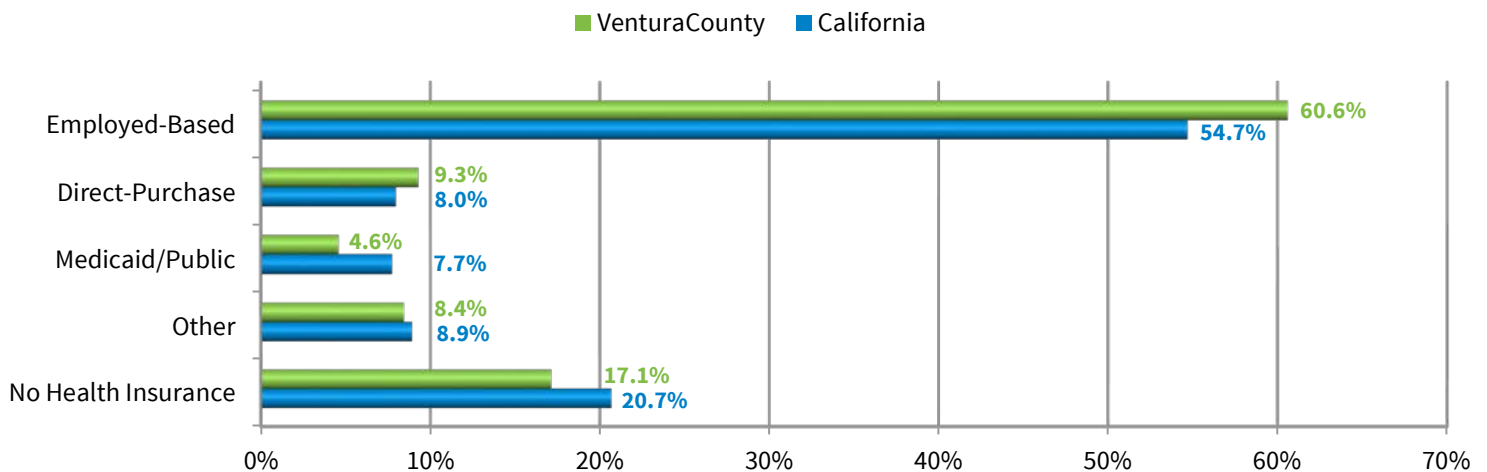
## Sources of Insurance Coverage for Residents Under 18 Years Old (2013)



## Sources of Insurance Coverage for Residents 18 - 34 Years Old (2013)



## Sources of Insurance Coverage for Residents 35 - 64 Years Old (2013)



# HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE BY CITY

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of people with health insurance in Ventura County. It does not include the new insurance customers who signed up through the state exchange authorized by the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare) because that coverage did not start until 2014.

## Why is the measure important?

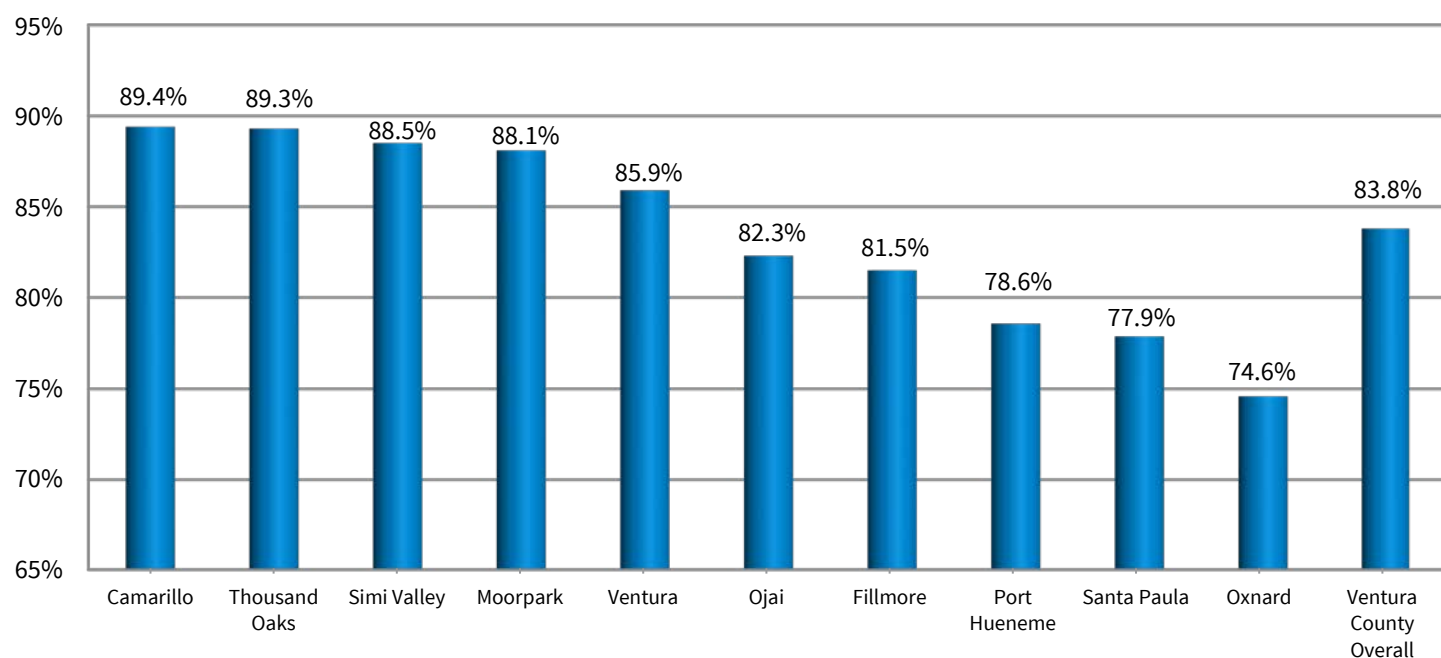
Health insurance is good for your health: Repeated studies have shown Americans who have insurance tend to live longer, healthier lives. Without insurance, the cost of even routine medical care can rise beyond most people's ability to pay, leading them to forego preventative care and ignore minor health problems until they become major ones. The uninsured are likely to seek care from hospital emergency rooms, where treatment costs are higher and are likely to be paid by the taxpayers or absorbed by the hospital and passed on to other patients.

## How are we doing?

In 2013, 83.8 percent of Ventura County residents had health insurance. There were wide gaps between the county's cities. In Oxnard, 74.6 percent of residents had health insurance, while in Camarillo, the figure was 89.4 percent. Ventura, Simi Valley, Moorpark and Thousand Oaks were also above the overall county rate, while Ojai, Fillmore, Santa Paula, Port Hueneme and Oxnard were below it. The rates in every city were nearly the same as they were two years earlier.

There is reason to believe that these rates have risen significantly since 2013, and that the gaps between cities have narrowed. Between June 2013 and June 2014, the state of California saw its coverage rate go from 78.4 percent to 83.7 percent, according to Gallup polling data. The likely reason was the Affordable Care Act, and California's expansion of Medicaid (Medi-Cal) through new insurance exchanges, which made it easier for residents to obtain insurance. Gallup does not release survey results at the county level, so it's not clear yet exactly what effect the Affordable Care Act has had on the number of uninsured people in Ventura County.

**Percent of Ventura County Population  
with Medical Insurance (2013)**



# TEEN BIRTH RATE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of births to teen mothers (ages 15 to 19), expressed as the rate of births per 1,000 teen girls.

## Why is the measure important?

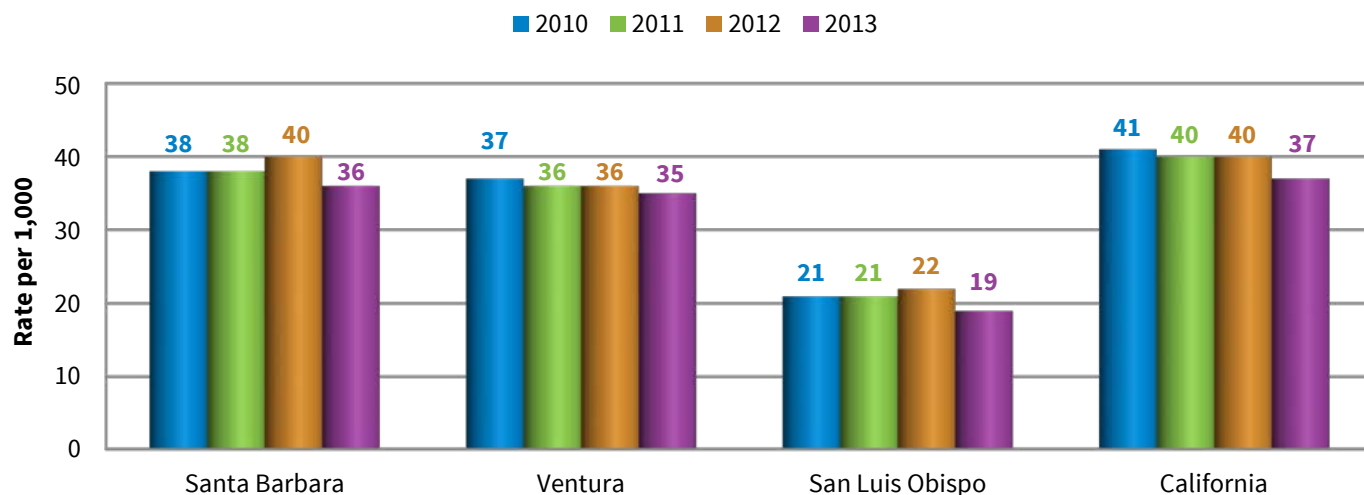
The rate of births to teen mothers is an excellent public health indicator of future quality of life. Teen mothers are deprived of their normal course of educational, social and economic development, and their children tend to be deprived, too. Teen mothers are more likely to drop out of high school than older mothers; are more likely to live in poverty; are more likely to be single parents; are less likely to get adequate prenatal care; and are more likely to have premature and low birth-weight infants. Children of teen mothers tend to have poorer health, lower cognitive development and higher rates of behavioral problems than children of older mothers, and they are more likely to become teen parents themselves.

## How are we doing?

The teen birth rate has been on the decline for decades. In recent years, the Ventura County teen birth rate dropped slightly, from 37 per 1,000 teen girls in 2010 to 35 per 1,000 in 2013. Ventura County's teen birth rate is below the overall California rate of 37 per 1,000 teen girls. Santa Barbara's rate is slightly higher, at 36 per 1,000 girls, and San Luis Obispo County's is much lower, at 19 per 1,000.

The prevalence of teen birth varies greatly within the county. In Oxnard, Fillmore and Piru, 13 percent of births in 2010 were to teen mothers. In Santa Paula, 11 percent of births were to teen mothers, and in Port Hueneme, the figure was 9 percent. In Camarillo, Thousand Oaks and Ojai, just three percent of births were to teen mothers, and in Simi Valley, 4 percent of births were to teens. The cities with the highest proportion of teen births tend to be among the county's lower-income cities, but there is another factor at play: the age of the population. Ojai, for example, has the county's highest median age, so it has proportionally fewer teen girls than other cities.

Teen Birth Rate for Ages 15 to 19 (2010 - 2013)



# VACCINE-PREVENTABLE ILLNESS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of cases of pertussis, or whooping cough, a highly contagious bacterial infection of the respiratory tract.

## Why is the measure important?

Pertussis is a serious disease that can be fatal among infants, the elderly or people who are already ill. It is highly contagious but also preventable by routine childhood vaccinations and booster shots for adults.

## How are we doing?

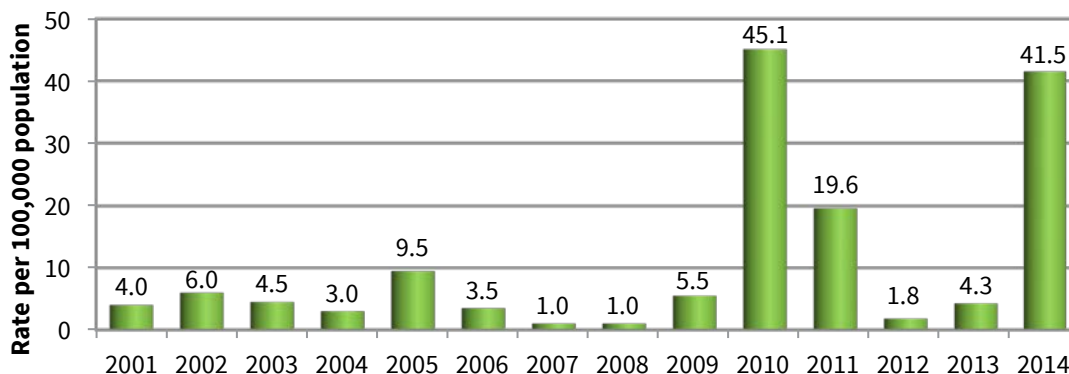
Ventura County, along with the state of California as a whole, has had two recent pertussis outbreaks that were serious enough to be classified as epidemics: one in 2010 and one in 2014. In 2010, the county had 45.1 cases per 100,000 people. The rate dropped to 1.8 in 2012 and 4.32 in 2013, and then in 2014 it shot up to 41.5 per 100,000 people.

Children are more vulnerable than adults to pertussis. Of the 273 cases of whooping cough in Ventura County in the first eight and a half months of 2014, 235 were in patients under the age of 20. Adults often don't seek medical attention for the disease, so they don't show up in the official statistics.

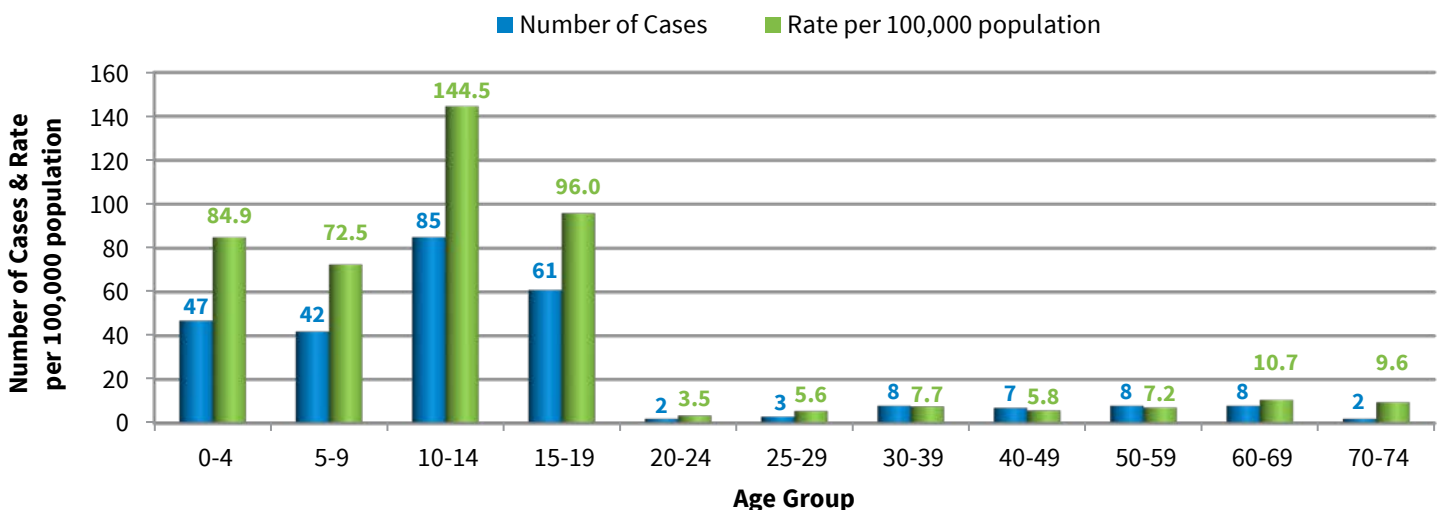
California has suffered repeated epidemics of pertussis despite the fact that a safe and effective vaccine has been readily available for generations. The pertussis vaccine does wear off over time, and pertussis has also mutated into strains that are hard for vaccines to control. Still, some of the spread of pertussis appears attributable to parents who do not vaccinate their children. One study of the 2010 pertussis outbreak showed that infections were concentrated in areas with the lowest vaccination rates.

The safety of all vaccines has been questioned in recent years, but no evidence exists that vaccines cause autism or other suspected health problems. Repeated pertussis epidemics indicate that long-discredited findings on the dangers of vaccines are having an impact on vaccination rates in the community.

**Annual Ventura County Pertussis Rate (2001 - 2014)**



**Ventura County Pertussis Cases by Age (2014)**





# ASTHMA HOSPITALIZATIONS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of hospitalizations for asthma symptoms, expressed as an adjusted average per 10,000 residents.

## Why is the measure important?

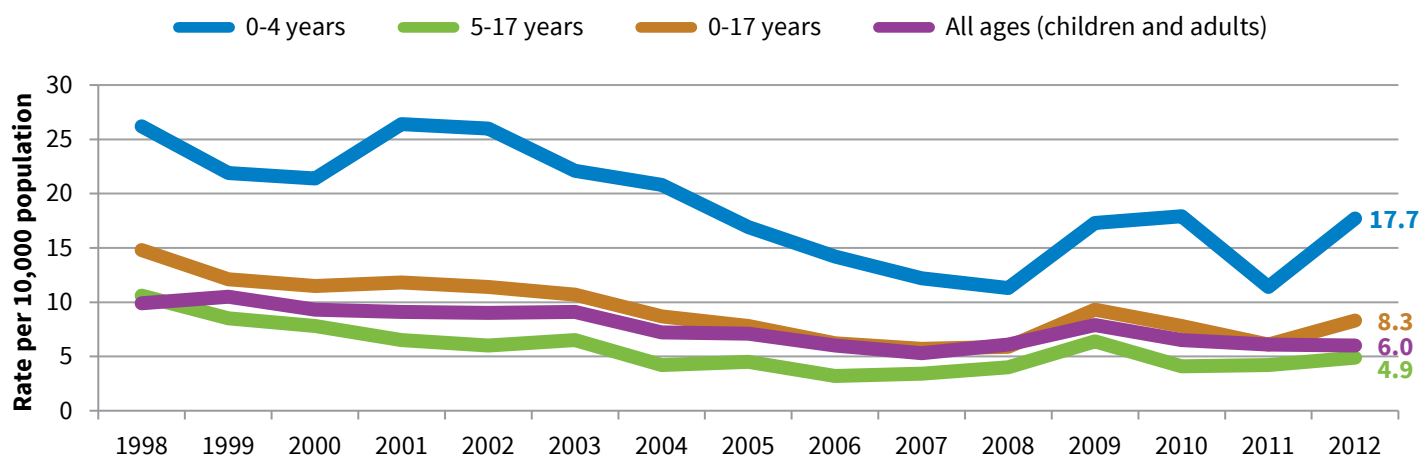
Asthma is a chronic respiratory disease that has become more common in the United States over the past few decades. It disproportionately affects children and young adults, and its prevalence is a general indicator of a community's respiratory health. The triggers for an asthma attack that may require hospitalization include: allergens; infections; exercise; abrupt changes in the weather; and exposure to irritants such as tobacco smoke, dust from farm fields or construction sites, and fine soot in smoke and diesel vehicle emissions.

## How are we doing?

The hospitalization rate for asthma in Ventura County has dropped significantly over the past decade or so, though it has leveled off more recently. In 1999, there were 10.5 asthma hospitalizations for every 10,000 county residents. The rate dropped to 7.2 by 2004 and to 5.3 by 2007. It climbed to 7.9 in 2009, though, before dropping back to 6 in 2012. Although 2009 may be an outlier, the air quality charts in our Environmental Quality domain show an increase in the number of days with bad air conditions in 2008.

As the overall hospitalization rate has bounced around, one thing remains constant: The youngest children are at the greatest risk for asthma-related health problems. In 2012, children 4 and under were hospitalized at a rate of 17.7 per 10,000, compared to a rate of 4.9 for children 5-17 and a rate of 6 for all children and adults.

## Ventura County Asthma Hospitalization Rate by Age (1998 - 2012)



# YOUTH SMOKING

## What is the measure?

The measure is the percentage of children in grades 5, 7, 9 and 11 who report having smoked a cigarette in the past 30 days, according to the state's annual California Healthy Kids Survey. The state did not survey 5th graders in 2010 or 2011.

## Why is the measure important?

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC estimates that smokers die 13 to 14 years earlier than nonsmokers. Youth smoking is particularly harmful because tobacco is highly addictive and most lifelong smokers begin as children.

## How are we doing?

Tobacco use in the United States has plummeted over the last half century. According to the CDC, 18.1 percent of American adults smoked cigarettes regularly in 2012, less than half the percentage who smoked in 1970. Now that smoking is much less prevalent, the rate of improvement has slowed down, but the percentage still drops nearly every year.

In Ventura County, cigarettes became less popular between 2006 and 2011, at least among high school students. In 2011, 12 percent of high school juniors smoked, compared to 16 percent in 2006. Among high school freshmen, the change was smaller, going from 9 percent in 2006 and 10 percent in 2008 down to 8 percent in 2011.

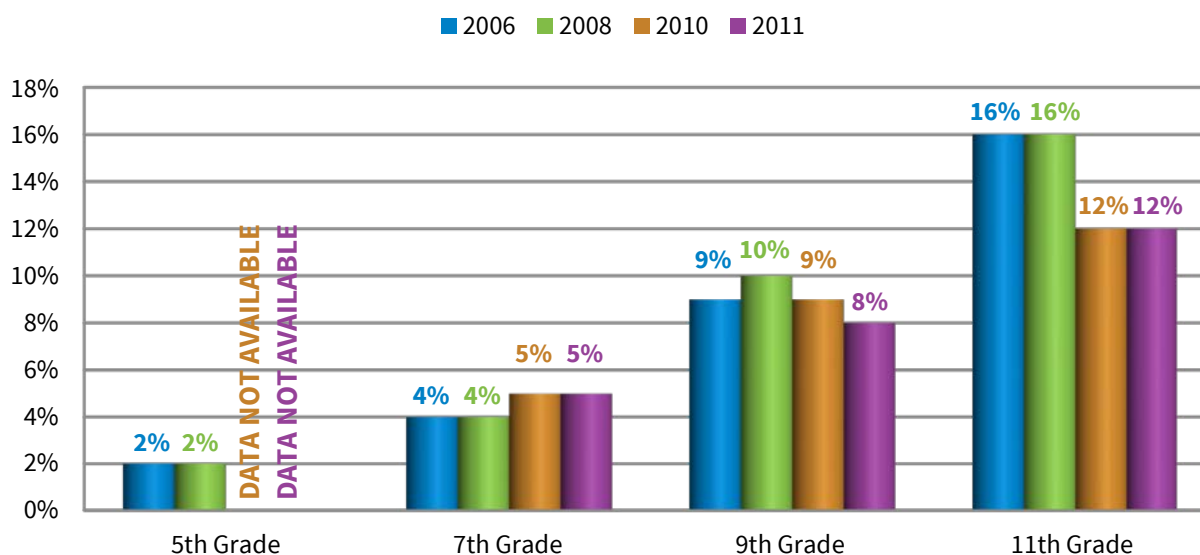
There are signs that the teenagers who do smoke are picking up the habit even earlier, though. The percentage of 7th graders who reported smoking in the past month actually went up, from 4 percent in both 2006 and 2008 to 5 percent in 2010 and 2011.

The county results can't be compared to the CDC figures for the smoking rate among adults. The CDC considers someone a smoker if they report smoking every day or "some days." The state survey classifies children as smokers if they smoked one or more cigarettes in the past 30 days.

Electronic cigarettes have become extremely popular in recent years, for both adults and teenagers. California's Healthy Kids survey hasn't yet included questions about e-cigarettes, but there's reason to believe that young people in California are using them more than ever, and perhaps more than they use traditional cigarettes. In 2014, a nationwide survey by the National Institute on Drug Abuse found that more high school sophomores and seniors used e-cigarettes than traditional cigarettes.

The effect of e-cigarettes on public health is unknown. "Vaping" an e-cigarette means inhaling a vaporized nicotine solution, instead of burning tobacco and inhaling the smoke. Some in the public health community think it can be a healthier alternative to smoking, under a principle known as "harm reduction." Other experts believe e-cigarettes are just as dangerous as cigarettes to public health, because they introduce new people to nicotine. E-cigarettes are far less regulated than tobacco cigarettes, though the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is considering its first set of e-cigarette regulations.

## Past 30 Day Cigarette Use by Ventura County Youth (2006 - 2011)



# Public Safety

Public safety is important enough to the people of Ventura County that every municipal government in the region has made police and fire protection among its highest funding priorities.

The investment has paid off, as Ventura County has a very low overall crime rate and some of its cities are among the safest in the nation. We sit in one of the most fire-prone areas on Earth, and our local, state and federal firefighters have kept us safe from truly disastrous wildfires.

The battle against crime is one of the great success stories in the recent history of American public policy. Ventura County, like the United States in general, is safer today than it has

been in the past half century. Crime rates peaked in the 1980s and early 1990s, when they were many times higher than they are now. The drop in crime since then has been huge, sustained and consistent. It continued even through the Great Recession, though the crime rates in most cities aren't dropping as fast as they did in the 1990s.

Economists, sociologists and statisticians have devoted their careers to figuring out why this happened, with no definitive answer. Their theories include more cops on the street, better policing methods, tougher sentencing, demographics, changing cultural norms and even reductions in children's exposure to lead.



# COUNTY CRIME RATE

## What are the measures?

The measures are the number of serious property and violent crimes reported per 100,000 residents in Ventura County and other large California counties, and Ventura County's crime rate over time, according to the FBI and State of California Department of Justice. The crime rate is based on what the FBI classifies as "Part I crimes," including rape, murder, robbery, aggravated assault, arson and grand theft.

## Why are the measures important?

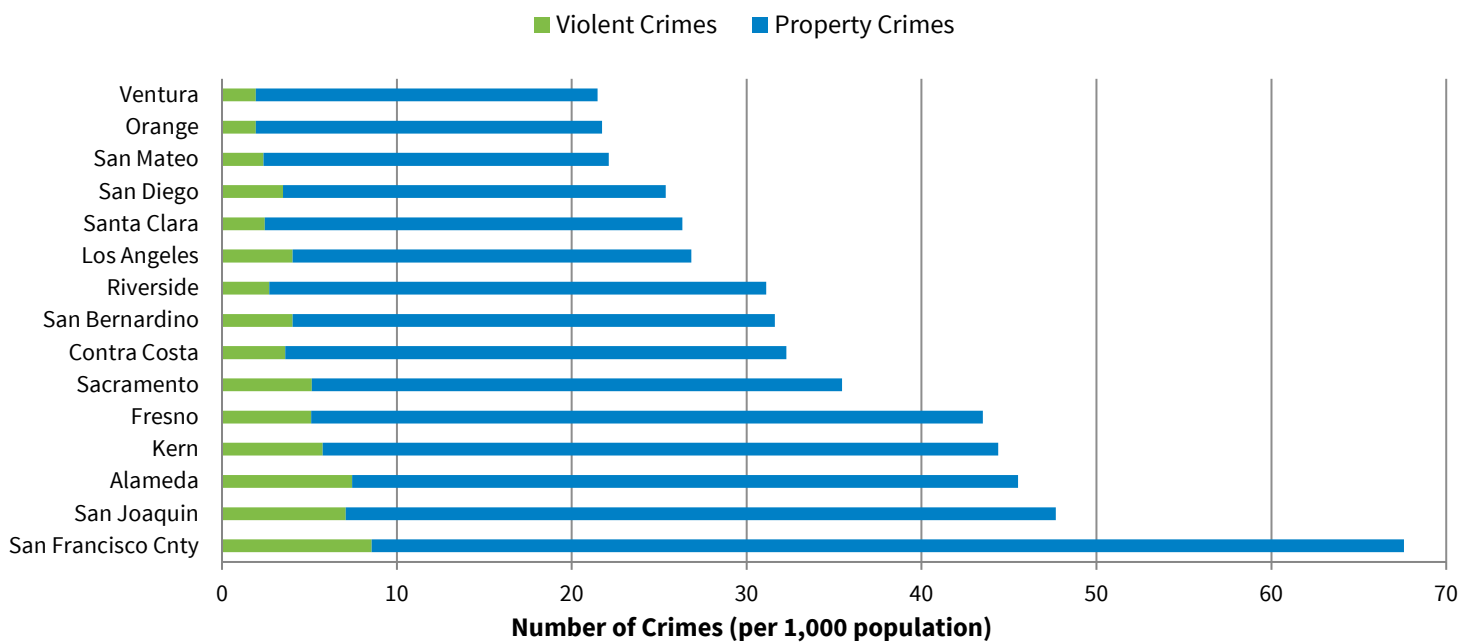
Violent crimes and property crimes are both hugely detrimental to the quality of life. The victims themselves suffer, of course, but so do other residents of the community who must live with the threat of being victimized. Prosecuting and imprisoning criminals costs money, so the higher the crime rate, the more money the government must collect, or the less it has to spend on its other priorities.

## How are we doing?

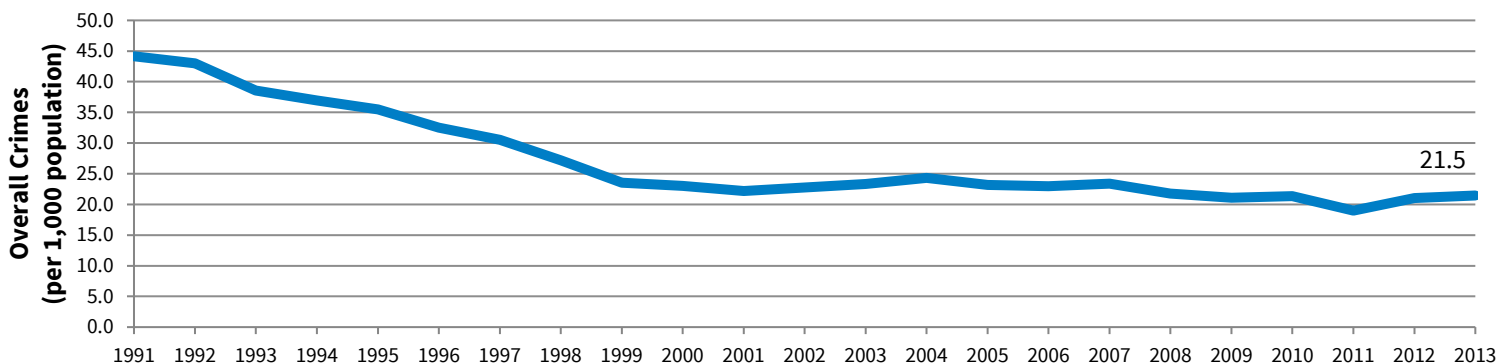
Ventura County is the safest large county in California. Among the 15 most populated counties in California, Ventura County had the lowest rate of violent crime and the second lowest rate of property crime in 2013.

The crime rate in Ventura County dropped tremendously in the 1990s — a 46.7 percent decrease between 1991 and 1999 — and leveled off a bit starting around 2000. It continued to drop slowly through 2013, even during the recession. In 2013, Ventura County's crime rate was 21.5 serious crimes per 1,000 residents. That was up slightly from the year before, but down 8 percent in the six years since 2007.

## Crime Rates in California's Most Populated Counties (2013)



## Overall Ventura County Crime Rate (1991 - 2013)





# CITY CRIME RATES

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of serious property and violent crimes reported per 1,000 residents in Ventura County.

## Why is the measure important?

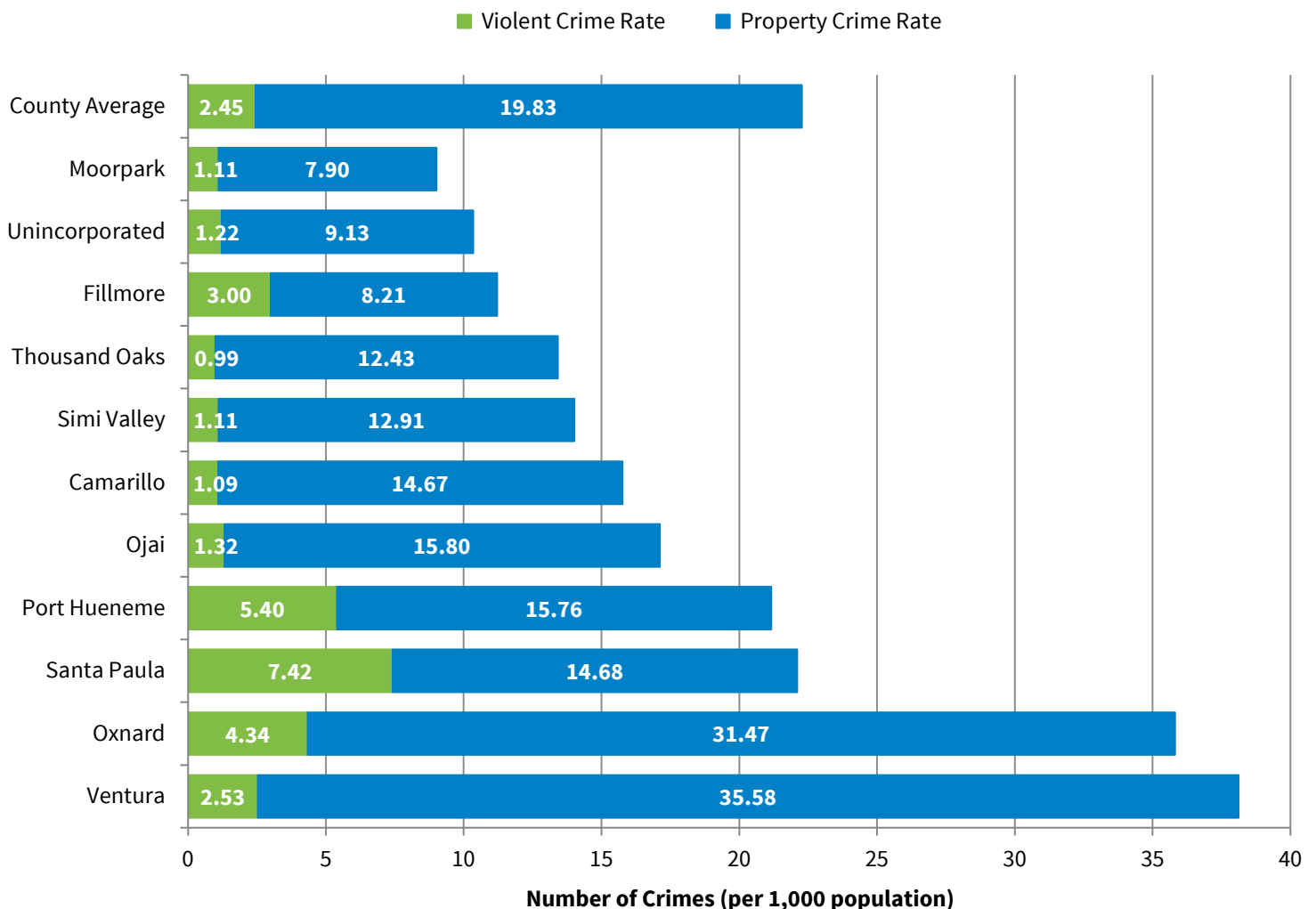
The overall crime rate in Ventura County is interesting and important, but it has less impact on residents' day-to-day lives than the specific crime rates in the communities where they live and work.

## How are we doing?

There are no cities in Ventura County that would be classified as “unsafe” in the grand scheme of things, but some are less safe than others. Ventura stands out as by far the county’s highest-crime city, primarily because of its high rate of property crimes. In 2014, Ventura had 35.58 reported serious property crimes per 1,000 residents. That was more than double the property crime rate of every other Ventura County city except Oxnard, and more than four times that of the safest city, Moorpark.

Santa Paula had the highest rate of violent crime in 2014, at 7.42 reported serious violent crimes per 1,000 residents. Thousand Oaks had the lowest violent crime rate at 0.99 per 1,000 residents, with Camarillo, Moorpark and Simi Valley close behind.

### Crime Rates in Ventura County (2014)



# PRISON REALIGNMENT

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of state prisoners released in Ventura County and assigned to local probation officers. The program is part of California Assembly Bill 109, the 2011 law that dealt with the state's prison overcrowding by shifting responsibility for non-violent, non-serious and non-sex offenders from the state prison system to county jails and probation departments.

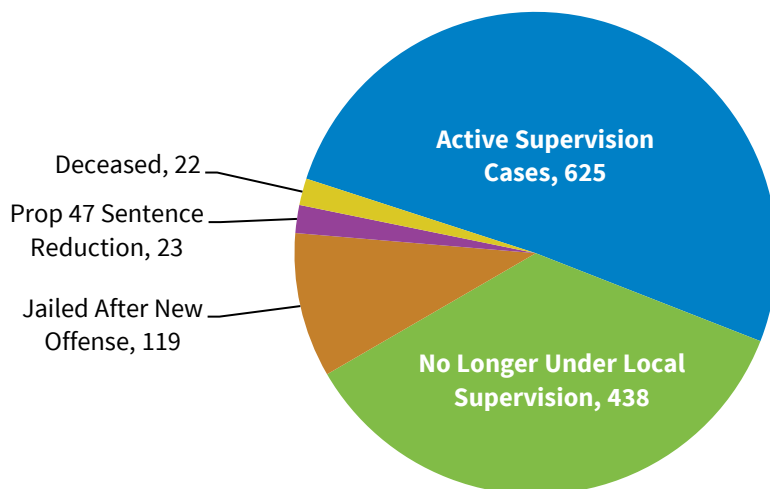
## Why is the measure important?

The realignment under Assembly Bill 109 represents one of the biggest changes to California's justice system in recent decades. Hundreds of state parolees have been transferred to the supervision of Ventura County probation officers. In addition, the county jail population increased 20 percent due to Assembly Bill 109 before later dropping due to Prop 47, the November 2014 ballot proposition that reclassified some felonies as misdemeanors.

## How are we doing?

Over the first three years of realignment, from 2011 to 2014, there were 1,227 state prison inmates released in Ventura County under "post release community supervision." Of those, 119 were sent back to jail for a new offense; 22 died; 23 sentences were reduced due to Prop 47; and 438 offenders either completed their terms or were no longer under local probation supervision. By the end of December 2014, there were 625 active cases remaining, meaning Ventura County probation officers supervised 625 more people than their pre-AB 109 caseload would have called for.

### Breakdown of AB 109 Cases Transferred to Ventura County Probation (2011 - 2014)



# JUVENILE FELONY ARRESTS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of arrests of people under 18 for felony crimes in Ventura County.

## Why is the measure important?

As with all crime, juvenile crime harms the direct victims and all of society. It also takes a toll on perpetrators because people who enter the criminal justice system at an early age are likelier than their peers to commit crimes and become incarcerated when they are adults. A healthy educational, economic and social environment, as well as effective intervention and rehabilitation programs, are necessary to keep juvenile crime low and keep young offenders from becoming lifelong criminals.

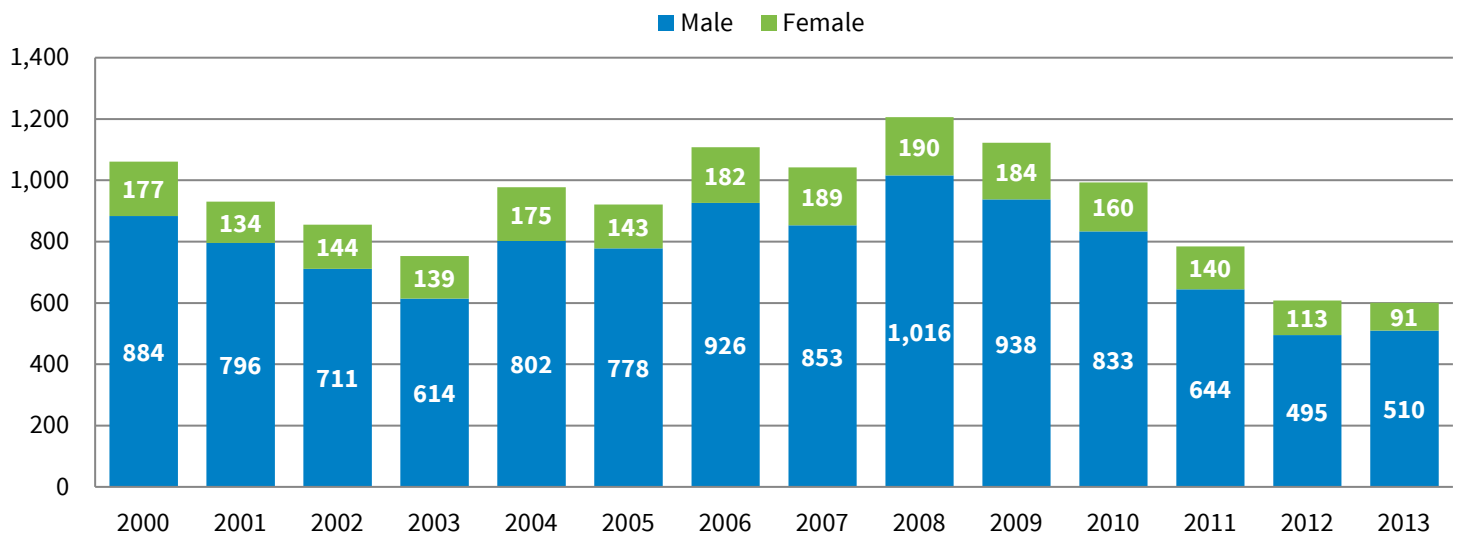
## How are we doing?

Ventura County appears to be winning the war on juvenile crime. In 2013, there were 601 arrests of children on suspicion of felonies, 1.15 percent fewer than the year before.

Unlike the drop in the overall crime rate, which was most dramatic in the 1990s and has slowed since, the big drop in juvenile felony arrests is recent. In 2008, there were 1,206 felony arrests of people under 18, double the number in 2013. That decline has come when there has been a small increase in the county's population; as the population increases, one would expect to see a slightly higher number of arrests.

Juvenile arrests dropped significantly in the years after 2000 before rising again to reach a peak in 2008. It might be too early to tell whether the more recent decline is truly a sustainable improvement, or a short-term trend like the one in the early 2000s.

**Ventura County Juvenile Felony Arrests (2000 - 2013)**



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of 9-1-1 calls in Ventura County pertaining to domestic violence, including violence against spouses, partners and children.

## Why is the measure important?

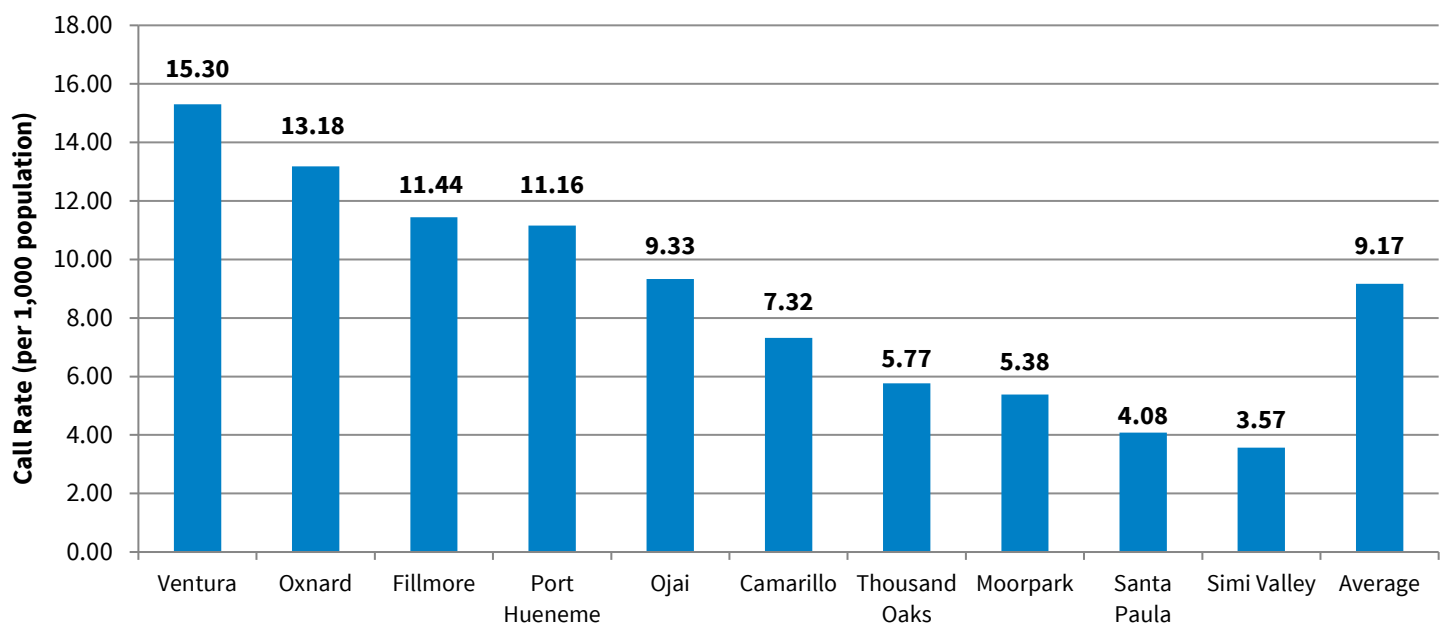
Domestic violence has deep implications for the physical and mental health of adults and children. Its direct effect on victims is obvious and tragic. It also indirectly affects generations of children, as people exposed to abuse at a young age are more likely to be involved in abusive relationships when they are older. It is important to note that this measure covers only calls for emergency assistance, not actual incidents of domestic violence, many of which go unreported.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County residents made 6,808 9-1-1 calls related to domestic violence in 2012. Almost two-thirds of those calls came from Oxnard or Ventura. Fillmore and Port Hueneme also had more calls, on a per capita basis, than the overall county rate. Ojai was very close to the county average, and Simi Valley, Santa Paula, Moorpark, Thousand Oaks and Camarillo were below the average.

This is generally consistent with the patterns of all types of crime, with higher rates in the West County than the East, but in this case, the difference is much more pronounced. There are also places where the relationship does not hold — for example, in 2012, Fillmore was one of the safest cities in the county, however it had the third highest rate of domestic violence calls. And Santa Paula, with a higher crime rate than Fillmore, had a much lower rate of domestic violence calls.

**Ventura County Domestic Violence Calls (2012)**





# CALLS TO VENTURA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of calls for service to the Ventura County Fire Department, divided into medical calls (EMS), fires and other types of service, such as traffic collisions or rescues. The department serves the unincorporated areas of the county and six of its 10 cities: Ojai, Port Hueneme, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, Moorpark and Simi Valley.

## Why is the measure important?

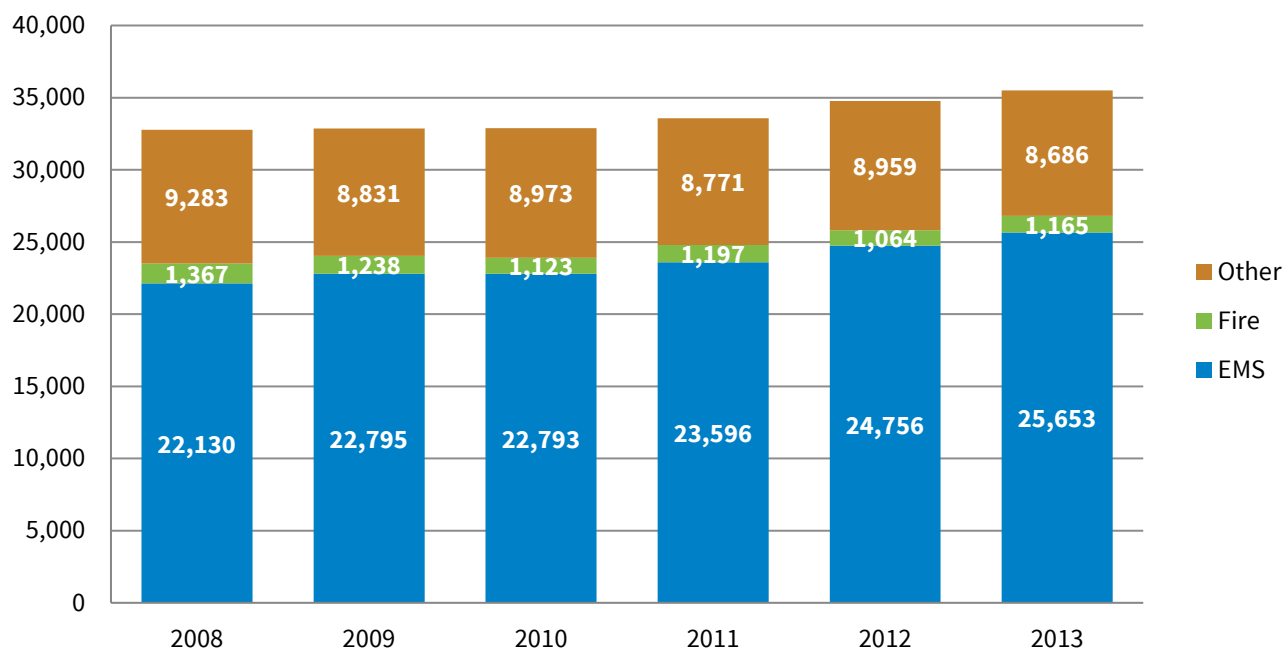
The number of calls the Fire Department must respond to determines how many stations and firefighters it needs, and impacts the level of funding required. The total number of fire calls can serve as an indicator of how well the community's efforts at fire prevention are working, and the number of emergency medical calls can be a reflection of the age and health of the population.

## How are we doing?

A modern American fire department is a "fire" department in name only, and Ventura County is no exception. Building codes and community awareness have made structure fires rare, while an aging population has made emergency calls more common. In 2013, only 3.3 percent of the Ventura County Fire Department's calls were fires. The majority, 72.2 percent, were medical emergencies. The trend is growing more pronounced: In 2008, 4.2 percent of the calls were for fires, and 68 percent were for medical emergencies.

The Ventura County Fire Department's workload grew at a faster rate from 2011 to 2013 than it had over the previous few years. The total number of calls went up by 8 percent from 2010 to 2013, after going up by just 0.3 percent from 2008 to 2010.

**Calls to Ventura County Fire Department (2008 - 2013)**







# SOCIAL SERVICES

In some societies, people in need — the hungry, the homeless, abused or orphaned children — are cared for entirely by the state. In other places, churches or extended families make up the social safety net. In the United States, things are more complex. The social safety net in Ventura County and across the country is a patchwork made up of government agencies, nonprofits, churches, private businesses and concerned volunteers. Between them, these groups and individuals help thousands of people every year in Ventura County survive poverty, illness, unemployment, abuse and other obstacles.

Because so much of the aid we give to others is voluntary, the social services sector requires constant vigilance and support. And there is still plenty left to do. The jails are crowded with people who need treatment for mental illness. Children often graduate from the foster care system at age 18 with no means of support. Thousands of families need help from charities to get enough to eat. And in an affluent part of one of the richest nations in human history, thousands of people sleep in cars, dry riverbeds or parks.



# 2-1-1 CALLS BY NEED

## What is the measure?

The measure is the volume of calls to Ventura County's 2-1-1 line seeking information about, or referrals to, social service programs.

## Why is the measure important?

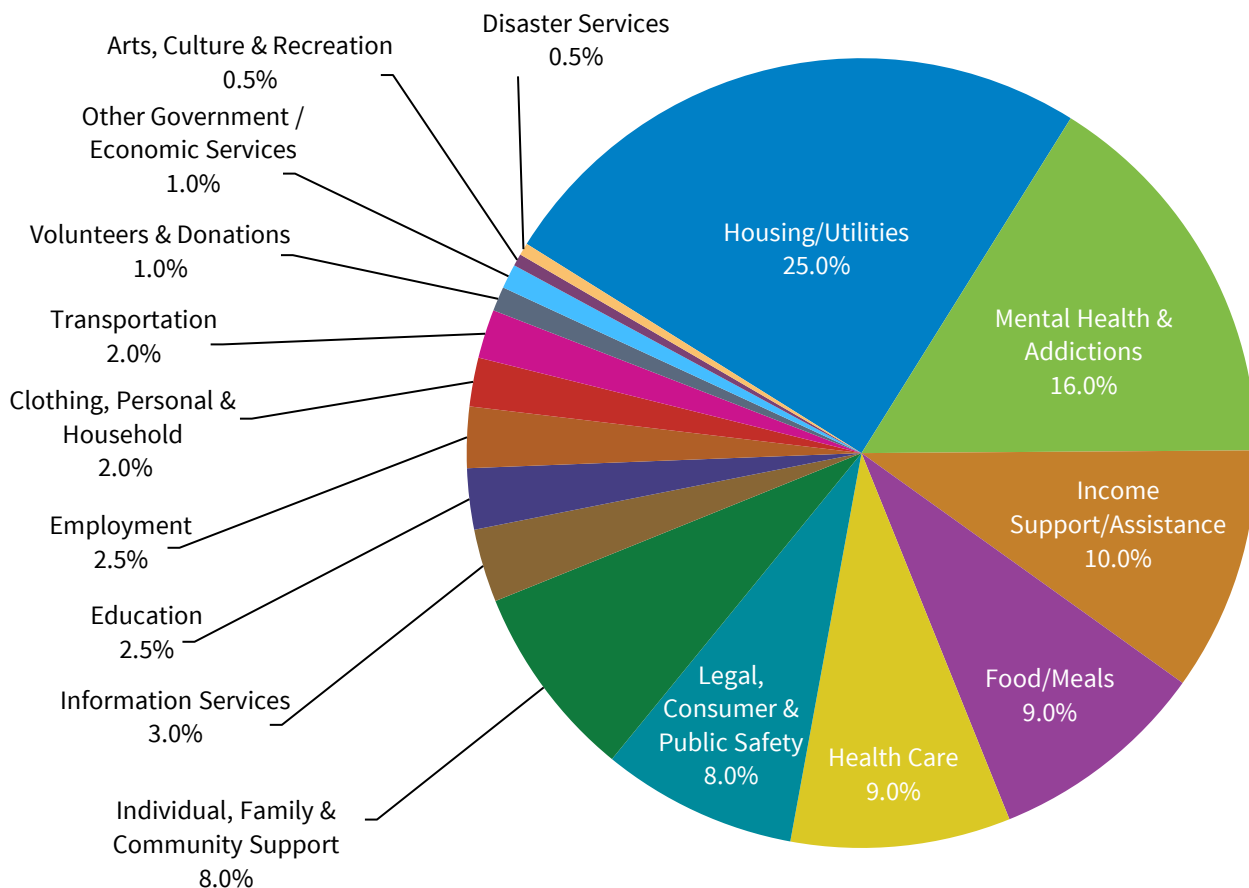
The 2-1-1 service was launched in Ventura County in 2005. It is a 24-hour phone line with operators who connect callers to organizations that provide food or rent assistance, substance abuse treatment, help dealing with domestic violence and other social services. It receives more than 20,000 calls per year, so its database of calls organized by need represents an in-depth look at where the demand for social services in Ventura County lies. Areas with a high volume of calls might require more focus by the government agencies and nonprofits that together make up the county's social safety net.



## How are we doing?

Callers use 2-1-1 for a wide range of needs. In 2013, issues with housing or utilities topped the list, at 25 percent of all calls. Next were mental health and addiction issues, at 16 percent of all calls, followed by income support and assistance at 10 percent of all calls and food assistance at 9 percent. The most common reasons for calling 2-1-1 have held fairly constant over the past few years, with housing and mental health issues consistently at the top.

**2-1-1 Calls by Category of Need (2013)**





# CHILD ABUSE

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of children who have been reported to authorities as abused or neglected, per 1,000 children aged 17 and younger, in Ventura County and two other Southern California counties. The figures include reports that were substantiated as well as those determined to be inconclusive, unfounded, assessment-only referrals, and “not yet determined.” The data counts each child only once per year, per county, even if there are multiple reports of abuse or neglect.

## Why is the measure important?

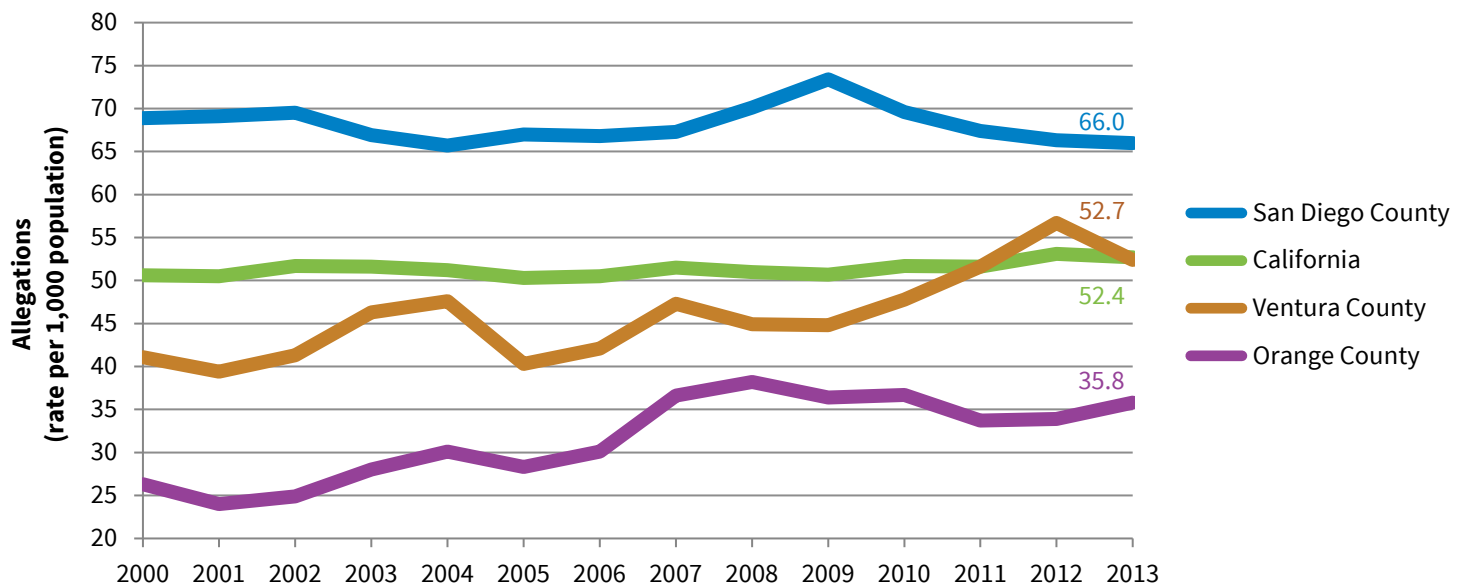
Child abuse does serious mental and physical harm to some of society’s most vulnerable people. The psychological harm can last a lifetime. Victims often grow up to be abusers themselves, or to be victimized again as adults, so stopping abuse sooner can break a multigenerational cycle of trauma, fear and violence.

## How are we doing?

The rate of reported child abuse in Ventura County is similar to that of the state as a whole. In Ventura County, there were 52.4 cases per 1,000 children in 2013, while the statewide rate was 52.7 cases per 1,000 children. Orange County had a much lower rate of reported abuse, at 35.8 cases per 1,000 children, while San Diego County’s was higher, at 66 cases per 1,000 children.

The trend in Ventura County is discouraging. The rate of reported child abuse in the county went up 33 percent between 2001 and 2013. In that period, the statewide rate rose only 4.4 percent. The increase in Ventura County could be a result of more people reporting abuse, rather than more actual abuse going on. In that case, the community should be commended for raising awareness of the problem and doing something about it.

**Child Abuse and Neglect Allegations Rate  
Per 1,000 Residents Age 0-17 (2000 - 2013)**



# HOMELESSNESS

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of people in Ventura County who were homeless on January 28, 2014, as determined by a census overseen by the county of Ventura. People were counted if they met the federal definition of homelessness, which refers to people living in emergency shelters; in transitional shelters; or without shelter, such as those sleeping in parks, on sidewalks or in cars. People living in motels or staying with friends or family were not counted as homeless.

## Why is the measure important?

Homelessness is enormously detrimental to the homeless individual, and to society as a whole. It means living without adequate sanitation, warmth or shelter from the elements. It can also mean living in fear of theft or violent crime, or legal sanction for sleeping in unauthorized public or private places. Many chronically homeless people are addicts or mentally ill, and being homeless makes it difficult to get the care they need. Though it afflicts the poorest of the poor, homelessness is expensive — homeless people frequently spend the night in jail or in a local emergency room, and either option costs taxpayers much more than providing housing or other services would have.

## How are we doing?

In 2014, volunteer census takers found 1,449 homeless people in Ventura County. That's 1,449 people without a permanent roof over their heads, in an affluent part of the

richest society in human history. That number is almost certainly too low, because it includes only people who could be located, who agreed to speak with census takers and who admitted being homeless.

Sixty percent of the county's homeless were counted in Ventura and Oxnard. Simi Valley had the third-largest homeless population.

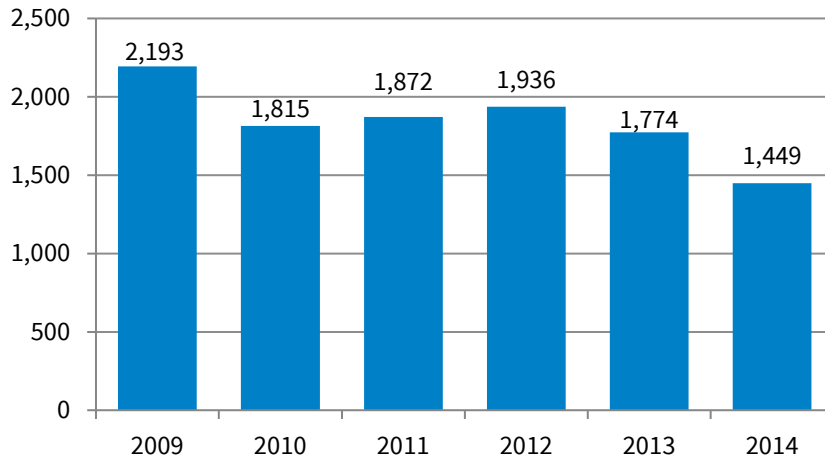
Ventura County's shelters are not equipped to handle the entire homeless population. In 2014, 63 percent were unsheltered. The proportion of people without shelter would have been much higher if the census were taken in the summer since the county's sole large emergency shelter opens only during the winter.

In 2014, 48 percent of Ventura County's homeless population was chronically homeless. That's much higher than the national average of 18 percent, but lower than the 2013 study, in which 70 percent of the homeless were chronically homeless. A "chronically" homeless person is defined as an individual with some type of disabling condition, who has been homeless either for more than a year, or for four or more separate periods in the past four years.

Ventura County's homeless population actually dropped by 18 percent between 2013 and 2014. The 2014 figure was the lowest since the homeless census began in 2007, and it was 33.9 percent lower than the high point in 2009. That could be the result of success in the many programs dedicated to helping the homeless. However, there is reason to believe there was an anomaly in the 2014 census, particularly in Oxnard and Ventura, where the totals were unusually low.

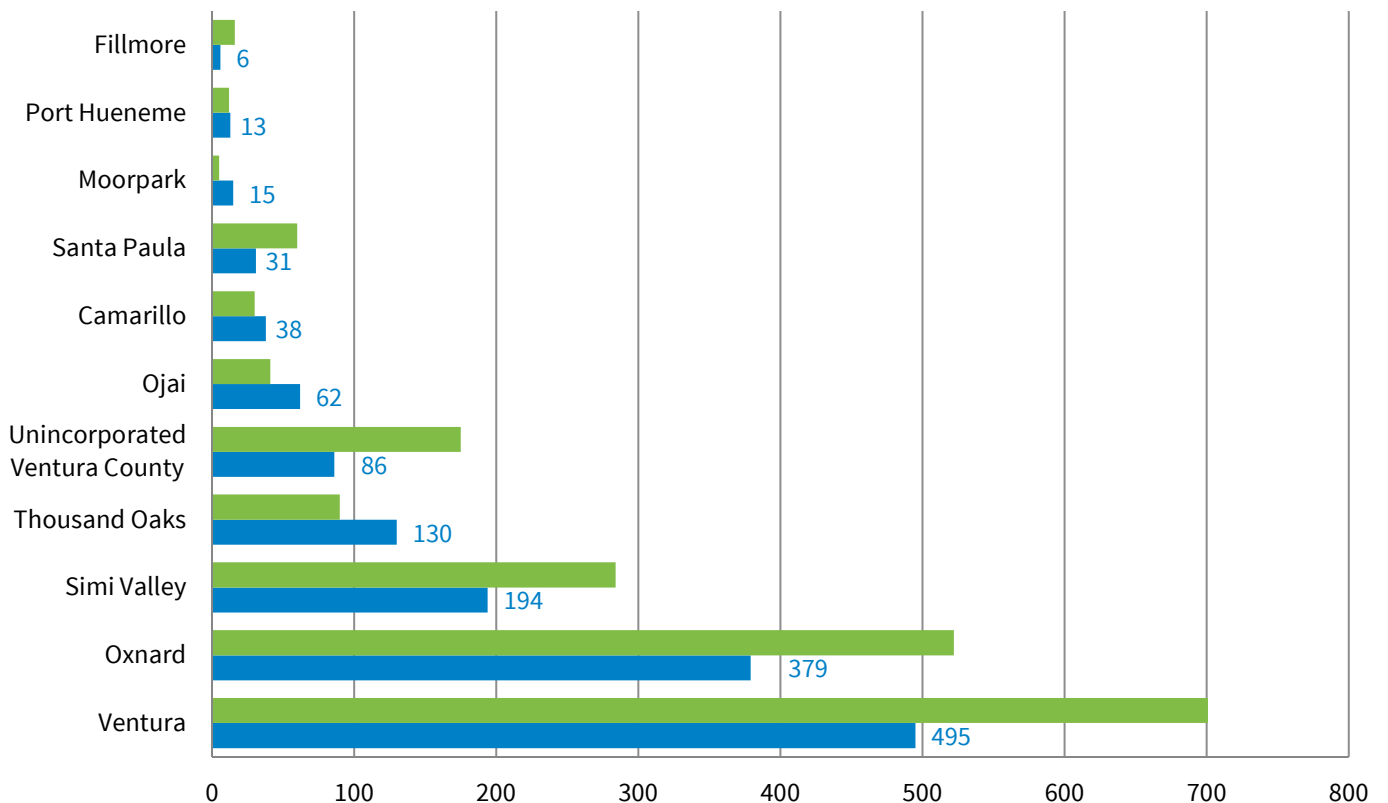


## Ventura County Homeless Counts (2009 - 2014)



## Ventura County Homeless Counts (2012, 2014)

■ 2012 ■ 2014



# GRANTS TO CHARITIES

## What are the measures?

The measures are the amount of money distributed by the Ventura County Community Foundation and the amount received by the United Way of Ventura County.

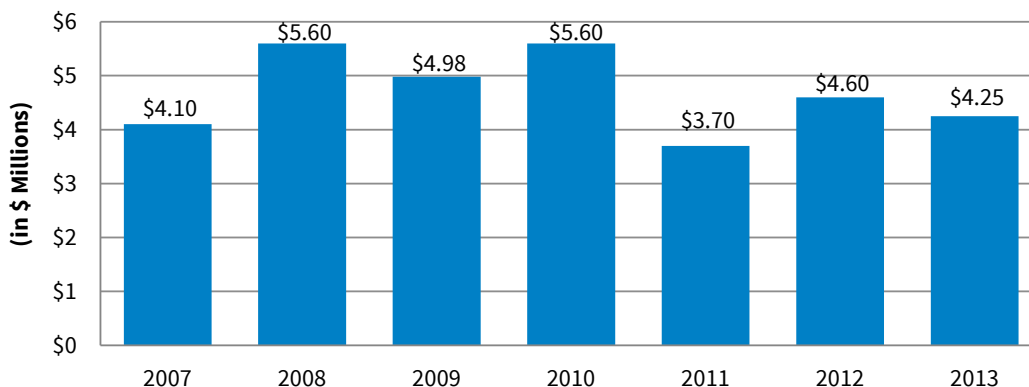
## Why are the measures important?

The United Way of Ventura County and the Ventura County Community Foundation are two of the biggest charitable organizations in this region, and both of them do much of their work by making grants to smaller community organizations. Together, their grants make up a significant portion of the money available to small charities.

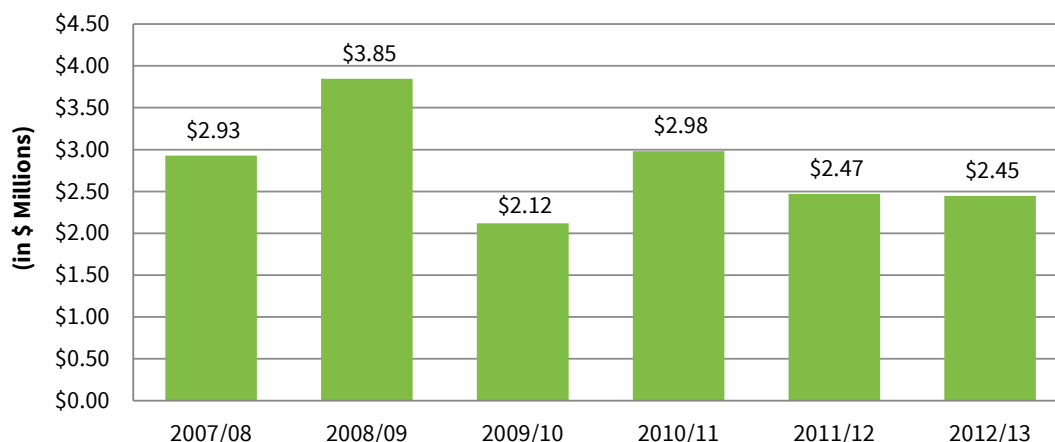
## How are we doing?

Both the United Way and the Ventura County Community Foundation have seen a great deal of fluctuation in their finances recently. In 2013, the Ventura County Community Foundation distributed \$4.3 million in grants. That was down 7.6 percent from 2012, but up 14.9 percent from 2011. The peak in recent years was \$5.6 million in 2010. The United Way had \$2.45 million in revenue in the 2012/13 fiscal year, about the same as the year before, but 36.4 percent below the total in 2008/09.

**Grants Awarded by the Ventura County Community Foundation (2007 - 2013)**



**Revenue to Ventura County United Way (2007/08 - 2012/13)**





# Transportation

Ventura County is an essentially suburban place, with rural areas separating its cities. As such, we are reliant on our cars, our roads and our highways, to the degree that almost 90 percent of workers in the county commute in private automobiles every day. That percentage has dropped in recent years, but only barely. All that driving alters the environment, both locally and globally, and it affects our well-being in subtler ways.

Citizens and governments all over the county are trying to change the way we get around. Since the cities in Ventura County lack the residential and commercial densities to support significant transit use, Ventura County will probably keep its suburban character transportation infrastructure.

The Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC), the main transportation planning agency in the county, is in the early stages of an effort to improve the county's transit system by coordinating bus routes in different cities and running more routes between cities. And most major development projects are approved with an eye toward placing homes within walking distance of stores and offices.

VCTC, Caltrans and other agencies are working on our roads, too. By mid-2015, Highway 101 will have a new carpool lane between Ventura and Santa Barbara. Improvements are also planned or underway for major thoroughfares in East Ventura County, including Highway 23.



# MEANS TO WORK

## What is the measure?

The measure is the primary means of transportation to and from work for workers 16 years of age or older.

## Why is the measure important?

Encouraging carpooling and public transit serves important public policy goals. When more people drive alone to work, traffic congestion is worse, as is the environmental impact of driving and the amount of gasoline consumed. “Means to work” is also a reflection of the type of development in the county; denser communities, and those where homes are located close to businesses, are more conducive to walking, biking and public transit.

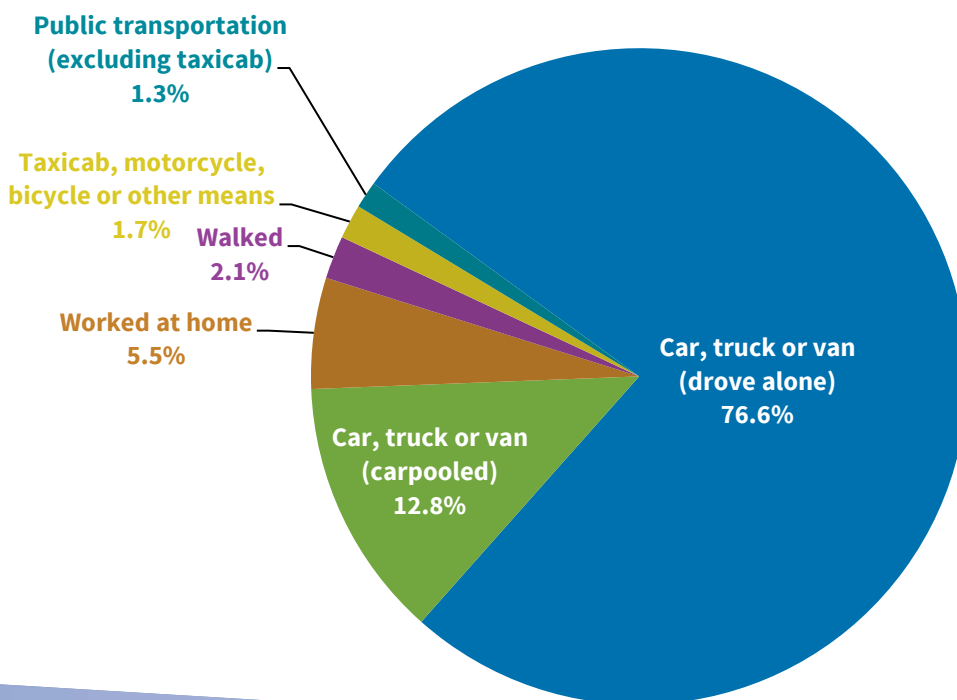
## How are we doing?

The vast majority of workers in Ventura County get to work by driving alone, though the number has declined slightly. In 2013, 76.6 percent of workers said they drove to work alone, down from 77.7 percent in 2010 and 80.2 percent in 2005. Even with that improvement, driving alone is more than three times as popular as all other transportation options combined.

Carpooling was the second most popular option, with 12.8 percent of workers in the county sharing rides to work. That means that nearly 90 percent of employed people in Ventura County get to work in a private automobile, either alone or with others.

Buses, trains and all other types of public transit are used for commuting by only 1.3 percent of Ventura County workers. More people walk to work (2.1 percent), or take taxis, motorcycles or bicycles (1.7 percent) than use public transit. Another 5.5 percent of the workforce works from home.

**Means to Work in Ventura County (2013)**



# TIME SPENT COMMUTING

## What is the measure?

The measure is the time it takes Ventura County residents to get to their jobs, in five-minute increments.

## Why is the measure important?

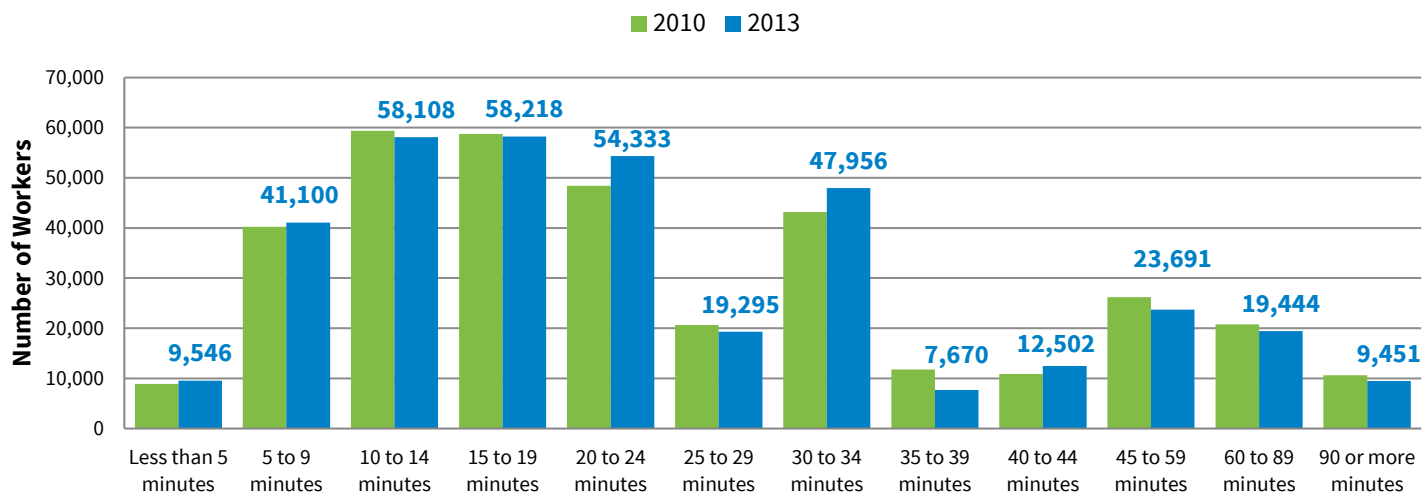
Longer commutes mean more time, fuel and money lost to driving, and more traffic-related pollution. Long commutes are also a quality-of-life issue; the more time people spend in the car, the less time they have for their families or friends, or working, relaxing, exercising or sleeping.

## How are we doing?

About two thirds of Ventura County workers spent less than half an hour getting to work in 2013, about the same amount as in the previous survey, in 2010. The most common commute length is a relatively short 15 to 19 minutes.

But there are still tens of thousands of Ventura County residents who spend much more time in their cars. About 52,500 people, or 15 percent of workers, have a commute that's longer than 45 minutes each way. About 29,000 of them, or 9 percent of workers, have a commute longer than an hour each way.

## Travel Time to Work in Ventura County (2010, 2013)





# VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED

## What is the measure?

The measure is Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), which is an estimate of the total number of miles driven annually in Ventura County, compared to population growth over time.

## Why is the measure important?

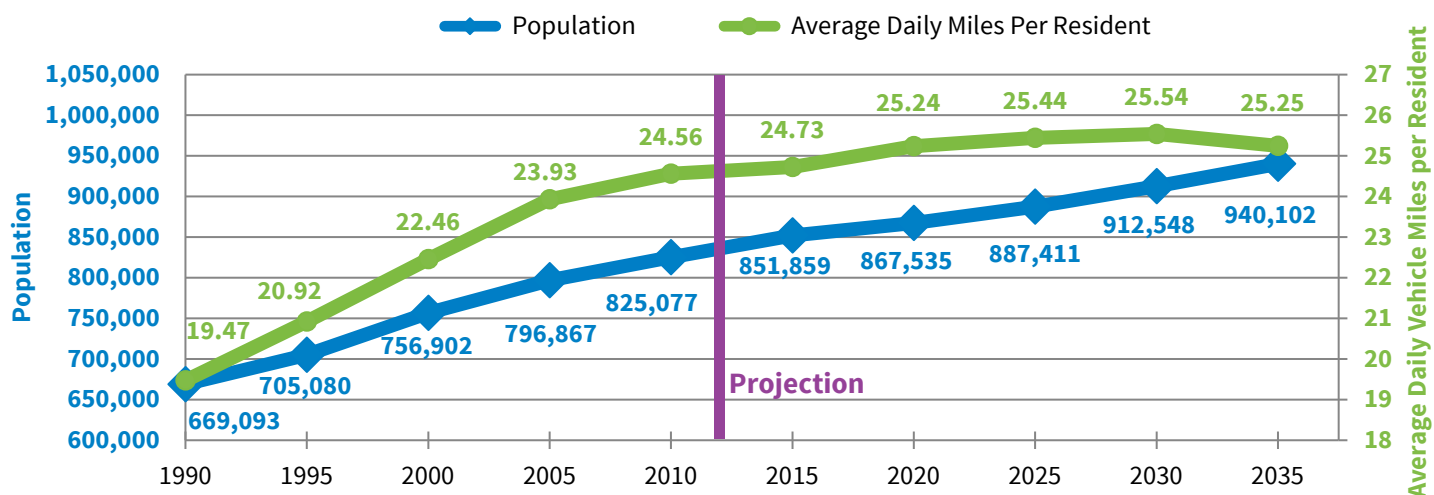
VMT includes all types of travel, not just commutes to work. It's the best measure of the stress borne by the road network and the environment from vehicle travel. Decreases in VMT can be the result of either better land-use planning and more efficient uses of resources, or slowdowns in the economy.

## How are we doing?

The number of miles driven in Ventura County has been rising faster than the population, but in the future, it is projected to rise slower than population growth.

In 2010, 20.3 million miles were driven, an increase of 6.2 percent since 2005. Presumably due to the economic slowdown, the rate of growth slowed noticeably when compared to the 2000-05 period, when vehicle miles grew by 12.2 percent. The California Air Resources Board predicts Ventura County will become slightly less automobile-dependent in the future: By the 2020-2025 period, vehicle miles are projected to grow slower than the population.

**Past and Projected Average Ventura County Vehicle Miles Traveled (1990 - 2035)**





# TRANSIT RIDERSHIP

## What is the measure?

The measure is the number of unlinked trips on fixed-route and dial-a-ride bus service on Ventura County's four largest transit systems: Gold Coast Transit, which serves most of West Ventura County; the bus systems in Simi Valley and Thousand Oaks; and the Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority, or VISTA, which runs buses between cities in Ventura County and to Santa Barbara and Los Angeles counties. "Unlinked trips" refers to the total numbers of passenger boardings, so a trip that requires a transfer is treated as two unlinked trips.

## Why is the measure important?

More transit ridership means less traffic congestion, less pollution and less gasoline consumption. Buses are an option for many commuters going to Los Angeles or Santa Barbara, and they are the only means of transportation for thousands of Ventura County residents who don't have cars or can't afford to drive.

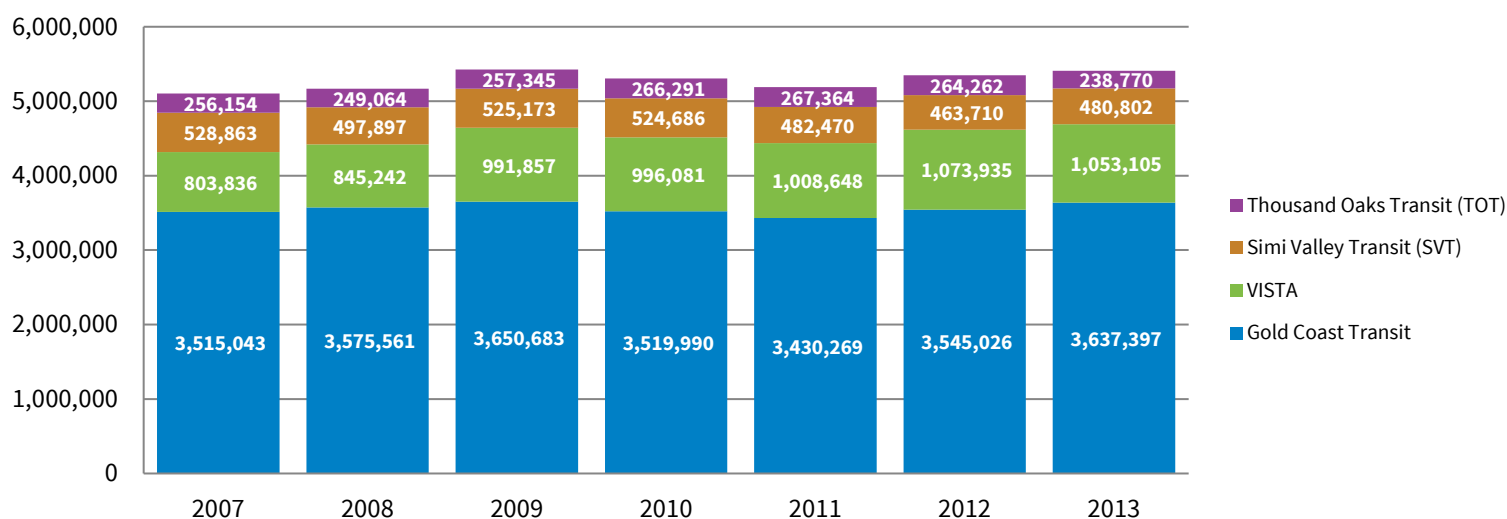
## How are we doing?

Overall trips on Ventura County's four largest bus systems grew in 2012 and 2013, after two years of decline. The most dramatic increase from 2012 was in the Simi Valley bus system, where rides grew by 3.69 percent. Transit use grew in the area served by Gold Coast (Oxnard, Ventura, Port Hueneme and Ojai) as well, and declined in Thousand Oaks and in the VISTA system.

The countywide decline in 2010 and 2011 was likely due to post-recession budget cuts at the state and local government agencies that fund public transit.

Unfortunately, this is a cyclical pattern — when the economy gets worse, people tend to have greater need to ride the bus, but that's exactly when the bus systems undergo budget cuts and need to reduce service.

**Number of Annual Ventura County Unlinked Trips (2007 - 2013)**



# TRANSIT COST

## What is the measure?

The measure is how much each of the four largest transit systems in the county spends to provide a ride to each passenger. It is calculated by dividing the total cost of operations for each transit system by its number of passenger rides for that year.

## Why is the measure important?

The less a transit system spends to transport each passenger, the more people it can serve. Economies of scale mean transit systems targeting higher-density areas with more transit users can deliver services at a lower per-passenger cost.

## How are we doing?

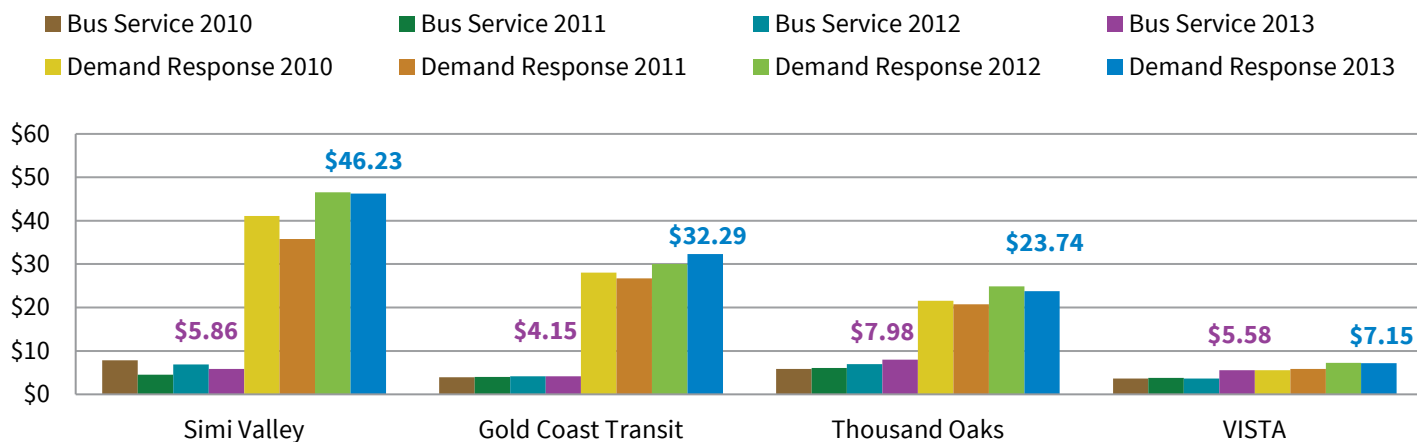
Different bus systems spend widely varying amounts to deliver each rider. Gold Coast (which serves Oxnard, Ventura,

Ojai and Port Hueneme) spent \$4.15 per ride in 2013, while Thousand Oaks spent \$7.98 and Simi Valley spent \$5.86. VISTA, the regional bus system, spent \$5.58, but it has a different mission and takes passengers on much longer trips.

The per-ride cost of bus systems in Simi Valley and the Gold Coast service area (Oxnard, Ventura, Ojai and Port Hueneme) operated at a lower cost from 2012 to 2013. VISTA, the regional bus service that connects Ventura County to Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, operated at a lower cost than the year before.

Demand response service, commonly known as dial-a-ride, is much more expensive, per rider, than traditional bus service. Dial-a-ride cost Simi Valley \$46.23 per ride in 2013. Gold Coast paid \$32.29 per dial-a-ride passenger, and Thousand Oaks paid \$23.74. VISTA was much lower, at \$7.15 per ride.

## Public Transit Cost of Operations per Unlinked Passenger Trip (2010 - 2013)



# FUNDING FOR HIGHWAYS

## What is the measure?

The measure is historical and projected spending on Ventura County highways.

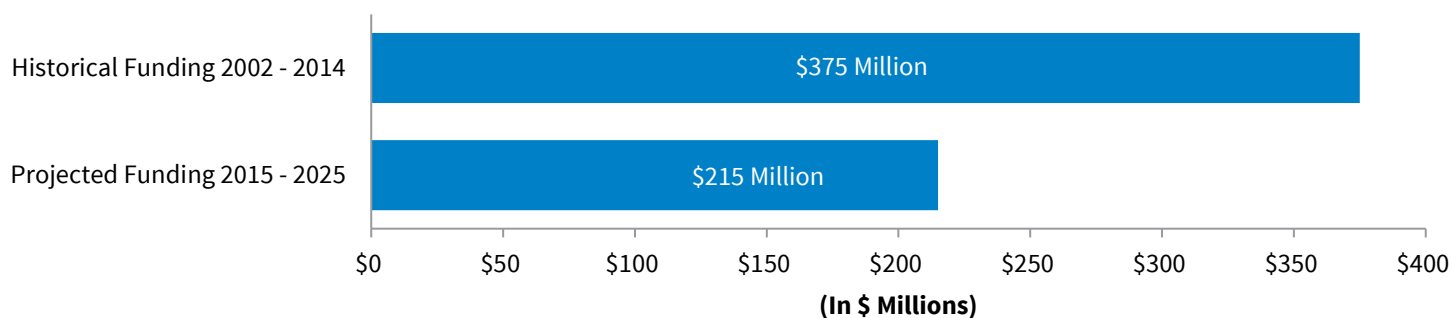
## Why is the measure important?

Despite efforts to promote mass transit and other alternatives, freeways remain the backbone of Ventura County's transportation network. The county's highways are responsible for moving hundreds of thousands of people every day, as well as most of the goods that are shipped into and out of the region.

## How are we doing?

Ventura County is in the midst of major repairs and expansions to many of its highways, including Highway 101 in the West County and Highway 23 in the east. Once those are finished, the county is likely to enter into a period of less construction and fewer improvements. According to the Ventura County Transportation Commission, spending from 2002 - 2014 was \$375 million, and spending from 2014 - 2025 will be \$215 million.

### Ventura County Highway Funding





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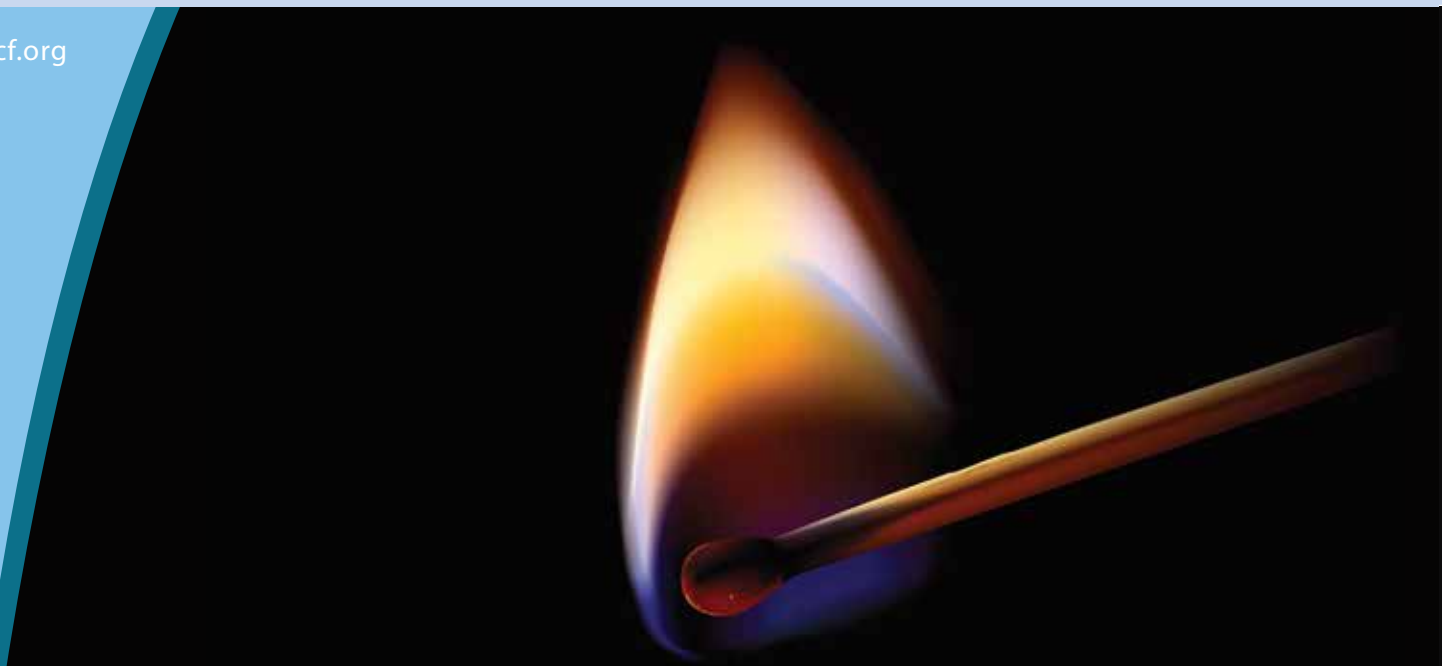
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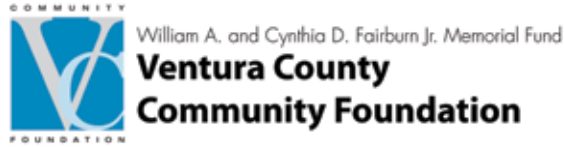
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