

# Hurricane Ike Impact Report: Liberty County



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# HURRICANE IKE IMPACT REPORT

## LIBERTY COUNTY SUMMARY

### Economic Impacts

\$53.9 million in estimated losses to the services sectors

\$277 million in estimated losses to the manufacturing sector

**Liberty County is the only county in the study area whose overall economy grew following Hurricane Ike, gaining an estimated \$169.8 million. Numbers are based on the Disaster Impact Model's accumulation of sales during the four quarters (2008 Q4 – 2009 Q3) following Hurricane Ike. Already considered the most costly storm to make landfall in Texas, Hurricane Ike's true economic impacts to the region continue to be analyzed. Liberty County's manufacturing sector was impacted the hardest experiencing an estimated \$277 million in losses.**

### Impact Report

#### *COUNTY INFORMATION*

Liberty County is a rural east Texas county located within the Houston-Sugar Land- Baytown metropolitan area and home to roughly 75,333 (2008) residents. Located roughly 60 miles northeast of Houston and 40 miles from Galveston Bay, Liberty County offers an escape from the city to hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. Bisected by the Trinity River, Liberty County supports a variety of agricultural production and is rich in natural resources including lignite, iron ore and sulfur.



### Hurricane Ike

Hurricane Ike made landfall with **Category 2** winds and **Category 4** water surges. As Ike moved up Galveston Bay the eye of the storm moved north-northeast up Liberty County's western border. The eye wall moved through the western portion of the county with sustained winds of 110 miles-per-hour, destroying homes, forest land and power lines throughout the county.



### COUNTY IMPACTS

#### Federal Funding

**\$15,785,485.55 in Individual Assistance grants**

**\$14,317,403.15 in Housing Assistance grants**

**\$1,468,082.40 in Other Needs Assistance grants**

**\$34,611,801.73 in Public Assistance grants**

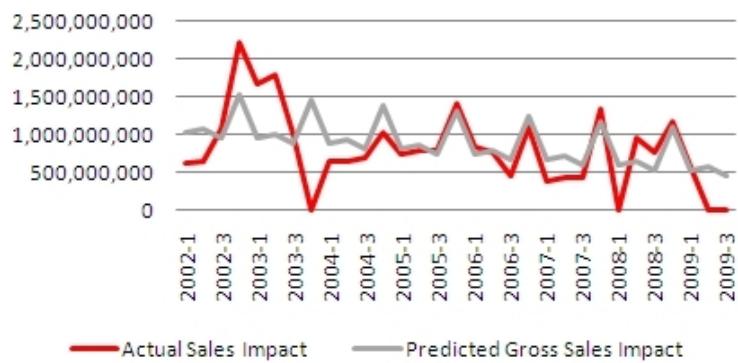
**\$7,688,800.00 in U.S. Small Business Administration loans**

According to the Disaster Impact Model, developed by Texas A&M AgriLife, Liberty County's economy for the 12-month-period following Ike was able to grow an estimated \$169.8 million over projected sales from the DIM model. However, among the 29 industry sectors evaluated in Liberty County, the manufacturing sector still suffered \$227 million in losses.

The winds from Hurricane Ike caused the most damage to Liberty County. The strong southern winds from Ike destroyed property, forests and made several roads impassable until cleared by tractors and/or saws. The storm knocked out every single resident's electricity in the county due to downed power lines and blown transformers.

Of the 234,000 acres of timberlands damaged by Hurricane Ike, nearly 30%, or 68,300 acres, were located in Liberty County. Residents of Liberty were unable to proceed with the recovery process until proper equipment could be used to safely remove these large trees from roofs, power lines, and roadways.

### Liberty County Economy-wide Ike Impact



Debris was also a major problem following the storm, with the cost of debris removal for Liberty alone exceeding \$26.8 million.

After Hurricane Ike (2008 4Q – 2009 3Q) Liberty County experienced on average a 6% per quarter gain in gross sales during the four quarters following the storm. Totaling an estimated \$147.8 million gain to Liberty County. Total gains to the county are estimated at \$147.8 million.