

YAKIMA COUNTY PROFILE

Population	Education	Community
Economy	Government	Transportation
Labor	Housing	Culture

Location

Yakima County is located in South Central Washington State. It is bounded to the north by Kittitas County, to the south by Klickitat County, on the west by Thurston, Lewis and Skamania Counties and the east by Benton and Grant Counties. The geography varies from densely timbered, mountainous terrain at the crest of the Cascade Mountain Range in the west to rolling foothills, broad valleys, and arid sagebrush covered regions to the east to fertile valleys in the central and southern parts of the County that has made agriculture the staple of the economy over the last 100 years. The highest point in the county is Mount Adams at 12,277 feet (3,742 meters) above sea level. The city of Yakima sits at 1,068 feet.



Yakima County is 4,296 square miles, or approximately 2.75 million acres, making it the second largest county in Washington. Three entities own over 1.7 million of the total acres of Yakima County. The city of Yakima, the tenth largest city in the state, contains over 35% of the population (84,074). 90% of the state's population is within a 3-hour drive from Yakima.



Land Owner	Acres Owned
Yakama Nation	1,074,174
U.S. Forest Service	503,726
Military Reservation	165,787

Climate

The County derives its names from the regional Yakama Indian tribes. There are several theories on the meaning of "Yakima," including a native legend about a Chief's daughter from Moxee who fled from her home after breaking tribal rules. The word Yakima in this legend means "runaway." Others believe "runaway" refers to the rivers that surround the valley. Yakima has also been interpreted to mean "well-fed people."

Yakima has four distinct seasons. Sunshine is the norm in Yakima County, and nearly of 300 days per year. Average precipitation is 8 inches a year, of which 24 inches occurs as snowfall in the months of November, December, and January. The average temperature in the winter is 37°, spring 63°, summer 88°, and fall 64°. This perfect weather makes Yakima a leader in agricultural products, wine growing, outdoor recreation & tourism.

Demographics

Yakima is the largest city in the county. In addition to its permanent resident base, the county has a large seasonal population related to the agricultural industry. This temporary population has been estimated at up to 50,000 during peak activity.

Area Population	2000	2007	2009
County	222,581	234,200	238,400
Unincorporated	93,216	85,456	89,130
Incorporated	129,365	148,744	149,270
Grandview	8,377	9,150	9,405
Granger	2,530	2,955	3,065
Harrah	542	631	595
Mabton	1,891	2,080	2,100
Moxee	821	2,065	2,525
Naches	643	805	765
Selah	6,310	6,935	7,185
Sunnyside	13,905	15,130	15,340
Tieton	1,154	1,200	1,195
Toppenish	8,946	9,105	9,090
Union Gap	5,621	5,700	5,830
Wapato	4,582	4,590	4,555
Yakima	71,845	82,940	84,850
Zillah	2,198	2,660	2,770

Total County Population by Age

Age	2009	Estimate 2010
0-19	77,679	77,023
20-24	17,283	13,962
25-54	88,465	92,795
55-64	26,243	27,213
65+	27,733	28,443
Total	234,400	239,436

The median age in 2009 was 32.66, with median age of men being 31.46, women 33.96.

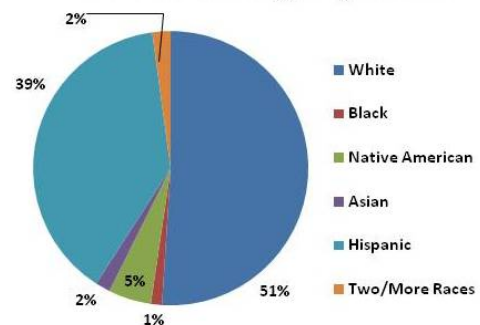
Classification	2008
Speaking English only	135,630
Speaking language other than English	75,851
Speaking Spanish at home	71,905
Other languages	3,048
Asian and Pacific Islander	1,484
Speaking Indo-European	1,564

Income	
2007 Median Household Income	\$43,639
2007 Per Capita Income	\$27,965
2008 Annual Covered Wage	\$30,829

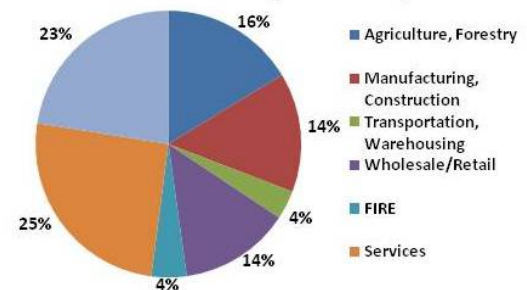
Ethnicity

Classification	2007
White	176,282
Black	3,102
Native American	12,003
Asian/Pacific Island	4,150
Two or More Races	5,118
White persons, not Hispanic – included in above totals	121,437
Hispanic Population included in above totals	92,232
Total	231,800

2007 Demographics



2007 Income by Occupation



Sources of Personal Income - 2008 (000's)

Total Personal Income	\$6,805,122
Net Earnings	\$4,206,631
Personal Current Transfers	\$1,596,854
Investment, Dividends, Rent	\$1,001,637
Income Maintenance	\$ 174,696
Unemployment Insurance	\$ 40,217
Retirement/Transfer Pmts	\$1,596,854
Non-Farm Proprietors Income	\$ 375,173
Farm Proprietors Income	\$ 191,539
Earnings by place of work	\$4,763,405
Wages/Salaries	\$2,991,268
Other Labor	\$ 669,684
Proprietors	\$ 487,282

Structure of Economy

Agriculture

In 2007 Yakima County had 558,000 irrigated acres of private land used for agriculture. As the state's leading agricultural county (\$850 million per year), Yakima has a large and highly varied farm base, complemented by diverse non-agricultural interests. The 2007 Census of Agriculture ranked Yakima County as the Washington State's number one producer of apples, hops, corn, spearmint, peppermint and grapes and one of the top producers of sweet cherries. Farmers in the Yakima Valley harvest 40 million pounds of hops annually – **20% of the world's supply**. Yakima's wine industry has gained national awareness, producing blue ribbon varieties of Riesling, Merlot, and Syrah wines. Yakima produces 29% of the **nation's** cherries, 42% of the **nation's** pears, and 38% of the **nation's** concord grapes. Yakima County has the largest inventory of bee colonies, cattle and sheep of any county in the state. Washington ranked first in the **nation** for milk production per cow

Non-Agricultural Industries

During 2006, on an annual average basis, the Yakima County economy experienced the fastest non-agricultural job growth rates they have had in the last five years, adding 2,700 new jobs for a robust annual average job growth rate of 3.3 percent

Wholesale/Retail Trade

Trade comprises 22 percent of the non-farm employment, or 13,000 jobs. Yakima County has a high concentration in wholesale trade (i.e. fresh fruit packing houses) reflecting warehousing of food products. They added 700 jobs in 2006; retail sales for the county were over 2.6 billion.

Construction, Mining, Forestry

Construction accounts for the vast majority of jobs in this category. Residential and commercial real estate sales increased 1.2% in 2006, allowing the construction industry to add 400 new jobs.

Services

The Services industry is the largest employment group in Yakima County employing about 66,500. Health care comprises 19% of this growing industry, reflecting Yakima's importance as a regional medical center.

Government

Over 21% of the county's non-farm work force is in government. Of the three levels of government (federal, state and local) the largest numbers of employees are in the local level, specifically in the elementary and secondary school system. The Yakima Training Center, located seven miles north of Yakima, is the Army's premier maneuver training area in the Northwest and has 325 permanent military/civilian personnel.

Manufacturing

Closely tied with Washington's agricultural tradition is value added manufacturing processes with specific focus on food processing. These activities include milling, blending, packaging, canning, freezing, processing, manufacturing, and refining end products for industrial, business and consumer production. Food processing represents about 40 percent of the manufacturing sector. It's more than 250 firms employ nearly 10,000 workers, and, in 2006, the gross sales for Yakima's food processors exceeded \$1.4 billion. A significant share of manufacturing employment stems from the agricultural sector but lumber & wood products, non-electrical machinery, paper and allied products, transportation equipment, metals, plastics, and fabricated metal products all have a significant impact. Bio-fuel is an emergent industry with a bright future in Yakima County, and includes bio-diesel, bio-gas and ethanol products.

Top 16 Employers - 2009

Company	FTEs
Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital	2200
Yakima School District, No. 7	1731
Walmart-Yakima/Sunnyside/Distribution	1700
Yakima County	1224
Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic	1181
Yakima Regional Medical Center	942
AB Foods/WA Beef	850
City of Yakima	753
Legends Casino	643
Yakima Training Center	550
Tree Top	540
West Valley School District #208	490
Shields Bag & Printing	476
Yakima Valley Community College	467
WA State DOT	361
Selah School District	344

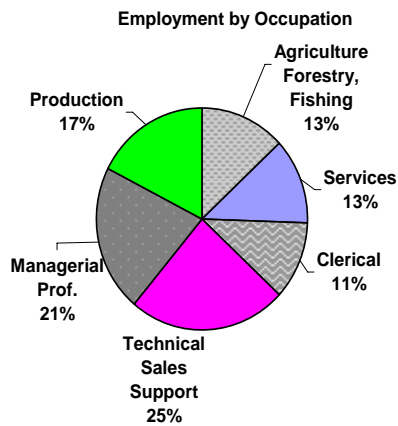
2008-# Firms, Employees & Covered Wages Paid (000)

Ag, Forestry & Fishing	1,206	23,589	\$509,284
Mining/Construction	653	3,707	133,233
Manufacturing	235	8,446	317,775
Transportation, Warehousing, Utility	209	2,963	108,982
Trade (Wholesale/ Retail)	901	13,745	419,943
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Information	423	3,430	133,304
Services	3,902	28,043	793,195
Government	137	17,163	700,638
Totals	7,305	95,745	\$3,116,354
	Firms	Employees	Wages

Labor Analysis

Yakima County's annual average unemployment rate has increased over the last two years from 6.1 percent to 8.5 percent. The region's total labor force in 2009 was 126,450. This represents an increase of over 10,000 workers over the past five years. Over the past three years, Yakima County's labor force has grown at a faster rate compared to Washington state or the nation as a whole. Yakima County's labor force and unemployment numbers are influenced by the region's seasonal agriculture activities. The labor force

picks up momentum in June and October when harvest activities peak. Conversely, the size and energy of the regional labor market drops off considerably during winter months when farm activities are largely dormant. The region's nonagricultural labor force was 77,058 in 2009. Recent nonagricultural employment levels have dropped in Yakima County. The national recession is the driver behind these local jobs losses, which are concentrated in the manufacturing, retail trade and construction sectors.



2009 Annual Workforce - 16 & Over

Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed
126,450	115,710	10,740
Total Firms	Unemployment Rate	Average Annual Wage
7,874	8.5%	\$30,829

Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Workers by Number of Employees

INDUSTRY	2008	2007
Total Non-farm	77,497	79,590
Total Private	60,334	62,100
Goods Producing	12,153	12,920
Natural Resources, Mining & Construction	3,707	4,100
Manufacturing	8,446	8,821
Durable Goods	5,034	5,300
Non-Durable Goods	3,412	3,521
Service Providing	65,344	66,670
Wholesale Trade	4,205	4,250
Retail Trade	9,540	9,940
Trans. & Public Utilities	2,963	3,050
Professional/Business	4,662	4,560
Health/Social Services	12,828	12,560
Leisure/Hospitality	6,887	7,200
Services & Misc.	7,096	7,710
Government	17,163	17,400
Federal Govt.	1,286	1,310
State & Local Govt.	15,876	16,090

May 2008 Salary Information

	Entry Level	Mean Hourly	Hourly - Fully Experienced	Mean Yearly
Bookkeeping, Accounting, Auditing Clerk	\$11.25 hr	\$16.24	\$22.37	\$33,780
First-Line Manager/Supervisor - Production	\$15.37 hr	\$23.67	\$34.17	\$53,310
Sales Reps, Wholesale & Manufacturing	\$15.37 hr	\$23.67	\$34.28	\$49,240
Purchasing Agents - Wholesale, Retail	\$16.98 hr	\$23.68	\$29.89	\$49,250
Human Resource Manager	\$17.45 hr	\$24.24	\$32.34	\$50,430
Office Clerks, General	\$9.13 hr	\$12.99	\$17.51	\$27,010
Machinist	\$12.12 hr	\$19.11	\$26.60	\$39,740
Structural Metal Fabricators & Fitters	\$11.56 hr	\$17.06	\$21.47	\$35,490
Assembly & Fabricators	\$8.49 hr	\$10.48	\$12.49	\$21,810
Laborers of Freight/Material Movers	\$8.46 hr	\$11.17	\$16.45	\$23,240
Helpers - Production Workers	\$8.47 hr	\$10.77	\$14.60	\$22,390
Truck Driver, Heavy or Tractor Trailer	\$11.64 hr	\$18.55	\$24.44	\$38,580

Education

Yakima County offers a complete range of educational resources. Options range from a private technical college and to major universities. Parents can choose from a wide variety of public and private educational settings for their children.

Primary & Secondary Education

Public School Districts	Enrollment (2008-2009)
East Valley	2,784
Grandview	3,467
Granger	1,466
Highland	1,141
Mabton	933
Mt. Adams	951
Naches Valley	1,509
Selah	3,367
Sunnyside	5,948
Toppenish	3,604
Union Gap (K-8)	613
Wapato	3,376
West Valley	4,940
Yakima	14,804
Zillah	1,346
Total	50,249

Private schools	Enrollment (2008-2009)
Achieve Online	600
East Valley	485
Grandview	35
Mt. Adams	38
Naches	25
Selah	75
Sunnyside	319
Toppenish	114
West Valley	282
Yakima	898
Zillah	70
Total	2,941

Number of Public Districts	15
Total Number of Teachers	2,870
Total Operating Revenue	\$491,702,920

Education Levels of Population

Persons 25 years and older 2007

Years of school completed	Percentage
Less than 9th grade	16.5%
4 or more years of high school	62.1%
4 or more years of college	15.7%

Higher Education

Over 20,000 students are enrolled in higher education in area colleges and vocational-technical schools. The largest school in the region is Central Washington University, located within commuting distance in nearby Ellensburg.

Institute	Enrollment 2008-2009
Central Washington University	9,880
Yakima Valley Community College	12,500
Heritage University	1,100
WSU Learning Center	157
Perry Technical Institute	852
Pacific Northwest University	150

Central Washington University

CWU is a branch of the state of Washington's higher education system. It is a four-yr university offering undergraduate degrees in arts and sciences, business, professional education, technical fields, and graduate degrees at the master's level in arts and sciences and professional education.

Yakima Valley Community College

YVCC is a public two-year institution offering 58 programs of study. It provides lower division college arts and sciences, university transfer, and vocational & technical education. They feature a well respected two year nursing program while also allowing the student to earn their Bachelor's in nursing through work-based internships and clock hours.

Washington State University Learning Center

is a Higher Education Center offering four-year and postgraduate degrees in partnership with Central Washington University and Washington State University.

Heritage University

Heritage is a private four-year institution whose major fields of concentration are teacher education, business administration and social sciences.

Perry Technical Institute

Perry Tech is a privately endowed, non-profit institute that offers a nationally recognized vocational/technical program. In cooperation with Central Washington University, it offers extension programs in engineering, robotics, and other technology.

Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences

Opened in 2007 PNWU is the Pacific Northwest's first Osteopathic Medical University focusing on the education of primary care physicians for practicing in rural and underserved communities. They also offer the courses from the College of Allied Health Studies and College of Post Graduate Studies.

Government

Yakima County has a County Commission with three elected commissioners. The city of Yakima has a City Manager, a seven-member City Council and serves as the county seat. There are 15 incorporated towns within the county that are governed by town councils. Yakima County maintains 1,737 miles of roads, a large majority of which are oiled or gravel. There are 12 County Fire Districts that operate outside the Valley's major towns or cities. Over 600 paid and volunteer firemen help run these rural fire stations. Yakima County maintains a jail facility with an average monthly inmate population of over 600.

Yakima County Building Permits

Year	# Permits Issued	\$Value-Millions
2009	431	\$ 99.4

Retail Sales-City and County

Year	City of Yakima	Countywide
2008	\$ 1,539,739,751	\$ 2,954,364,053
2007	\$ 1,513,415,249	\$ 2,822,368,733
2006	\$ 1,427,555,564	\$ 2,653,521,999
2005	\$ 1,350,618,320	\$ 2,503,737,175
2004	\$ 1,307,845,725	\$ 2,411,255,348
2003	\$ 1,246,026,000	\$ 2,294,202,000

State and Local Tax Structure

Washington State uses sales and use taxes, business and occupation (B&O) taxes, gas taxes and property taxes to generate a predominate share of overall state revenue. The state's tax structure is relatively stable when tracked against changes in personal income. Washington State has no corporate income, unitary, or inventory tax. There is also no tax on interest, dividends, or capital gains. The business and occupation tax is based on gross receipts generated within the state. Local governments work within the state tax collection system. A portion of local property taxes and sales taxes is also retained by Yakima County. Total Assessed Value of all Taxable Property in 2009 = \$14,532,869,569. Total Property Tax Collected 2009 = \$161,749,952

Average Property/ Tax Levy Rates \$/000

Year	2008	2009	2010
Levy Rate	11.32	11.13	11.58

Tax Rates 2009

Washington State Sales Tax	6.5 %
Yakima City Local Tax	1.7 %
Other City Local Tax Rates	1.4 %
Real Estate Tax	.0025 %

Yakima County General Fund - Revenues & Expenditures

Revenue By Source	2009
Taxes	\$ 56,787,799
Licenses & Permits	320,959
Intergovernmental	53,815,505
Charges for Services	27,151,698
Fines & Forfeits	2,261,375
Interest Earnings	2,918,670
Special Assessments	278,105
Other Revenue	10,667,373
Utilities	7,419,611
Building & Fire Safety	1,774,190
Total Revenue	\$163,395,285

Expenditures by Function	2009
General Government	\$ 17,932,077
Judicial	11,494,025
Public Safety	49,056,928
Physical Environment	2,170,344
Transportation	12,850,478
Economic Environment	4,889,971
Health & Human Services	21,336,670
Culture & Recreation	2,219,837
Debt Service	10,228,980
Capital Outlays	17,353,478
Utilities	8,764,863
Building & Fire Safety	2,410,418
Total Expenditures	\$160,708,069

Housing – Yakima County

2009 Countywide Residential Sales

Residential Sales	2,146
Average Price	\$164,112

2009 Average Sale Price by Category

Residential	\$164,112
Multi-Family	\$179,266
Commercial	\$375,000
Agriculture	\$115,288

Cost of 2,400 sq. ft. Single Family Home

Area	Cost	Area	Cost
Yakima	\$260,779	Spokane	\$246,013
Tri-Cities	\$243,619	Seattle	\$433,281
Tacoma	\$353,318	Bellevue	\$510,019



Housing Availability – December 2009

Description	#	Avg List price
5 Bedrooms	73	\$413,388
4 Bedrooms	212	\$296,055
3 bedrooms	477	\$217,742
1-2 bedrooms – all areas	142	\$118,815
Condo/Townhouse	46	\$194,746
All homes on the market	904	\$236,367
Manufactured Home, with land	80	\$153,302

Rental Information - 2009

Description	Average Cost (Yakima)
Home (s)	
One Bedroom	\$450 - \$600
Two Bedroom	\$550 - \$850
Three Bedroom	\$750 - \$1300
Duplexes	
One Bedroom	\$525 - \$675
Two Bedroom	\$625 - \$850
Three Bedroom	\$950 - \$1200
Apartments	
Studio	\$350 - \$600
One Bedroom	\$450 - \$550
Two Bedroom	\$500 - \$745
Three Bedroom	\$750 - \$1,150

ACCRA Cost of Living Index - Selected Cities – 3rd Quarter, 2009

Weight	Cost	Yakima WA	Seattle WA	Portland OR	Spokane WA	Tri-Cities WA
100%	Composite Index	96.9	121.7	113.6	93.8	92.1
13%	Grocery Items	100.9	118.2	113.3	91.5	90.0
29%	Housing	85.3	147.4	129.3	85.0	84.6
10%	Utilities	89.0	85.9	92.8	83.0	82.8
12%	Transportation	108.5	114.5	109.0	106.9	111.5
4%	Health Care	121.9	122.8	108.0	106.9	109.5
32%	Misc. Goods & Services	100.9	113.6	108.5	99.6	93.4

Banking/Financing

Yakima County has 167 banks and financial institutions. This includes nine commercial banks with 44 branches, one savings and loan with four branches, one savings bank with six branches and eight credit unions with 15 branches. Combined total deposits are \$2+ billion. The local business community has access to comprehensive financial services including assistance with international business transactions.

Several non-traditional finance programs are available to businesses and entrepreneurs. Micro-loans from \$1000-\$25,000 are available to emerging businesses that complete a certified training program. Other loan programs such as Small Business Administration [SBA], State Development Loan Fund, Industrial Revenue Bonds and others offer financing ranging from \$10,000-\$10,000,000. Most of these programs operate in conjunction with a commercial banking institution and the borrower will usually have to obtain credit approval from a bank to access these programs.

Community Facilities

Health Care

Yakima County, the region's medical center, has five hospitals and a number of clinics. The largest two hospitals, *Yakima Regional Medical and Cardiac Center and Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital*, are located in the city of Yakima. Yakima Regional, with a hospital in *Toppenish*, was named among the top 100 cardiovascular hospitals in the nation. *Sunnyside Community Hospital* serves the Lower Valley and is a critical access hospital with a 24 hour emergency room, 4 bed Intensive Care Unit, Medical Surgical Floor, Family Birth Center, Operating Rooms, Laboratory and Diagnostic Imaging (X-Ray, CT Scan, Mobile MRI, Ultrasound, Nuclear Medicine, Bone Density Scan). *Children's Village* is a comprehensive medical facility designed for children with disabilities and special health needs. *North Star Lodge* provides total care outpatient cancer treatment. The *Yakima Regional Cancer Care Center* was opened in 2000 to provide a one-stop location for a wide range of out-patient cancer services. Approximately 275 physicians from 36 medical specialties support these hospitals, providing surgical, general medical, neurosurgery, oncology, coronary care, intensive care, pediatric services and maternity.

Worship

There are over 250 churches in Yakima County. The variety includes divisions of Christianity, Jewish, Buddhist, Latter Day Saints, and other non-denominational practices.

Media

Newspapers

Publication	Frequency	Circulation
Yakima Herald Rep.	daily	43,000
Daily-Sun News	daily	4,000
VIVA	weekly	9,000
Toppenish Review	weekly	6,400
Grandview Herald	weekly	2,500
Wapato Independ't	weekly	2,000
Selah Independent	weekly	1,800
Yakima Bus Journal	monthly	6,000
Yakima Bus Times	monthly	6,000
Valley Press	weekly	22,000
Centr'l Wa S. Times	weekly	19,000

Television Stations

Station	Affil.	L-Local C-Cable
KIMA	CBS	L29/C6
KNDO	NBC	L23/C4
KAPP	ABC	L35/C2
KYVE	PBS	L47/C8
KCYU	FOX	L68/C3
UNIVISION		L2.1/C18

Radio Stations

Station	Frequency	Category
KYXE	AM1020	Spanish
KJOX	AM1390	ESPN/Sports
KUTI	AM1460	Country
KIT	AM1280	News/Talk
KATS	FM94.5	Rock
KXDD	FM104.1	Country
KDBL	FM92.9	Country
KFFM	FM107.3	Contemporary
KYPL	FM91.1	Christian
KYAK	AM930	Christian
KRSE	FM105.7	Soft Rock
KENE	AM1490	Spanish
KARY	FM100.9	Oldies
KDNA	FM91.9	Spanish
KZTA	FM96.9	Spanish
KHHK	FM99.7	Hot Rock
KBBO	AM980	Talk Radio

Transportation

Major Highways

Interstate 82 runs through the heart of Yakima County. The modern freeway links with Interstate 90 at Ellensburg, just 30 miles north of Yakima and Interstate 84 to the south. I-90 connects Seattle with New York City. Major highways include US Routes 12 and 97, and State Routes 22, 24, 241 and 410.

Local Transit

Yakima Transit buses connect Yakima, Selah, and Union Gap with all downtown services. Buses run every 20 minutes.

Airport

General aviation service is available at Yakima Air Terminal, Sunnyside Airport, and Buena Field. Yakima has a 7,603 and a 4,239 foot asphalt runway. Sunnyside has a 3,500 foot asphalt runway, while the Buena runway has 2,600 feet of turf. Yakima is served by Horizon Air with three flights daily to Seattle. There are two full service fixed base operators on the airfield. Airfreight service is available from Federal Express and UPS.

Motor Freight Carriers

Within Yakima County there are 10 trucking firms for heavy hauling, one for liquid or dry bulk, two for local cartage, and 38 for motor freight.

Railroads

Rail shipment to and from Yakima County is available via Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Central Washington railroad lines with 292 active spurs throughout the county.

Ports

Puget Sound is three hours from Yakima County and provides major international ports on the Pacific Ocean. Inland ports are available within two hours on the Columbia River.

Bus Service

Greyhound Bus Lines serve daily routes from Grandview, Sunnyside, Granger, Toppenish, Wapato, and Yakima to Seattle, Pasco, and Portland.

Utilities

Electric

Hydroelectric dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers provide Washington State with the lowest rates in the nation. Yakima County is served by two electric utilities, Pacific Power, an investor-owned utility, and the Benton County Rural Electric Association.

Natural Gas

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation distributes natural gas throughout Yakima County with service available for all types of installations. An ample supply of natural gas from U.S. and Canadian sources is expected to meet all anticipated future demand.

Solid Waste Disposal

Solid waste collection service is available throughout the county either by municipal systems or private companies. There are three solid waste landfills and two transfer station within Yakima County. The area has recycling centers for a number of items.

Water

There are 16 municipal/public water systems in the county. Through interagency agreements, they are able to meet water demands in a more efficient manner.

Wastewater

Each city operates its own wastewater collection system. The Port of Sunnyside operates a system dedicated to the treatment of industrial waste. The regional treatment plant operated by the city of Yakima has a delegated industrial pretreatment monitoring program in place.

Telecommunications

Advanced telecommunication services are available in Yakima County. Competition between local providers has helped improve telecommunications infrastructure dramatically. Extensive fiber optic cables are in place in most of the major communities in the region, including Yakima. These systems are supported by four different state-of-the-art digital switches. Multimillion dollar investments allow businesses to tap into broadband services that are increasingly in today's digital economy. US West, GTE Northwest, Cowiche Telephone, CenturyLink, United Telephone, and Fairpoint Communications serve Yakima County. Cellular companies serving Yakima County are: AT&T, U.S.Cellular, Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile.

Culture/Recreation

Yakima County offers an almost limitless variety of recreational opportunities. Twelve ski resorts within a few hours drive offer excellent downhill and cross-country skiing. 71 lakes, 14 rivers and numerous streams offer stream and lake fishing, white water rafting, boating, swimming, windsurfing and water skiing. Upland bird and big game hunting, backpacking, hiking, bicycling are all available in season. Golfing (three private and six public courses) challenges even the master golfer. At the Apple Tree Golf Course water hazards come into play on twelve holes. The signature hole is #17, a 180-yard, par 3, requiring a tee shot over water to an apple-shaped island green. "Golf Digest" has rated this as one of the top ten "Best in State" courses. Tennis, baseball and softball are avidly pursued sports. Park and Recreation departments offer varied year round programs for both children and adults.

Entertainment events include the annual Central Washington State Fair, Wild West Parades & Rodeos, auto racing, art fairs, and colorful community celebrations and festivals. Yakima is the home to several semi-professional sports teams: The Yakima Bears (baseball - 2000 NWL Champions), the Yakima Reds (soccer - 2000 Western Conference Champions and 2003 Northwest Division Champions), the Yakima Valley Warriors (indoor football, American Indoor

Football Association affiliate), and the Yakima Mavericks (outdoor football, Evergreen Football League). NASCAR sanctioned stock car racing and drag racing can be experienced at the Yakima Speedway or Renegade Raceway.

Touring professional and local performing arts are regularly presented at the beautifully restored Capitol Theatre in Yakima where the Yakima Symphony Orchestra and Chorus perform and Broadway style shows are featured, The Seasons Performance

Hall, a 100-year old church transformed into a performing arts venue, and an active community

theatre group performs at the Warehouse Theatre.



There are 63 historic and culturally significant sites within Yakima County. Art galleries, Libraries, Yakima Valley Museum, Yakama Indian Nation Cultural Center and the Legends Casino, Agricultural Museums, McAllister Museum of Aviation, Fort Simcoe State Park, and the Historical Toppenish Murals preserve our history and enrich our culture in Yakima County.

Hotel & Convention Facilities

There are over 2,900 hotel and motel rooms available in the Yakima County. Additional facilities are available in several of the smaller communities and in more rural, secluded settings. The Yakima Convention Center offers 41,000 square feet of meeting space, free parking, on site caterers, an all-inclusive bid process that offers booking incentives, and a full range of support services.

For additional information on Yakima County contact:

Yakima County Development Association

(509) 575-1140

www.ycda.com

Economic development, sites and buildings, housing, workforce

Yakima County

1-800-572-7354

<http://www.yakimacounty.us/>

Public works, permitting, planning

Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce

(509) 248-2021

www.yakima.org

Business assistance and newcomer information

City of Yakima

(509) 575-6000

www.ci.yakima.wa.us

Public works, permitting, community development

Yakima Valley Visitors and Convention Bureau

1-800-221-0751

www.visityakima.com

Tourism and convention center information