

Located in the heart of the Gila Valley, Thatcher is the geographic center of a growing and vibrant economic region. Within the town limits sits the tree-lined campus of Eastern Arizona College (EAC). Founded in 1888, Eastern Arizona College has a distinguished history as Arizona's oldest community college. Additionally, the regional 18-hole golf course can be found within the municipal limits. Combining geographic location and transportation access, Thatcher boasts some of the region's prime retail locations. Sales for the regional market exceed \$840 million annually and growing. The town of Thatcher is a regional economic hub and is emerging as an upscale community within the Gila Valley.

Principal Economic Activities

Agriculture, once a mainstay of the Thatcher economy, is being eclipsed by higher education and the retail sector as the community's economic drivers. Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold Inc. operates two major facilities in the region, Safford and Morenci, contributing more than \$435 million annually to the regional economy. Freeport's Safford open-pit copper mining complex, located less than 12 miles from the Thatcher Town Hall, is a zero-discharge facility, and one of the most environmentally advanced copper mines ever built. With its hub location, Thatcher is seeing retail trade and the service sector emerging as major players in its economic outlook. Former agricultural lands are now being converted to residential and retail uses.

Scenic Attractions

Coronado National Forest provides many recreational opportunities. Southwest of the town are the Pinaleno Mountains and the 10,720 foot Mount Graham. Swift Trail provides a route to the summit featuring picnic and camping sites. At alpine elevations above Thatcher lies Riggs Lake, an excellent camping and fishing destination. Scenic U.S. 70 connects Thatcher with recreation areas at San Carlos Lake and Coolidge Dam. To the west are Klondyke and Aravaipa Canyon, a designated primitive area. To the south, Roper Lake State Park features natural mineral water hot springs along with developed camping sites and excellent fishing. Other recreational opportunities include Hot Wells Dunes, Gila Box Riparian National Conservation Area and Black Hills Back Country Byway. Thatcher is on the famous "Salsa Trail."

Community Facilities

A variety of recreational facilities are available in Thatcher ranging from tree-filled parks and ball diamonds to the regional municipal golf course. Residents also enjoy the comprehensive facilities of Eastern Arizona College with its gymnasium, wellness center, conference facilities and swimming pool. In addition to its academic and vocational courses, EAC offers a wealth of diverse cultural events from concerts to a summer arts program. Bachelor's and master's degree programs are offered through Northern Arizona University, located on the EAC campus.



BASIC INFORMATION

Founded:	1888	Incorporated:	1899
Elevation:	2,929 ft.	Location:	Graham County
Distance to major cities:			
Phoenix:	160 miles	San Diego:	538 miles
Tucson:	134 miles	Los Angeles:	534 miles
Las Vegas:	455 miles		

POPULATION

	2000	2010	2016 (est.)
Thatcher	4,022	4,872	5,174
Graham County	33,489	37,299	38,303
State of Arizona	5,130,632	6,401,569	6,835,518

Office of Economic Opportunity

PROPERTY TAX

	2000	2010	2016
Elementary / High School	5.98	1.50	7.37
City / Fire District	0.01	0.00	0.00
Graham County	4.32	4.45	6.20
Totals (Graham County)	10.31	5.95	13.57

Arizona Dept. of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation

SALES TAX / TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX

Thatcher	2.50%
Graham County	6.60%
State	5.60%

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LABOR FORCE

	2000	2010	2016
Civilian Labor Force	1,774	2,101	2,078
Unemployed	64	199	70
Unemployment Rate	3.6%	9.5%	3.4%

Office of Economic Opportunity

WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

	Count	Share
Less than high school	147	6.2%
High school or equivalent, no college	576	24.1%
Some college or Associate degree	1,052	44.1%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	611	25.6%

American Community Survey

INDUSTRY (RANKED BY EMPLOYMENT)

	Count	Share
Education, health care & social assistance	611	34.0%
Retail trade	256	14.2%
Public administration	210	11.7%
Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services	176	9.8%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, & mining	122	6.8%
Professional, scientific, & administrative services	116	6.5%
Construction	105	5.8%
Manufacturing	60	3.3%
Other services, except public administration	60	3.3%
Transportation, warehousing, & utilities	43	2.4%
Finance, insurance & real estate	34	1.9%
Wholesale trade	5	0.3%
Information	0	0.0%

American Community Survey

This profile was prepared by the Arizona Commerce Authority in cooperation with local sources. For further information, please contact:

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