

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

Distance to major cities:

Phoenix:	160 miles
Tucson:	134 miles
Las Vegas:	455 miles
San Diego:	538 miles
Los Angeles:	534 miles

POPULATION

	2000	2010	2023 (est.)
Thatcher	4,022	4,872	5,332

Office of Economic Opportunity

SALES TAX / TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX

Thatcher	2.50%
Graham	1.00%
State	5.60%

Arizona Dept. of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation

LABOR FORCE

	2000	2010	2022
Civilian Labor Force	1,774	2,101	2,213
Unemployed	64	199	79
Unemployment Rate	3.6%	9.5%	3.6%

Office of Economic Opportunity

WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

	Count	Share
Less than high school	311	11.4%
High school or equivalent, no college	697	25.6%
Some college or Associate degree	1,037	38.1%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	680	25.0%

American Community Survey

INDUSTRY (RANKED BY EMPLOYMENT)

	Count	Share
Education, health care & social assistance	505	26.6%
Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services	348	18.3%
Retail trade	281	14.8%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, & mining	242	12.7%
Public administration	113	6.0%
Transportation, warehousing, & utilities	87	4.6%
Professional, scientific, & administrative services	82	4.3%
Construction	62	3.3%
Manufacturing	56	2.9%
Finance, insurance & real estate	43	2.3%
Information	36	1.9%
Other services, except public administration	33	1.7%
Wholesale trade	11	0.6%

American Community Survey

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

Thatcher Economic Development

Heath Brown
P.O. Box 670
Thatcher, AZ 85552
Phone: 9284282290
Email: hbrown@thatcher.az.gov
Website: www.thatcher.az.gov

Graham County Chamber of Commerce

1111 Thatcher Blvd.
Safford, AZ 85546
Phone:
Email: Admin@grahamchamber.org
Website: <https://grahamchamber.org/>