

RICE COUNTY



Rice County

Rice County is a vibrant region that spans almost 500 square miles in central Minnesota, just south of Minneapolis and St. Paul. That wide stretch is home to a number of historic towns that have retained their sense of tradition. Along with that pride in its rich history, Rice County actively embraces the future by attracting and retaining businesses and jobs in the high tech, health care, education, and “green” industries.

Among the key features and selling points of the County, this includes Faribault, Northfield, Dundas, Morristown, Nerstrand and Lonsdale are:

- **Proximity to the Twin Cities and Surrounding States** – Rice County and its communities are within 30 minutes of the Twin Cities and the airport via Interstate 35, a major north-south connector. There are also several regional highways leading to Iowa, Wisconsin and Illinois. This access is beneficial to companies seeking a diverse and plentiful labor supply and a robust and efficient distribution network for goods made in and/or distributed from the area.
- **Workforce** – The County draws from a widely diverse and educated labor pool that spans a multi-county area. This allows businesses to move to Rice County or expand their operations knowing that they easily can fill varied and important positions.
- **Business Environment** – The County has a pro-business culture that seeks and embraces partnership opportunities to meet the needs of companies looking to grow.
- **Taxes** – Residential and commercial property taxes are among the lowest in the state. This provides a strong competitive edge and helps facilitate development and attract business and families.
- **Land** – There is an ample supply of land ready for development, offering businesses many choices to suit their needs for office, industrial, distribution, light and heavy manufacturing, and retail development.

Among the progressive companies that call Rice County home include SageGlass, an innovative “green” glass manufacturer; Faribault Foods, a producer of shelf-stable foods and beverages; Post Consumer Brands, a food supplier; Met-Con, a construction company; and McLane Minnesota, a grocery wholesale distributor.

Education and Training

Rice County combines a strong business climate with solid educational opportunities. Two premiere liberal arts colleges, St. Olaf and Carleton, are located in Northfield.

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Those seeking specialized business training can turn to South Central College, a community and technical college located in Faribault. The college's Center for Business and Industry serves more than 15,000 people a year, preparing them for a variety of jobs in general business, non-profit and government agencies. Also, a Minnesota Workforce Center is located in Rice County.

Workforce

- A business taking up residence in Rice County gains access to workers within the county's boundaries, as well as surrounding area (such as highly skilled workers in Southern Minneapolis-St. Paul).
- 90% of Rice County residents commute 45 minutes or less.
- Rice County's "effective" labor market offers companies a diverse set of worker skills and abilities.
- Rice County's healthy population and labor force is expected to grow at a faster pace than other surrounding areas, which should help small to medium sized, growth-minded businesses find and recruit the workers they need to maintain and/or expand their operations in the future.
- Rice County's workforce offers the opportunity to accommodate a new breed of local businesses, those with similar but different workforce needs to current, local employers.

Population:

2010 Census: 64,142

2018 Population Estimate – 66,489

Cost of Doing Business

Rice County serves as the clearinghouse of information, as a technical resource for programs and regulations, and provides technical assistance on specific economic development activities. Rice County has established a network of public and private partners that cooperate to work towards the goal of improving the County's tax base and creating quality jobs. The County provides a breadth of economic development incentives, and is committed to meeting the financial and tax needs of our business partners.

Utilities

Electricity provided by Xcel Energy and Steele Waseca Cooperative Electric unless otherwise noted on individual community profile. Natural Gas provided by Xcel Energy unless otherwise noted on individual community profile. Water, Waste Water, and Solid Waste Disposal provided by each city or township.

Sites

Rice County has large tracts for industrial development, business parks, and a variety of commercial locations available for business expansion and attraction purposes. To search for property in the various communities for your business location, visit "Available Property" on the Rice County Economic Development website.

Contact Information

Rice County Economic Development
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