Orange County 2004

COMMUNITY INDICATORS

2004

The 2004 Orange County Community Indicators marks our fifth annual report where we track a range of topics important to the county's social and economic health and prosperity. A glance through the report's headlines will give you a snapshot of life in Orange County: our economy, education, health and wellbeing, safety, environment and civic involvement.

Over the past five years, Orange County has shown consistently positive trends in several areas including tourism-related spending and jobs, the percent of mothers receiving prenatal care, our crime rate, and the academic performance among Orange County schools. In contrast, several problems have persisted that will require long-term, collaborative efforts to improve such as housing and rental affordability, homelessness and child care quality and affordability.

One of the major trends in 2003 we did not track in this report is the surge in "reality programs" in the media. While reality in name only, this media phenomenon has raised interesting debates over the blurring of fact and fiction in our society. In contrast, this report is the real "reality program" for Orange County – an independent and objective assessment that tests our perceptions about our community. The challenge in the years ahead will be to sort out myth from reality as we attempt to promote continued economic prosperity and a high quality of life.

The purpose of this report is to inform discussion and inspire action, with a goal of engaging the community in activities which may influence Orange County's ongoing quality of life. I hope the 2004 Orange County Community Indicators report continues to serve as a resource as you engage in dialogue regarding Orange County's future.

Michael M. Ruane
Project Director

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New Indicator

◆ Data for at least one element of this indicator is updated every two years.

Introduction

What is a Good Indicator?

Good indicators are objective measurements that reflect how a community is doing. They reveal whether key community attributes are going up or down; forward or backward; getting better, worse, or staying the same. Effective indicators meet the following criteria:

- Reflect the fundamental factors which determine long-term regional health
- Can be easily understood and accepted by the community
- Are statistically measurable on a frequent basis
- Measure outcomes, rather than inputs

Why are Community Indicators Important?

The value of community indicators is to provide balanced measurements of the factors which contribute to sustaining community vitality and a healthy economy, including economic, social, quality of life, and environmental measurements. They also provide a picture of the county's overall social and economic health over time. The narrative for each community indicator defines why the indicator is important to the community and measures community progress.

Selection Criteria

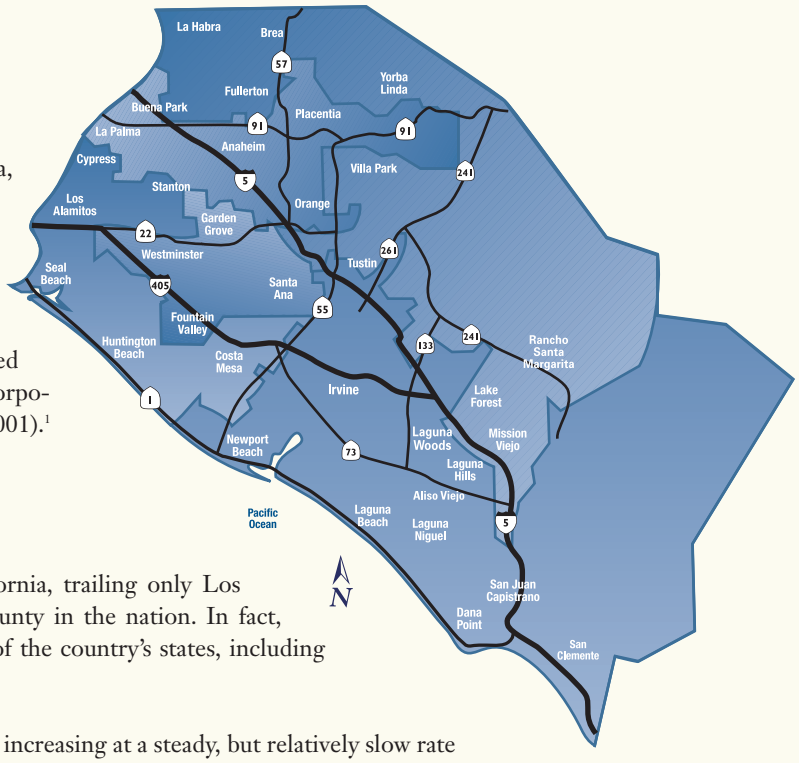
The indicators selected for inclusion in the Orange County Community Indicators report represent broad interests and trends in Orange County and are comparable to indicator efforts in similar communities throughout the nation. The indicators that were selected also meet the following specific criteria:

- Illustrate countywide interests and impacts as defined by impacting a significant percentage of the population
- Include the categories of economic development, technology, education, community health and prosperity, public safety, environment, and civic engagement
- Reflect data that is both reliable and available over the long-term

Peer Counties

To gain a better understanding of the state of the county in relation to other metropolitan areas, Orange County is compared to neighboring and/or certain peer counties or regions in many of the indicators presented in this report. Neighboring counties include: Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego Counties. Peer regions are metropolitan areas that have similar economic or demographic characteristics as Orange County and thus are considered economic competitors. They include: Atlanta, Austin, Boston, Minneapolis (or Twin Cities), Research Triangle (North Carolina), San Francisco Bay Area (or Santa Clara County or the San Jose Metropolitan Area), and Seattle.

County Profile



Orange County is located in the heart of Southern California, with Los Angeles County to the north and San Diego County to the south, and Riverside and San Bernardino Counties to the east. There are currently 34 cities within the county, several which have recently incorporated. During the 1990s the unincorporated population rose slowly to a high of about 209,000 in 1999 and then steadily dropped over the last few years to 109,000 in 2003 following the incorporations of Rancho Santa Margarita (2000) and Aliso Viejo (2001).[1]

POPULATION

Growth

Orange County is now the second largest county in California, trailing only Los Angeles and surpassing San Diego, and the fifth largest county in the nation. In fact, Orange County has a greater number of residents than 29 of the country's states, including Mississippi, Utah, Nevada, and Idaho.[2]

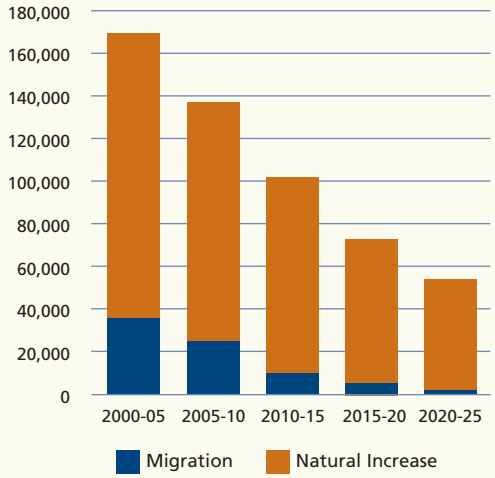
Over the past 30 years, Orange County's population has been increasing at a steady, but relatively slow rate compared with its growth in the previous 30 years. In 1950, Orange County's population numbered 216,224. By 1970, that number had increased to over 1.4 million people, growing an average of 22% per year during the 50s and 10% per year in the 60s. During the 70s, the county's population growth slowed to an annual average of 3.6%, and during the 80s it slowed even further to 2.5%. Between 1990 and 2000, the average annual rate of increase was 1.8% and from 2000 to 2003, the average annual rate of change was 1.6%.[3]

Numeric Population Growth
Top 15 Counties, 2001-2002

County (Major City)	State	Rank
Los Angeles	CA	1
Maricopa (Phoenix)	AZ	2
Riverside	CA	3
Harris (Houston)	TX	4
Clark (Las Vegas)	NV	5
San Bernardino	CA	6
Orange	**CA**	**7**
Sacramento	CA	8
San Diego	CA	9
Terrant (Fort Worth)	TX	10
Miami-Dade	FL	11
Broward (Fort Lauderdale)	FL	12
Collin (Dallas)	TX	13
Palm Beach	FL	14
Will (Joliet)	IL	15

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Components of Population Growth, 2000-2025



Source: Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton

Despite the slowing rate of growth since the 50s, Southern California remains one of the fastest growing regions in the nation in terms of numeric population growth. In 2002, Orange County's population was 2,938,507. While counties in the San Francisco Bay Area lost population, Orange County ranked 7th out of over 3,000 U.S. counties in terms of numeric population growth between 2001 and 2002, adding over 38,000 people. Orange County's slow growth rate puts it at 644th in the nation in terms of percent change between 2001 and 2002 largely due to the fact the county's base population is already so large, not because the county is no longer growing.[4] The county's steady population growth is expected to continue, with population projections in Orange County of over three million by 2005 and nearly 3.6 million by 2030.[5]

Between January 2002 and 2003, Newport Beach accounted for the largest percent population growth in Orange County, growing at a rate of 10.7%, the 6th fastest rate of growth among all California cities. This growth is primarily attributable to the annexation of Newport Coast on January 1, 2002, adding about 7,000 new residents to the city of Newport Beach. This annexation also contributed to the loss of population in unincorporated areas (a decrease of 5.7% between 2002 and 2003).[6]

Migration Versus Natural Increase

In the 1950s and 60s, there was enormous migration into the county from surrounding counties and other locations. The majority of growth came not from natural increases, but from people moving to the county. Today, the vast majority of Orange County's population growth is generated internally through natural increase (births minus deaths).[7]

Density

Orange County is one of the most densely populated areas in the United States and is second only to San Francisco for the most densely populated county in California. As of January 2001, Orange County's population density was estimated at 3,665 persons per square mile, a 2% increase in density over the course of one year.[8] It is denser than Los Angeles County, more than 2.5 times denser than Santa Clara and Sacramento Counties and five times denser than San Diego County, which has roughly the same population.[9] Within the county, densities vary by location, from a low of 492 persons per square mile in unincorporated areas to 2,733 in Los Alamitos, 3,691 in Rancho Santa Margarita, 7,095 in Huntington Beach, and 12,355 in Stanton.[10]

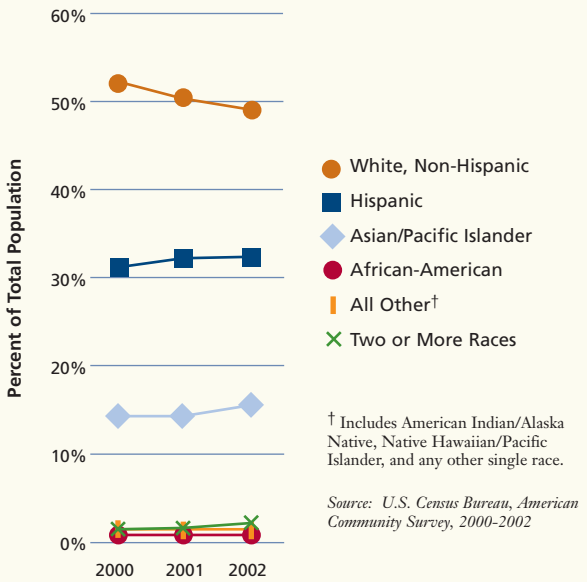
Average Household Size

In 2000, the average Orange County household had 3.0 persons living there, higher than the California average of 2.87 and the national average of 2.59. Only 14 of the 58 counties in California had higher average household sizes than Orange County. Household size varies by city. Santa Ana had the highest household size (4.55), followed by Garden Grove (3.56), Stanton (3.45), Anaheim (3.34) and Buena Park (3.32).[11] High housing prices can lead to overcrowding (when the household has more occupants than the housing unit was designed to accommodate). Overcrowding can have numerous negative consequences and is discussed in more detail in the Family Wellbeing indicator.

Ethnicity and Age

The latest data suggest the trend toward greater ethnic diversity continues. Orange County is now a "minority majority" county where no single racial or ethnic group comprises more than 50% of the total population. Whites comprised 49.5% of the total county population in 2002, down from 51.3% in 2000. Hispanics comprised 32.1%, up slightly from 30.9% two years previous. Asians rose from 13.7% to 14.5% over this same period.[12]

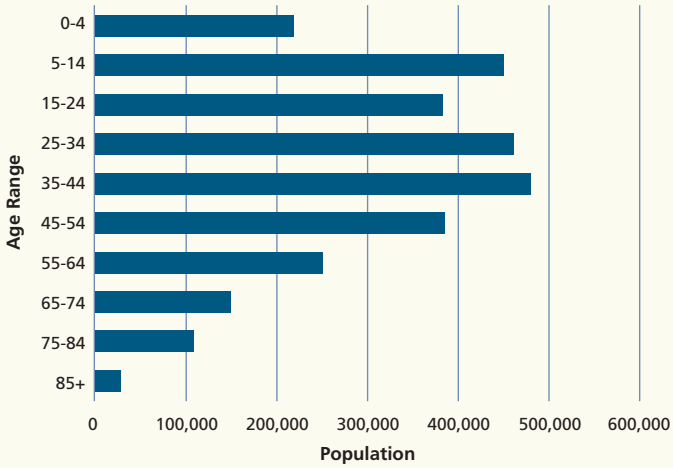
Population by Ethnicity
Orange County, 2000-2002



† Includes American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and any other single race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2000-2002

Population by Age
Orange County, 2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2002

Orange County's population by age peaks in two places: the five to 14 age group and the 25 to 44 age groups. The county's median age in 2002 was 34. Projected growth among the various age groups differs by ethnicity. Orange County's White population is aging while all other races and ethnicities are projected to show a significant growth in the child and young adult populations.[13]

EMPLOYMENT

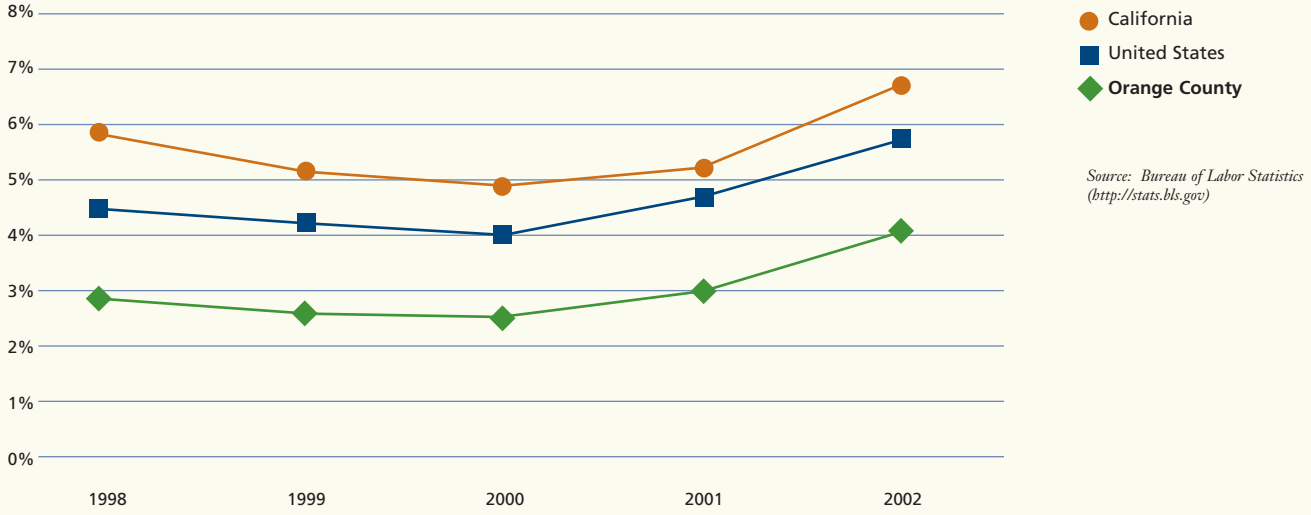
Orange County enjoys a diverse economy, with no single sector accounting for more than one-third of the county's economic output or labor market. The employed labor force in 2001 was approximately 1.54 million, with the largest labor markets comprised of services (32%), trade (24%), and manufacturing (16%). The trend over the past 10 years has been a rapid increase of the service sector and a steady increase in trade, while manufacturing employment has fluctuated.[14] Industry projections for 1999 to 2006 indicate that services will grow 27%, driven primarily by growth in business services. Manufacturing is projected to grow 13% with the durable goods sector accounting for most of the job growth, particularly electronic equipment, transportation equipment, and industrial machinery manufacturing. Retail trade is expected to grow 14%.[15]

Small businesses flourish in Orange County's entrepreneurial climate, with only 19% of residents working in companies employing more than 500 people, compared with the state average of 21% in 2001. Firms with between 50 to 500 employees grew the fastest over the past five years. In fact, employment at large companies with over 1,000 employees has declined over the same period.[16]

Unemployment

In September 2003, Orange County's unemployment rate of 3.6% was second only to Washington D.C. for the lowest unemployment rate among metropolitan areas with populations over one million. Orange County had a lower unemployment rate than the U.S. (6.1%), California (6.4%) and all our neighboring and peer metro areas including San Jose (7.5%), Los Angeles (6.8%) and Austin (5.5%). Historically, after a declining unemployment rate for much of the 1990s, Orange County's rate began to rise after 2000 to an average annual rate of 4.1% in 2002.[17]

Unemployment
Average Annual Rate, 1998-2002

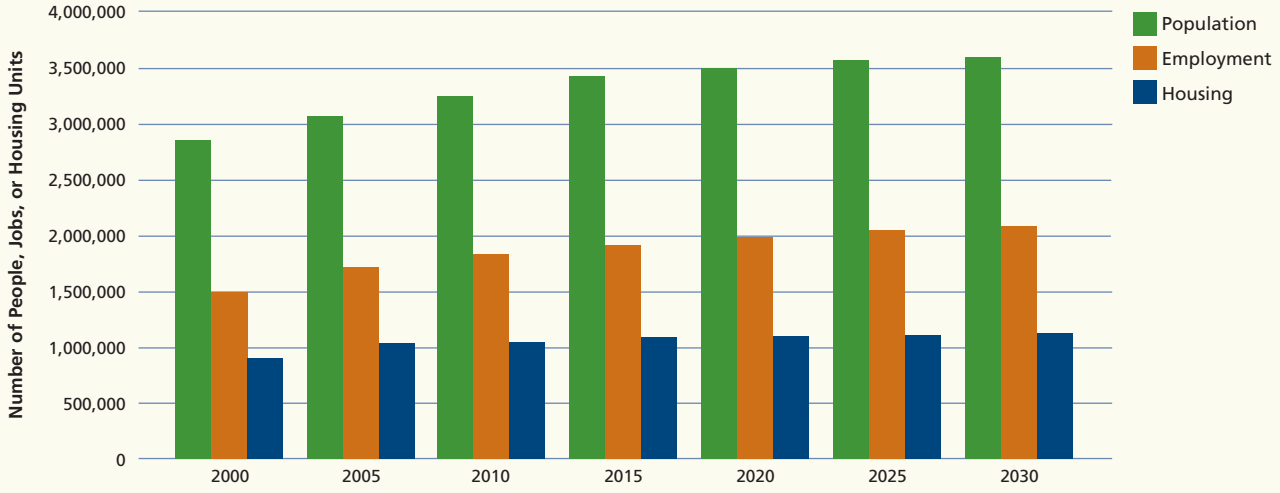


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics (http://stats.bls.gov)

HOUSING

As of 2002 there were 992,921 housing units available to county residents, 49% of which were single-family detached units.[18] As described further in the following report, the cost of single-family homes and multiple-family dwellings is increasing, along with rental costs. The median price of a single-family detached home in Orange County as of July 2003 was $496,370 and Fair Market Rents range from $987 for a one-bedroom unit to $1,220 for a two-bedroom unit and $1,698 for a three-bedroom unit.[19] Housing projections for the county anticipate almost 91,000 housing units to be added between 2000 and 2010.

Population, Employment and Housing
Orange County, 2000-2030



Source: Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton (preliminary data)

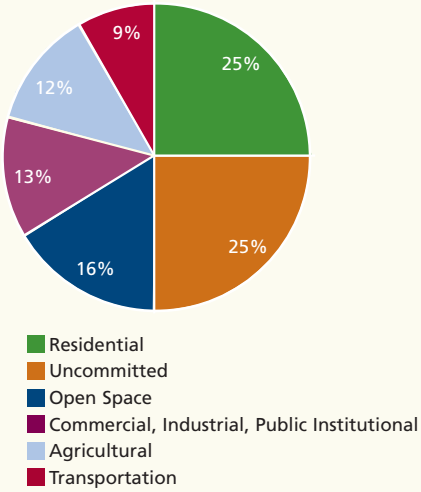
LAND USE

Orange County covers 798 square miles of land, including 42 miles of coastline. Substantial portions of the county are devoted to residential housing of various types (25%). Commercial, industrial, and public institutional uses account for only 13% of the county's land area. One-fourth of the county is classified as uncommitted, meaning it is either vacant or there is no data available for that land. Sixteen percent of the land is dedicated to open space and recreation. The County of Orange maintains nine beaches, three harbors and approximately 37,000 acres of regional parks (over 58 square miles) for the enjoyment of county residents and the protection of natural resources. Orange County's many cities and other state or federal agencies also maintain local park and open space facilities, adding upwards of 65,000 acres to the county total.

Note: These figures have been revised to include transportation rights-of-way and other amendments. They should not be compared to the figures printed in previous Community Indicators reports.

Source: County of Orange, Resources & Development Management Department, November 2003

Orange County Land Uses, 2003



Per Capita Property Tax Allocation Among Large Counties and Cities, 1999/00

Large Counties	Per Capita Property Taxes	Large Cities	Per Capita Property Taxes
Santa Clara	$153	Oakland	$147
Los Angeles	139	Los Angeles	142
Alameda	121	San Diego	118
Contra Costa	116	Long Beach	101
Sacramento	101	San Jose	82
San Diego	94	Fresno	62
Riverside	77	Anaheim	56
San Bernardino	66	Santa Ana	56
Orange	**51**	Riverside	43
Statewide County Average	**$115**	**Statewide City Average**	**$85**

Source: California Legislative Analysts Office (www.lao.ca.gov/2002/cal_facts/finances.html)

STATE AND LOCAL FINANCES

Orange County is what is referred to as a "donor county" – the county government receives from the state the least amount of property taxes per capita ($51) among large counties in California. The same is true for Orange County cities – Anaheim and Santa Ana are at the bottom of the allocation among large cities (both at $56). The smaller allocations would suggest that Orange County and its large cities, in comparison to other large counties and cities in California did not receive a large share of countywide property taxes before Proposition 13.[20]

GROSS COUNTY PRODUCT

If Orange County were a country, its gross product in 2002 would rank 39th in the world – ahead of such nations as Finland, Greece, Thailand and Ireland. Among metro areas in the United States, Orange County has the 11th largest gross product, behind Los Angeles (2nd) and Boston (4th) and ahead of the Twin Cities (12th) and San Diego (13th). Orange County improved in rank in terms of 10-year average annual gross metro product growth. The county is now among the top 100 metro areas, rising from 117th between 1991 and 2001 to 59th between 1992 and 2002.[21]

[1] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003
[2] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, State Characteristic Estimates and County Population Estimates, July 1, 2002 (http://eire.census.gov/popest/estimates.php)
[3] California Department of Finance (http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/Demograp/repndat.htm); reported by Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003 (www.fullerton.edu/cdr)
[4] U.S. Census Bureau (http://eire.census.gov/popest/data/counties.php)
[5] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton
[6] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003 and California Department of Finance, 2002-2003 City Population Percent Change Rankings (http://www.dof.ca.gov/html/Demograp/Rankcities.xls)
[7] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton
[8] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003
[9] U.S. Census Bureau (http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/phc-1-6.pdf)
[10] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003
[11] U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, SF 1 (http://factfinder.census.gov)
[12] U.S. Census Bureau, 2000-2002 American Community Survey (http://factfinder.census.gov/) and Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003
[13] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey and Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton
[14] Center for Demographic Research, California State University, Fullerton, Orange County Progress Report 2003
[15] California Employment Development Department, County Snapshot 2002 (www.calmis.cahwnet.gov/file/COsnaps/oransnap.pdf)
[16] California Employment Development Department, California Size of Business Report, 1996-2001 (http://www.calmis.ca.gov/htmlfile/msa/orange.htm)
[17] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (http://stats.bls.gov/)
[18] U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey Summary Tables
[19] The median home price is reported by the California Association of Realtors. Fair Market Rents are established by Housing and Urban Development based on 50th percentile (or median) rents in the market area.
[20] California Legislative Analysts Office (http://www.lao.ca.gov/2002/cal_facts/finances.html)
[21] U.S. Conference of Mayors, The Role of Metro Areas in the U.S. Economy, July 2003 (www.usmayors.org/metroeconomies03/metroecon_appendix_0603.pdf)

Special Features

Per Capita County Revenues and Expenditures are Among Lowest in California

Description of Indicator

This indicator compares County of Orange per capita revenues and expenditures with five other peer counties and the state. It focuses on property tax revenues, which are a significant component of overall revenues, collected locally but allocated by the state based on formulas originally set by Assembly Bill (AB 8) in 1979, and modified by the 1992 property tax shift away from counties to schools (Education Revenue Augmentation Fund).

Why is it Important?

Understanding how local property taxes are allocated and where Orange County stands relative to other counties can inform discussion and inspire solutions to the property tax share inequities among counties. Comparing total revenue and expenditure patterns with other California counties can help the public assess the County government's fiscal health.

How is Orange County Doing?

Property Tax History

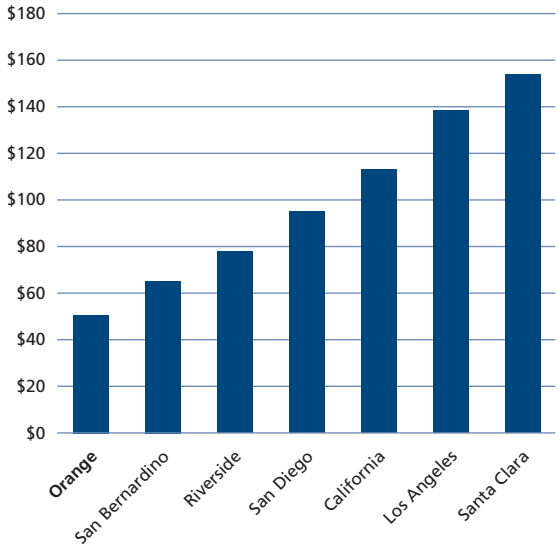
Prior to 1979 local governments had discretion over property tax rates and revenues - whether they set their property tax rates high or low, and what services they funded from these revenues and to what degree. When California voters passed Proposition 13 in 1979, they shifted this authority away from counties and set the statewide formula for taxing real property. Today, only a portion of local property taxes is returned to local governments (such as counties, cities, and special districts) based on a formula established by the Legislature which is tied to the relative pre-1979 tax rates of each county. Although a county may have experienced significant change since 1979 such as population growth, changes in property values, and changing service needs or priorities, the formula for local property tax shares has not changed. Prior to 1979, Orange County was largely undeveloped and tax rates were correspondingly low.

Property Taxes Today

In fiscal year (FY) 1999/00, property tax shares returned to California counties ranged from a high of $1,461.94 to a low of $50.84 per capita, with a state average of $112.61 per capita. Orange County received less property tax revenues than all neighboring and peer counties, ranking 57th out of 57 counties measured.[1] According to researchers, McCarty, Sexton, Shefrin, and Shelby (2001), Orange County's property tax revenues are approximately 6% of the property tax collected within the county due to the property tax allocation formula implemented by AB 8 in 1979.[2]

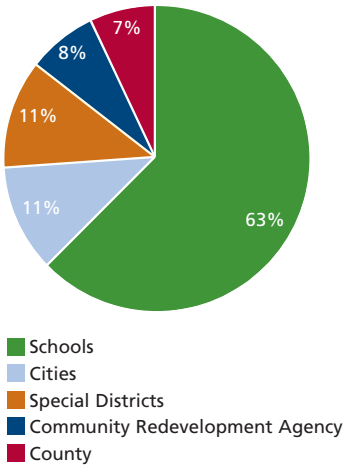
Of the property taxes Orange County does receive back, fully 63% goes to schools. The remaining 37% is split roughly between cities, special districts, redevelopment and the County. According to 2000/01 figures, the Orange County government retains less of the typical property tax dollar than peer and neighboring counties. On average, California counties retain 19% of the typical property tax dollar and 52% goes to schools.[3]

Per Capita Property Tax Revenue
County Comparison, 1999/00



Source: California Institute for County Government, California County Fact Book 2003 (www.cicg.org/publications/profiles/orange_county.pdf)

Where the Typical Property Tax Dollar Goes
County of Orange, 2003/04



Source: County of Orange Auditor-Controller Tax Unit

[1] There are 58 counties in California. San Francisco County is not comparable due to its status as a joint city-county.
[2] Report located at http://www.iga.ucdavis.edu/ppic_report.pdf
[3] California State Board of Equalization (www.boe.ca.gov/annual/table15_01.doc)

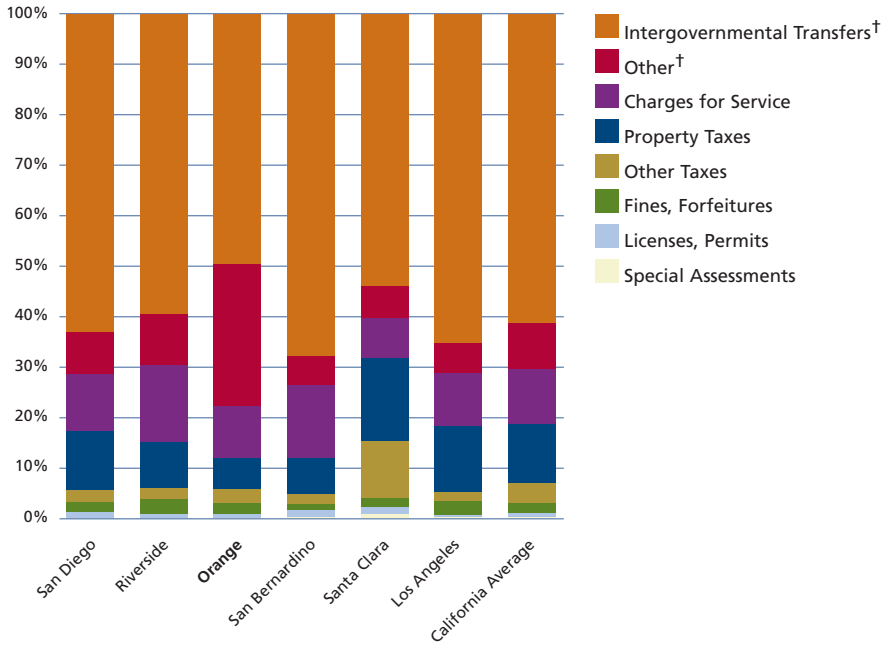
Total County Revenue

Counties and other local jurisdictions rely on additional revenue sources to help pay for public services, such as other taxes, special assessments, licenses and permit fees, fines and forfeitures and intergovernmental transfers. Each county has its own mix of revenues, including property tax allocations, making up the total revenues per capita which in FY 1999/00 ranged from $7,040 (Alpine County) to $795 (Madera County), with a state average of $1,066. Orange County's total per capita revenues for FY 1999/00 were $853, ranking the county at 52 out of 57.

Total County Expenditures

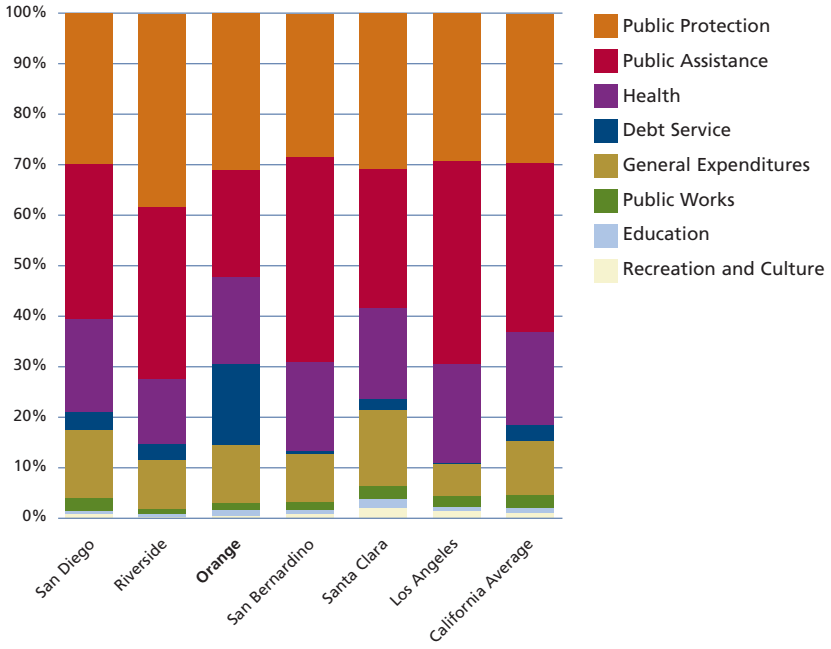
Each county also determines its expenditures based on the community needs and priorities. In FY 1999/00 total expenditures per capita ranged from $6,798 (Alpine County) to $741 (Madera County) compared with a state average of $890. Orange County's per capita expenditures totaled $782, again resulting in a rank of 52 out of 57 counties.

County Revenue Sources Per Capita, 1999/00



† "Intergovernmental Transfers" refers to funds received from state or federal government sources. The "Other" category includes revenue from the use of money and property, other financing sources, revenue and transfers in from enterprises, sales and use taxes, and miscellaneous revenue.

County Expenditures Per Capita, 1999/00



Source: California Institute for County Government, California County Fact Book 2003 (www.cicg.org/publications/profiles/orange_county.pdf)

Districts Get Creative to Increase Capacity on a Budget

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the extent to which Orange County schools, grades K-12, can meet personnel and facility demands under current and anticipated financial constraints.

Why is it Important?

A fundamental need of a growing and changing community is to provide enough teachers, classrooms, and funding to maintain a stable school system.

How is Orange County Doing?

Continuing population growth is driving up enrollment, and the Class Size Reduction program creates further pressure for more teachers and more classrooms. In response, Orange County schools are attempting both to expand their personnel and facilities and to use existing resources more efficiently.

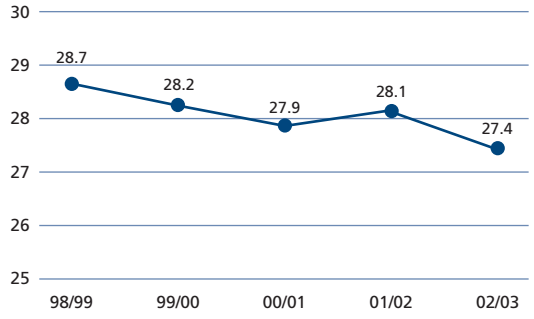
Growth in teacher hiring between 1999 and 2003 outpaced growth in enrollment (9.4% versus 8.6%), suggesting schools are able to meet their personnel needs. This growth led to a slight improvement in the countywide pupil-to-teacher ratio. To maintain this trend in the face of enrollment growth, personnel budgets must continue to grow despite anticipated budget constraints. More teachers are available, but the future challenge will be securing funding to hire them.

Perhaps the more pressing challenge is facilities. Since 1998/99, our schools have successfully decreased class sizes (students per room) by 4.5%. To maintain this trend, more classrooms are needed. The California Department of Education estimates that between 2002 and 2007, California schools will need more than 40,000 additional classrooms (or 22 new rooms a day), at a cost of $22.8 billion. As of January 2004, a tally by the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) for the March 2004 bond initiative found 74% of Orange County districts collectively need $750 million for new construction and modernization.

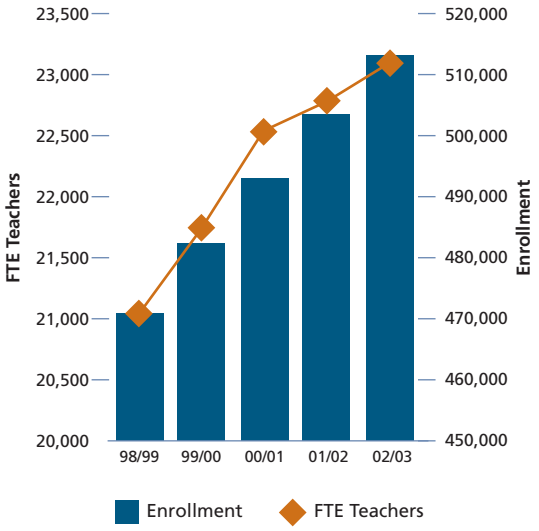
When lack of funds or space limits new construction, many schools use their existing facilities more efficiently by "multitracking." Multitrack, year-round education (MTYRE) divides students and staff into groups that are in school at different times, thereby "creating" classrooms and saving construction dollars through more constant use. Since 1998/99, the number of Orange County pupils enrolled in MTYRE increased until 2000/01 and then started decreasing. This suggests schools responded favorably to available funding and the educational benefits of multitracking but may find it carries costs as well. Still, over 50,000 Orange County students (or 16% of elementary and intermediate students) continue to participate in MTYRE, evidence of persistently overcrowded facilities.

Another increasingly popular strategy to create space under tight budgets is through joint-use projects. In these projects different entities develop agreements to share use and costs of facilities. For example, dense cities with little park or community space may partner with schools to run recreation programs on school grounds after school hours. Theaters, conference rooms, technical facilities, and pools can be shared in a similar fashion. Locally, the OCDE has partnered with the Anaheim Elementary School District to build a local bond funded multi-story shared space for special needs and traditional students. It is expected to break ground in 2004 and be ready for the 2006/07 school year.

Average Class Size
Orange County, 1999-2003



Enrollment and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Teachers
Orange County, 1999-2003



Enrollment in Multitrack, Year-Round Education
Orange County, 1999-2003

1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
52,398	53,529	54,975	52,659	50,736

Sources: Orange County Department of Education, California Department of Education/School Facilities Planning Division, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov), National Association for Year-Round Education, and Anaheim Elementary, Magnolia, Orange Unified, Santa Ana Unified, and Tustin Unified School Districts

Economic and Business Climate

This year's indicators are mixed. Consumer confidence is rebounding, tourism shows a steady increase, and our high-tech sector is strong. But few executives think our business climate is improving. Housing and rental affordability keep dropping, world trade has declined, and our per capita income growth is slower than the nation, state and peers.

Business Optimism Falls for Third Straight Year

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures Orange County's business climate through two studies: a survey of how business executives in Orange County feel about doing business in Orange County (Business Sentiment, Orange County Executive Survey, 2003) and a ranking of the best regions in the nation for entrepreneurship (Best Regions, Dun & Bradstreet and Entrepreneur magazine, 2003).

Why is it Important?

A region's business climate reflects its attractiveness as a location, the availability of business support and resources, opportunities for growth, and barriers to doing business. Since businesses provide jobs, sales tax dollars, and economic entrepreneurship and growth, a strong business climate is important for maintaining Orange County's economic health and quality of life.

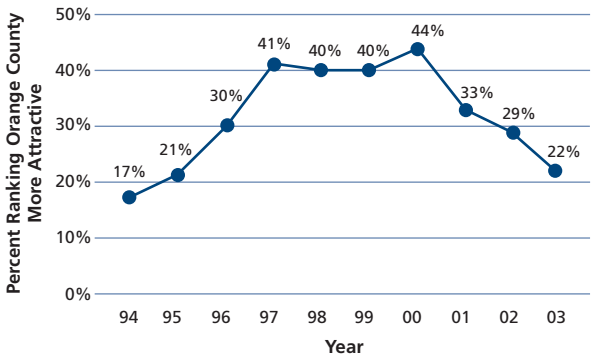
How is Orange County Doing?

In 2003, 22% of Orange County executives surveyed stated that the county was becoming a more attractive place to do business. This is the third year in a row that this rating has dropped, bringing the county to the lowest rating since 1995. Despite the drop, business sentiment is still better than the early 1990s; only 6% of executives polled in 1992 thought the county was becoming more attractive for business at that time.

The most often cited reasons for the county's attractiveness as a business location were: Orange County is centrally located relative to markets, the county is a desirable place to live, and the particular business' customers are here. In 2003, executives ranked traffic as the primary negative factor in the business climate, surpassing housing costs, which was the top negative factor in 2002. Traffic had been ranked as the primary negative factor in the 2000 and 2001 executive surveys. In 2003, only 15% of executives polled stated that the county's desirability as a place to live contributed to its attractiveness as a business location, significantly down from 32% in 2000.

In 2003, Orange County was ranked the 4th best metropolitan area for entrepreneurs in the western United States. This is similar to Orange County's ranking of 5th in 2002 and 6th in 2001. Orange County lagged behind San Diego and Sacramento (which tied for 2nd in the rankings), but was ahead of other California cities. Nationally, Orange County was rated as the 34th best place for entrepreneurs in 2003, down from 30th in 2002 and 27th in 2001. Metropolitan areas were evaluated based on the number of businesses less than five years old, employment growth in small companies, employment growth for the past three years, and the rate of business failures.

Business Sentiment, 1994-2003



Source: Orange County Executive Survey, 2003

Top 10 Best Cities for Entrepreneurs
Western Cities/Regions, 2003

Regional Rank	City/Metro Area	National Rank
1	Las Vegas, Nevada	11
2	San Diego, California	16
2	Sacramento, California	16
4	**Orange County, California**	**34**
5	Riverside/San Bernardino, California	36
6	Oakland, California	41
7	San Jose, California	48
8	Seattle/Bellevue/Everett, Washington	50
9	Portland/Vancouver, Oregon/Washington	54
10	San Francisco, California	60

Source: Dun & Bradstreet and Entrepreneur magazine, 2003 (www.entrepreneur.com/bestcities)

Tourism Spending Increases

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures travel industry jobs and visitor spending in Orange County and peer counties in California on accommodations, food, recreation, retail sales and travel arrangements.

Why is it Important?

Visitors traveling to Orange County for recreation and business generate revenue and jobs for the local economy. Tourism is one of the leading industries in Orange County, accounting for 6.5% of the county's employment in 2003. Hotels, shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues rely on the tourism market for a significant percentage of their business. Orange County cities benefit from tourism due to the Transient Occupancy Tax, a local tax applied to hotel charges.

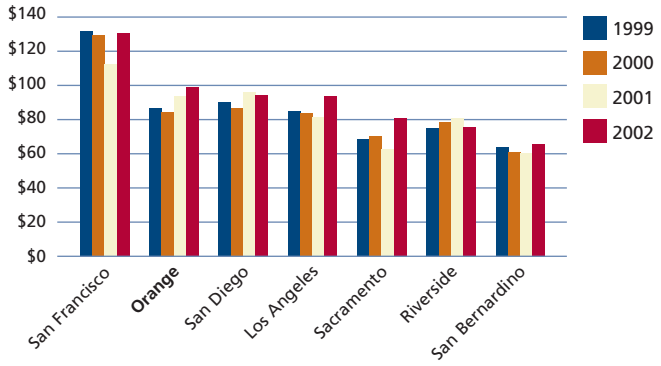
How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County has the second largest average daily visitor expenditures among large California counties, trailing only San Francisco. There has been a steady increase in per person tourism expenditures in Orange County after a slight dip in 2000.

Total visitor spending in Orange County increased at an annual rate of 4.4% from 1997 through 2001, faster than the growth of tourism spending in San Francisco County, but slower than the growth rate in all the other counties compared.

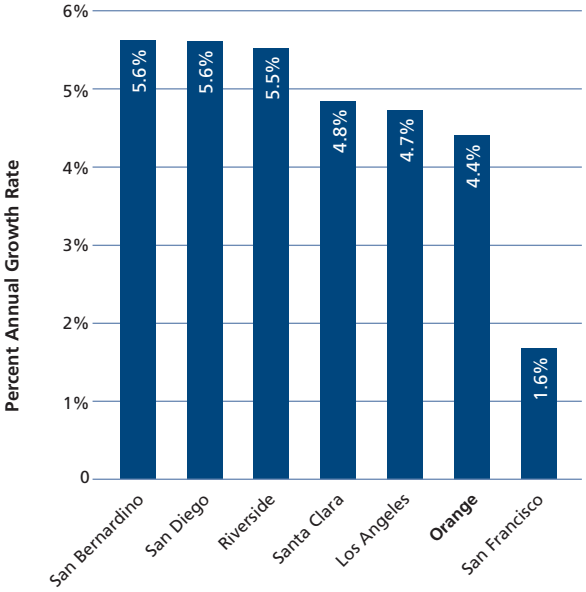
According to the California Division of Tourism, tourism jobs accounted for over 91,220 jobs in 2001, making the county the third largest center for travel-related employment in California, behind Los Angeles and San Diego Counties. Looking more broadly to include industries that serve both tourists and local Orange County residents, such as eating and drinking establishments, tourism or tourism-related industries account for over 123,000 jobs in the county. Amusement parks such as Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm, and the county's 42 miles of beaches continue to be among the most popular tourist destinations in California.

Average Expenditures Per Day Per Visitor
County Comparison, 1999-2002



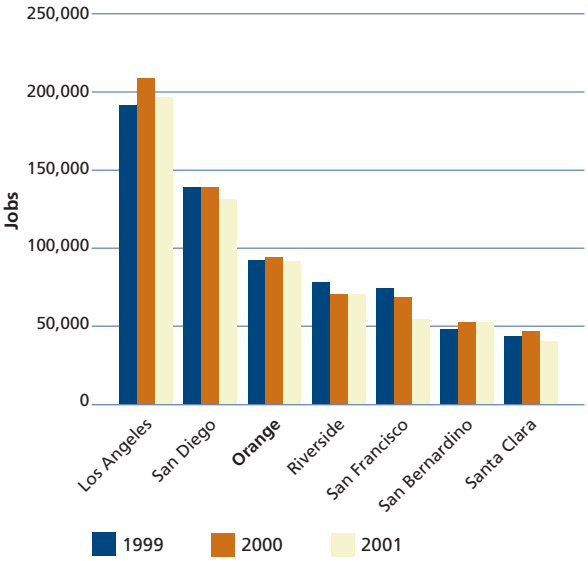
Source: California Division of Tourism, Domestic Travel Report, Year End 2002

Visitor Spending by County
Average Annual Growth Rate, 1997-2001



Source: California Division of Tourism, California Travel Impacts by County, Dean Runyan Associates (www.deanrunyan.com/impactsCA.html)

Travel Industry Jobs by County, 1999-2001



Source: California Division of Tourism, California Travel Impacts by County, Dean Runyan Associates (www.deanrunyan.com/impactsCA.html)

Exports Grow with NAFTA Nations; Overall Exports Decline

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the trend in total and manufacturing exports for Orange County companies and identifies the county's top export markets for total exports and in leading high-tech sectors.

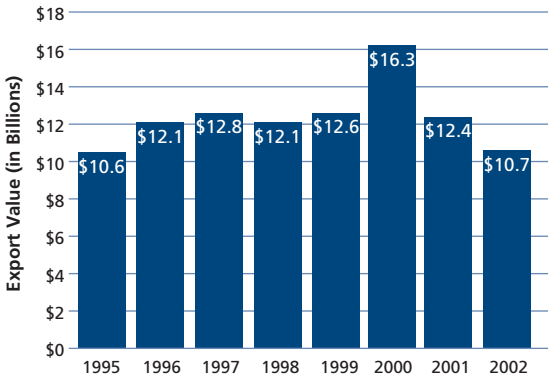
Why is it Important?

As trade agreements continue to increase free trade opportunities and competition, Orange County companies must be able to access foreign markets. Due to the county's strong Latino community and proximity to Mexico, Orange County is well positioned to take advantage of growing markets in Latin America, as well as more traditional export markets in Europe and Asia.

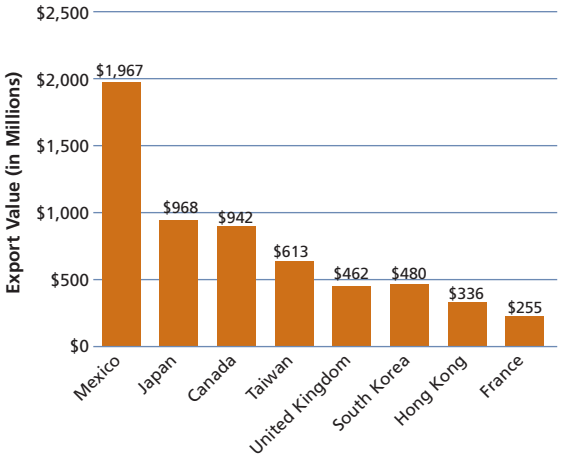
How is Orange County Doing?

Continuing a trend that started in 2001, total exports (comprised of manufacturing and service exports) dropped in 2002 to $10.7 billion. Manufacturing, the largest component of total exports, dropped to $8.3 billion. Sluggish export performance is linked to weak economies in the county's primary export markets. In 2002, Mexico was the top destination for Orange County exports, with Japan and Canada the next most important markets. This reflects the impressive growth of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) countries as markets for Orange County firms. NAFTA countries accounted for 23% of Orange County manufacturing exports a decade ago; by 2002, 35% of the county's manufacturing exports were destined for NAFTA countries. For companies in leading high-tech sectors, the top five markets in 2003 include a majority of European and English-speaking countries.

Total Orange County Exports Worldwide, 1995-2002



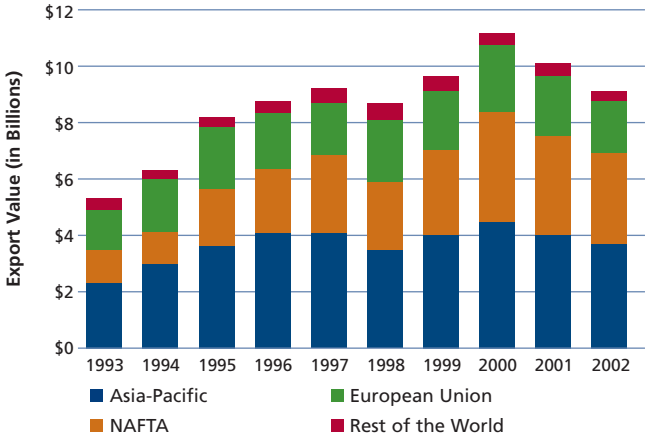
Total Orange County Exports to Top Export Markets, 2002



Note: Exports to all other nations totaled $4.7 billion.

Source: California State University, Fullerton Institute for Economic and Environmental Studies

Orange County Manufacturing Exports by Destination 1993-2002



Top Five Export Markets for Orange County Companies by Sector, 2003

	Sector			
	Biotechnology	Electronics	Information Technology	Telecommunications
1	Canada	United Kingdom	Canada	Canada
2	Japan	Germany	Japan	United Kingdom
3	China	Australia	United Kingdom	France
4	Germany	China	China	Japan
5	United Kingdom	France	Mexico	Germany

Source: California State University, Fullerton, Center for Study of Emerging Markets, International Trade Action Program Database, 2003

Consumer Confidence Rebounds in 2003

Description of Indicator

This indicator uses the Consumer Confidence Index (CCI), a five-question survey conducted nationally by the University of Michigan and locally by the Public Policy Institute of California and the University of California, Irvine, to measure the confidence that consumers have in their present and future personal income situations.

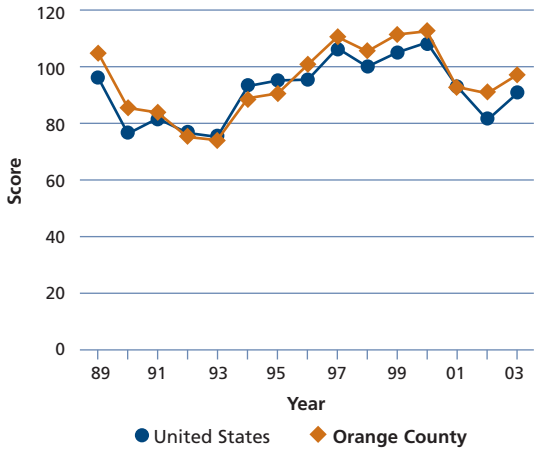
Why is it Important?

A high CCI shows consumers feel optimistic about the state of the economy and their economic wellbeing. It measures the willingness of Orange County consumers to make major purchases such as a new home or car, invest in business endeavors, or take a risk with their career such as starting a business or pursuing additional education.

How is Orange County Doing?

In 2003, the CCI score in Orange County was 97, up from 90 in 2002 and 93 in 2001. However, it is still below the record high score of 112 in 2000. The nationwide CCI score in 2003 was 90, up from 81 in 2002, but less than 92 recorded in 2001. For the national index, a score of 100 is considered very good, and a score of 85 is the average for the 50-year history of the national survey.

Consumer Confidence, 1989-2003



Source: Orange County Annual Survey (prior to 2001), and Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey, Special Survey of Orange County, in collaboration with University of California, Irvine (2001-2003)

Income Growth Slower than State, Nation, and Peers

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures per capita income levels and income growth. Total personal income includes wages and salaries, proprietor income, property income and transfer payments, such as pensions and unemployment insurance. The figures are in current year dollars (not adjusted for inflation).

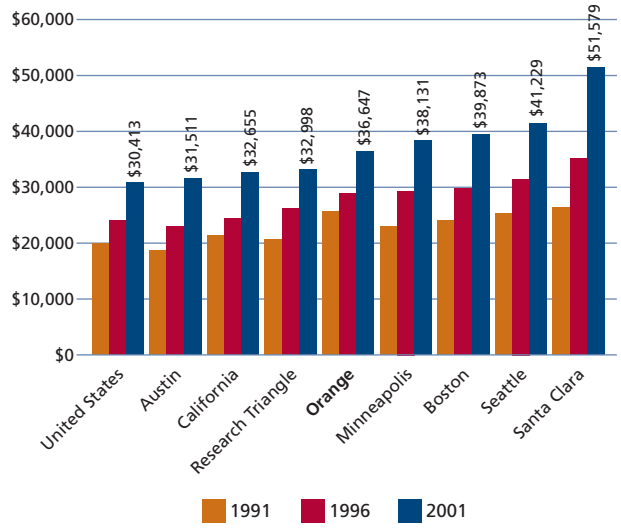
Why is it Important?

Higher disposable incomes result in additional purchases of goods and services which contribute to overall economic strength and a sense of material satisfaction as residents have what they need to survive and prosper.

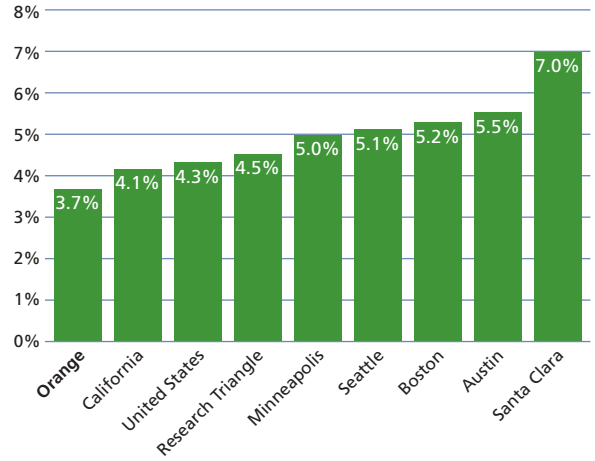
How is Orange County Doing?

In 1991, Orange County had the 6th highest per capita income in the state and had a higher per capita income than all of the economic peer metropolitan areas except Santa Clara County. Due to slower than average income growth in the early 1990s Orange County slipped in rank to 9th highest in the state in 2001. Growth rates in the late nineties improved, but not significantly enough for the county's 10-year average annual growth rate to rise above the bottom rank among peers. On the positive side, Orange County's per capita income level rose 3.4% between 2000 and 2001, higher than the state (0.9%), the nation (2.2%) and all peers, some of which experienced drops in per capita income from 2000 to 2001.

Per Capita Income, 1991, 1996, and 2001



Per Capita Income
Average Annual Percent Change, 1991-2001



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (www.bea.doc.gov)

Recent Job Growth is Primarily in Service Clusters

Description of Indicator

This indicator shows employment and salaries in 10 major Orange County industry clusters. The clusters were chosen to reflect the diversity of Orange County employment, major economic drivers within the county, and important industry sectors for workforce development.[1]

Why is it Important?

Employment change within specific clusters illuminates how Orange County's economy is evolving. Approximately 40% of all Orange County jobs are in the 10 clusters described in this indicator. Tracking salary levels in these clusters shows whether they can provide a wage high enough for workers to afford living in Orange County.

How is Orange County Doing?

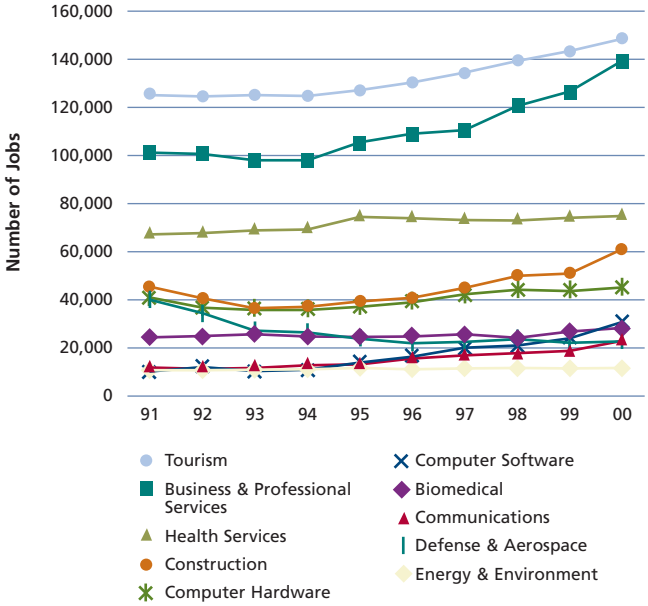
The three largest clusters – Tourism, Business and Professional Services, and Health Services – reflect the importance of the service sector in the Orange County economy. These three clusters posted solid employment growth from 1991 to 2000 with an average annual growth rate of 1.8%, 3.2%, and 1.1%, respectively. The large reductions in Defense and Aerospace employment from 1991 to 2000 were more than counterbalanced by strong job growth in Computer Software (186%) and Communications (84%).

The technology downturn since 2001 has hit technology sectors hard. Between 2001 and 2002, Computer Software, Communications, Defense and Aerospace, Computer Hardware, and Energy and Environment each saw decreases of between 7% and 26%. However, these losses have been offset somewhat by increases in the only clusters to show job growth between 2001 and 2002: Business and Professional Services (6%), Health Services (4%), and Tourism (2%).

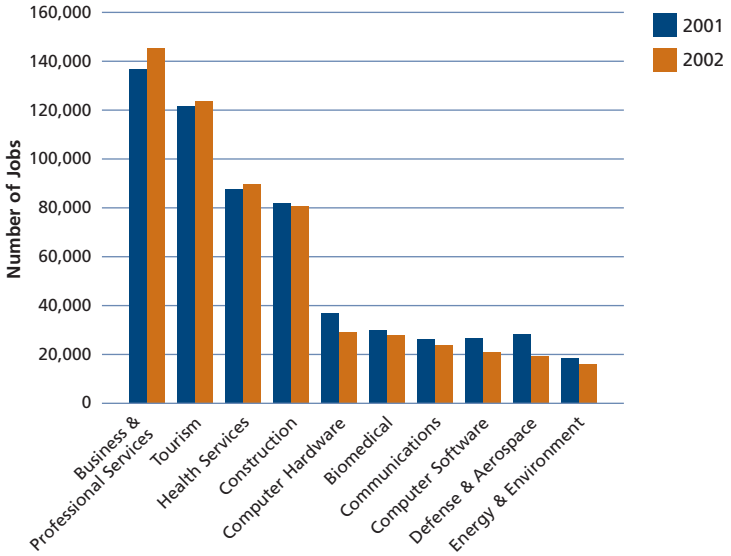
Salaries grew from 2001 to 2002 in all clusters except Computer Software, Business and Professional Services and Defense and Aerospace. The largest increase was in Communications and the largest decrease was in Computer Software, yet this still remains the highest paid cluster.

[1] Through 2000, the California Employment Development Department (EDD) utilized the Standard Industrial Classification system (SIC). For 2001 and later years, the EDD uses the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). Because the NAICS includes many changes in industry classification that are intended to improve upon the SIC system, the 1991-2000 and 2001-2002 data series cannot be directly compared and are shown separately.

Employment in Selected Clusters
Orange County, 1991-2000



Employment in Selected Clusters
Orange County, 2001 and 2002



Average Annual Salaries in Orange County Clusters, 2002

	2002	Change 2001-2002
Computer Software	$76,388	-5.9%
Defense & Aerospace	$62,729	-1.4%
Communications	$56,745	9.2%
Computer Hardware	$56,729	2.9%
Biomedical	$56,625	2.0%
Construction	$45,084	1.4%
Energy & Environment	$44,298	0.3%
Business & Professional Services	$43,826	-0.3%
Health Services	$41,722	5.3%
Tourism	$16,705	0.5%

Source: Orange County Business Council analysis of data from the California Employment Development Department

New Housing Permits Increase, While County Loses Jobs in 2002

Description of Indicator

This indicator shows the ratio of new housing permits divided by new jobs for Orange County, comparison metropolitan areas, California, and the United States.

Why is it Important?

When an economy is growing, new housing must be created to handle the additional workers employed. The inability to meet housing demand has the potential to make housing unaffordable to workers by driving up housing prices and apartment rents, making it more difficult for employers to attract and retain workers, and forcing more employees to make longer commutes. When an economy contracts, the need for new housing is less pronounced but does not vanish, as existing residents will desire move up homes. Also, housing permit growth during economic contraction can help a region reduce excess demand that could have been created during periods when housing construction did not keep pace with economic growth.

How is Orange County Doing?

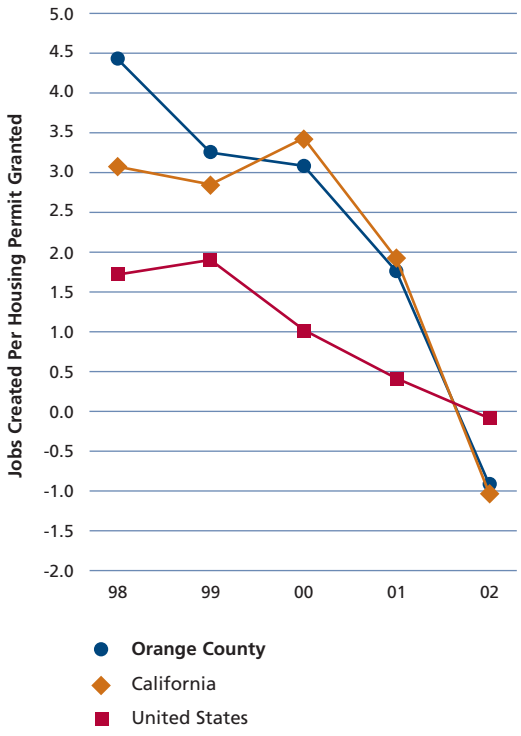
In 2002, for the first time since tracking for this indicator began, Orange County lost jobs. The economy shrunk by 10,700 jobs while the County and municipalities in the county issued 11,370 new housing unit permits. This will help reduce excess housing demand that accumulated during the most recent economic expansion. Yet the county's rapid increase in house prices (see the Housing Affordability indicator, page 18) suggests there is considerable remaining excess demand in the housing market. During the late 1990s, Orange County created as many as 4.4 jobs for every housing permit granted, implying that in those years the county's housing construction was not keeping pace with demand. By 2001, both employment growth and new housing permits declined, and the larger decline in employment growth yielded a relatively balanced 1.73 ratio of new jobs to permits. In 2002, new housing permits increased over the 2001 level of 8,577, while the county lost jobs, resulting in a ratio of negative 0.94 in 2002. Peer regions had similar experiences, with only Riverside/San Bernardino and San Diego metro areas posting positive job growth in the past year.

Housing Demand Measures, 2002

	Housing Permits	Employment Growth	Ratio Employment Growth to Permits
Riverside/San Bernardino	32,594	38,000	1.17
San Diego	13,853	10,000	0.72
U.S.	1,747,678	-191,100	-0.11
Phoenix	46,851	-5,800	-0.12
Atlanta	64,798	-16,000	-0.25
Research Triangle	18,012	-6,700	-0.37
Orange County	**11,370**	**-10,700**	**-0.94**
California	118,270	-125,400	-1.06
Austin	12,316	-13,800	-1.12
Minneapolis	25,319	-30,900	-1.22
Seattle	23,743	-44,400	-1.87
Los Angeles	16,755	-40,000	-2.39
Boston	17,866	-60,400	-3.38
San Francisco Bay Area	22,980	-171,200	-7.45

Sources: Meyers Group and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

New Jobs Created Per Housing Permit Granted
1998-2002



Sources: Meyers Group and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Fewer Residents Can Afford a Median Priced Home

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures housing affordability by looking at the level and change of the median priced home, and by examining the Housing Affordability Index for Orange County and comparison metropolitan areas. The Housing Affordability Index measures the percentage of Orange County households that can afford the median priced home in the county.

Why is it Important?

A lack of affordable housing can be a major barrier to a strong, reliable economy. High relative housing prices may potentially influence location decisions of corporations. A shortage of affordable housing (particularly for first-time buyers) may discourage young families from moving to Orange County or staying here after graduating from local colleges and universities, and can push Orange County workers to settle outside the county, resulting in longer commutes, increased traffic congestion and pollution, decreased productivity, and a diminished quality of life. Finally, home ownership can be a significant means of personal wealth creation.

How is Orange County Doing?

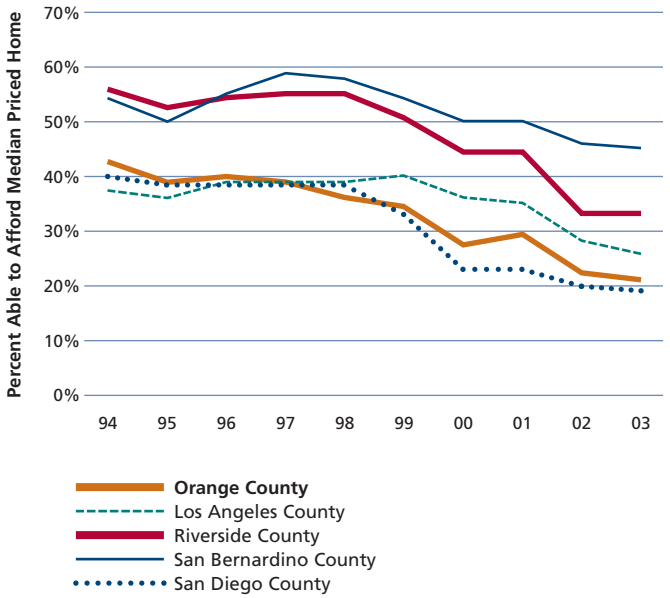
Home Sale Price

According to the California Association of Realtors, in July 2003, the median sale price of a single-family detached home in Orange County was $496,370 (an increase of 14.7% from July 2002) and $383,320 in California (19.1% higher than July 2002). For several years, high housing prices have been maintained through historically low interest rates and high housing demand relative to available supply. Interest rates began to rise in the summer of 2003, but so far there is no evidence that rate increases will reduce demand for homes. According to the California Budget Project, to purchase the median-priced home in Orange County with a 20% down payment, the buyer's annual income must be over $87,000. For comparison purposes, the approximate annual income in Orange County for a firefighter is $59,000, a nurse is $53,000, and an elementary school teacher is $46,000.

Housing Affordability Index

In June 2003, only 21% of households in Orange County could afford the median priced home. This compares to 22% in 2002, and 29% in 2001. The county's housing affordability rate is half the 42% level in 1994. These rates are far below the United States average of over 50%. Orange County is less affordable than all our neighbors except San Diego County.

Housing Affordability Index, 1994-2003



Source: California Association of Realtors

Fastest Growing Occupations Pay Less than Half the Amount Needed for Rent

Description of Indicator

The rental affordability indicator measures the Housing Wage – the hourly wage a resident would need to afford Fair Market Rent. For Orange County, Fair Market Rent is the 50th percentile (or median) rent in the market.

Why is it Important?

Lack of affordable rental housing can lead to crowding and household stress. Less affordable rental housing also restricts the ability of renters to save for a down payment on a home, limiting their ability to eventually become homeowners and build personal wealth through housing appreciation. Ultimately, a shortage of affordable housing for renters can instigate a cycle of poverty.

How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County's Housing Wage rates increased in 2003. The hourly wage needed for a one-bedroom apartment ($18.98) is equivalent to an annual income of $39,478. According to employment projections, most of the occupations likely to have the largest gains in the county's three high-growth industries have hourly wages far below the Housing Wage. Even among the higher wage growth occupations, wages are not enough to afford a median priced home in the county (see page 18). Among state and national peer metropolitan areas, only Boston, San Francisco and Santa Clara County have higher Housing Wages (less affordable rental housing) than Orange County.

Renting in Orange County

Fair Market Rent, 2004	
One Bedroom	$ 987
Two Bedroom	$1,220
Three Bedroom	$1,698
Estimated Orange County Median Family Income, 2003	$70,000
Amount a Household Earning Minimum Wage Can Afford to Pay in Rent	$351
Amount a Household Earning 30% of Median Family Income Can Afford to Pay in Rent	$525
Number of Hours Per Week a Minimum Wage Earner Must Work to Afford a One-Bedroom Apartment	112

Sources: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and National Low Income Housing Coalition

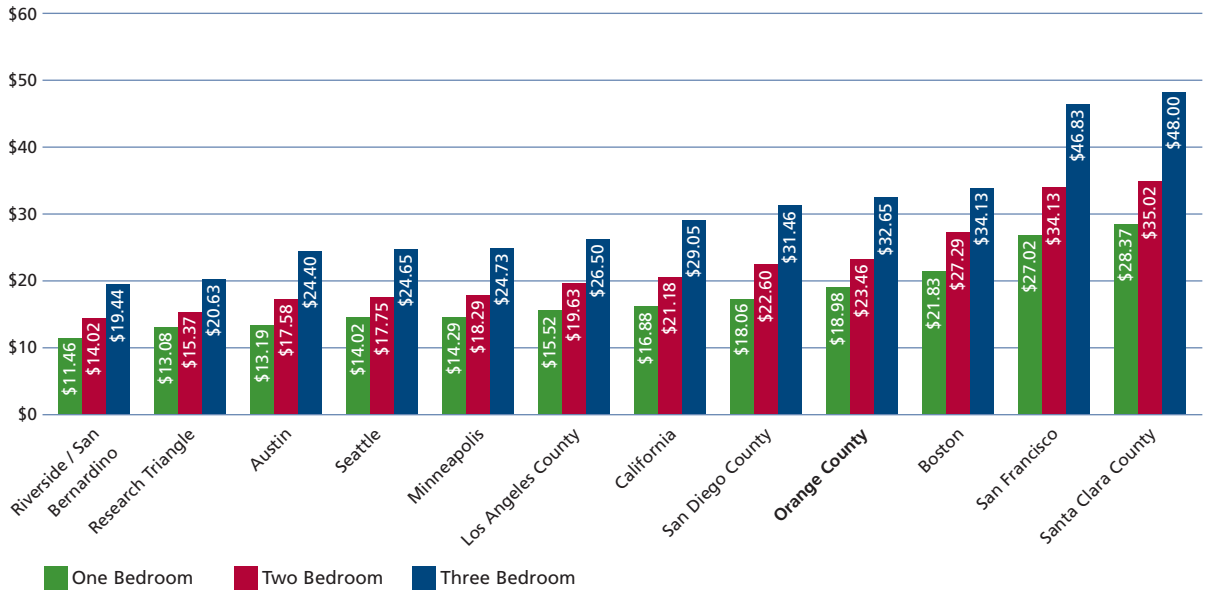
Projected Top Growth Occupations and the Median Hourly Wage for Occupations Likely to Have the Most Job Gains

Orange County, 1999-2006

	Occupation	Median Hourly Wage
Services	Janitors and Cleaners (excludes Maids/Housekeeping)	$7.67
	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	$8.17
	Security Guards	$8.35
	General Managers/Top Executives	$21.50-$70.00
Manu-facturing	Assemblers, Fabricators, Electrical	$7.81-$9.45
	First Line Supervisors/Managers of Production and Operating Workers	$20.45
	General Managers/Top Executives	$40.53-$70.00
	Computer Systems Analysts	$28.48
Retail Trade	Retail Salespersons	$8.42
	Cashiers	$7.48
	Waiters and Waitresses	$6.74
	First Line Supervisors/Managers of Retail Sales Workers	$16.77

Source: California Employment Development Department (www.calmis.ca.gov/file/COsnaps/oransnap.pdf)

Hourly Wage Needed to Afford Fair Market Rent, 2003



Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition (www.nlihc.org/oor_current/)

Majority of Freeways Congested; Commuter Rail Continues to Grow

Description of Indicator

This indicator includes several transportation-related measures including average commute times, freeway congestion and utilization, construction of new roads, bus and rail use and transit system expenditures, and mode of travel.

Why is it Important?

The ease with which residents and workers can get around within the county is integral to Orange County's quality of life. Congestion and long commutes affect personal lives and worker productivity due to the time lost in transit. An effective public transit system offers an important alternative for individuals who do not own or do not wish to drive a car. Measuring the use of existing facilities and investment in transportation infrastructure will help the community determine how to address future mobility needs.

How is Orange County Doing?

Average Commute Times

In 2002, the average commute time to work in Orange County was 26 minutes (unchanged from 2001). This places Orange County in the middle of the comparison regions, with Riverside/San Bernardino County commuters spending the longest time commuting to work (29 minutes) and Minneapolis commuters spending the least (22 minutes).

Use of Orange County's Freeways

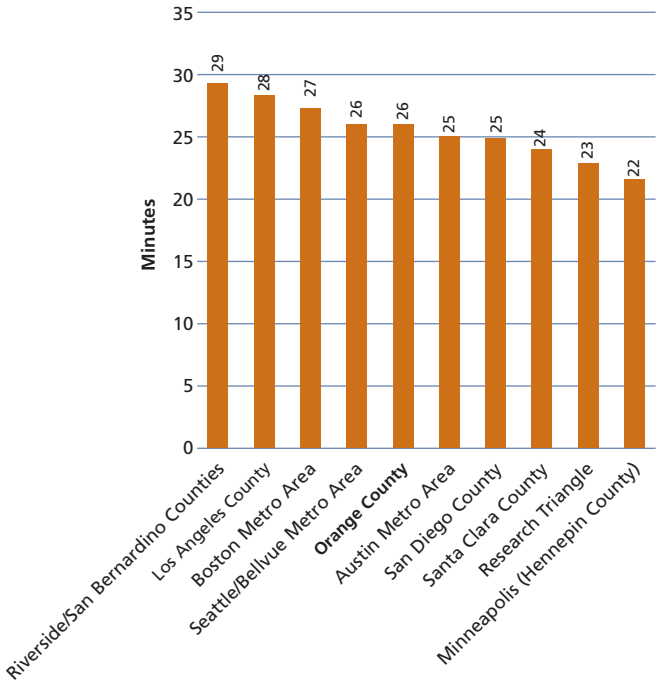
The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) tracks congestion levels on Orange County freeways in the morning and evening peak rush hours. Congestion is worse in the evening than the morning rush hours. In fall 2001, there were more than three hours of congestion during the evening commute on a majority of Orange County's freeways including segments of Interstate (I) 605, I-405, I-5, State Route (SR) 55, SR-22, SR-57 and SR-91.

Caltrans tracks the available miles of freeway and the total number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per year by county. A comparison of VMT per lane mile of freeway indicates the utilization of the freeway. A greater number of VMT per freeway mile suggests greater congestion on the system, as well as more wear and tear on the roadways and therefore, higher maintenance and preservation costs. Compared to peers, in 2000 Orange County had the greatest level of freeway utilization of all areas compared including Los Angeles, Santa Clara and San Diego Counties. This is due in part to the configuration of the Orange County freeway system on a diagonal rather than grid system, resulting in a lack of parallel frontage roads or alternate routes.

Lane Miles and Vehicle Miles Traveled Defined

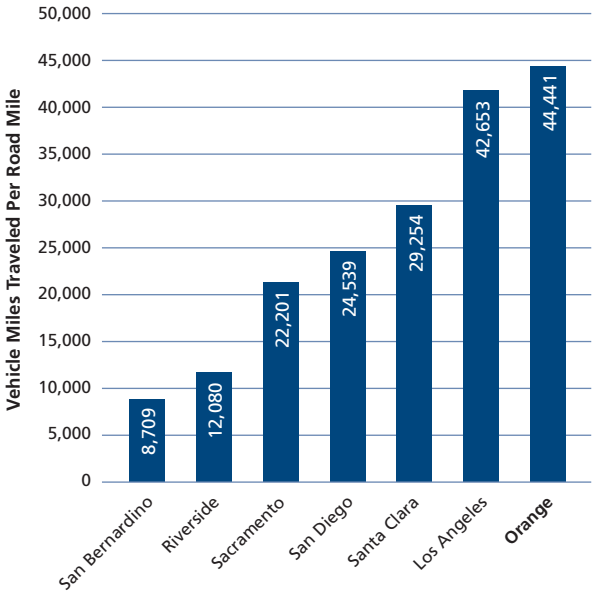
A freeway or arterial lane mile is one mile of a single lane of roadway (if two lanes are added to a mile stretch of road, it would be considered two lane miles). Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) measures the total number of miles traveled by automobiles on Orange County roads.

Average Commute Times to Work in Minutes
Regional Comparison, 2002



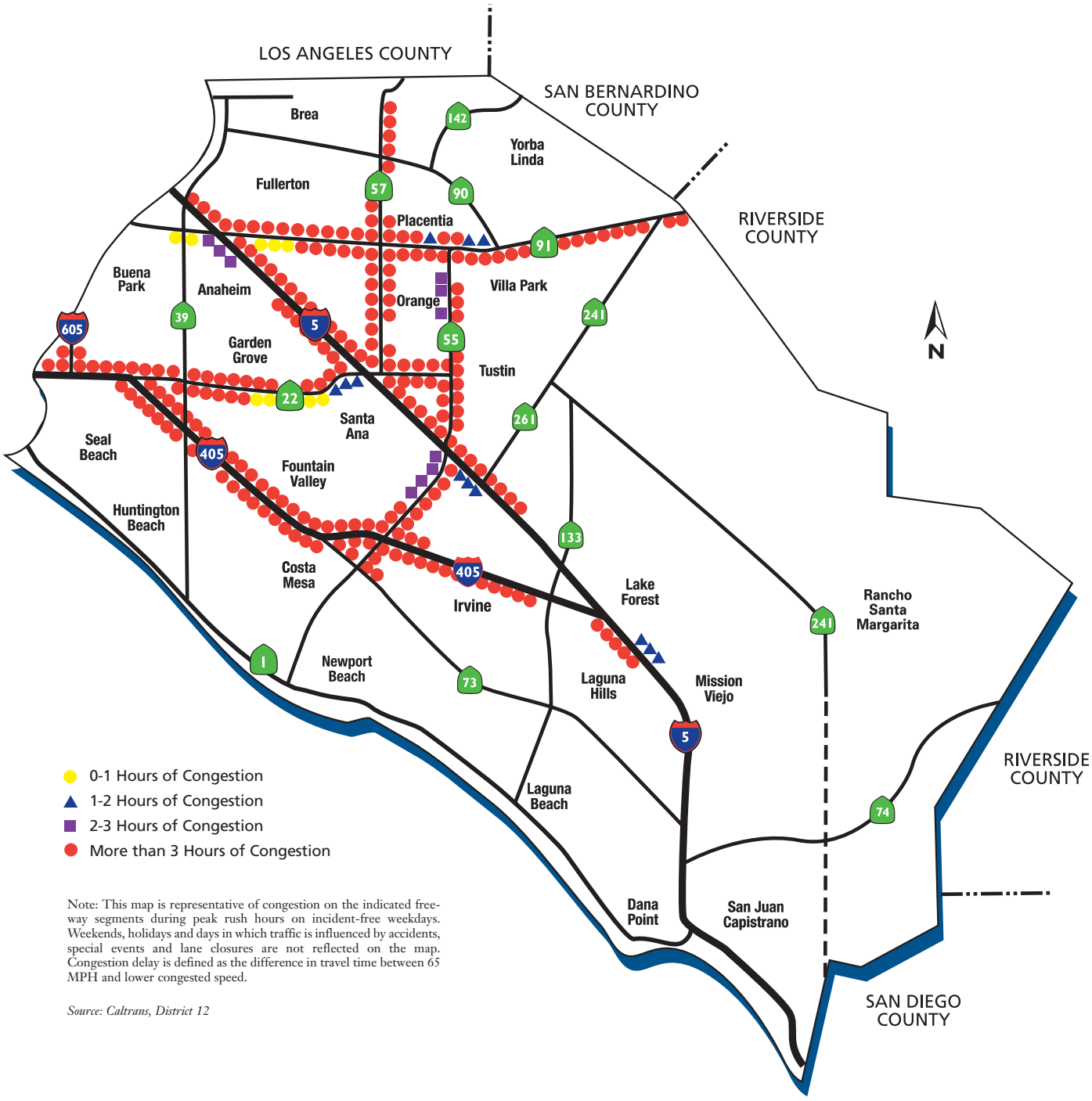
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey (www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html)

Freeway Utilization
County Comparison, 2000



Source: Caltrans, 2000 Accident Data on California State Highways

Congestion on Orange County Freeways
PM Peak Hours, Fall 2001



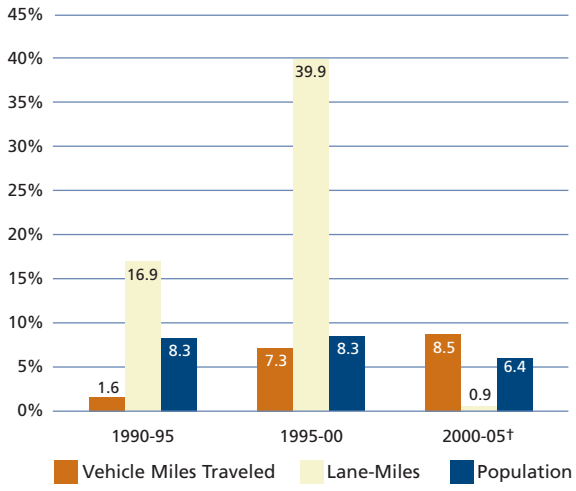
Note: This map is representative of congestion on the indicated freeway segments during peak rush hours on incident-free weekdays. Weekends, holidays and days in which traffic is influenced by accidents, special events and lane closures are not reflected on the map. Congestion delay is defined as the difference in travel time between 65 MPH and lower congested speed.

Source: Caltrans, District 12

Construction of New Roadways

The total number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on Orange County's network of major streets and roads has been steadily increasing along with our population. While the county's population grew faster than VMT growth in the early 1990s, VMT growth is projected to outpace population growth between 2000 and 2005, a trend that is likely to lead to increased traffic congestion. In 1990, traffic congestion on Orange County's roadways was severe. In June of that year, voters approved a one-half cent sales tax for transportation improvements called Measure M, providing for construction of new and widened roads and freeways. With the passage of Measure M, construction of new lane miles increased significantly, totaling 64% growth between 1990 and 2000. However, with the exception of improvements planned for SR-22, construction of new freeway facilities funded through Measure M is already complete or will be completed by 2005. Between 2000 and 2005, construction of new freeway lane miles is expected to increase by only 1%. So, while the total number of vehicle miles traveled in Orange County is projected to continue growing, construction of additional lanes is expected to drop significantly. If these projections prove true, traffic congestion and delays could worsen in the future.

Percent Growth in Vehicle Miles Traveled, Lane-Miles, and Population in 5-Year Intervals
Orange County, 1990-2005



† Projection

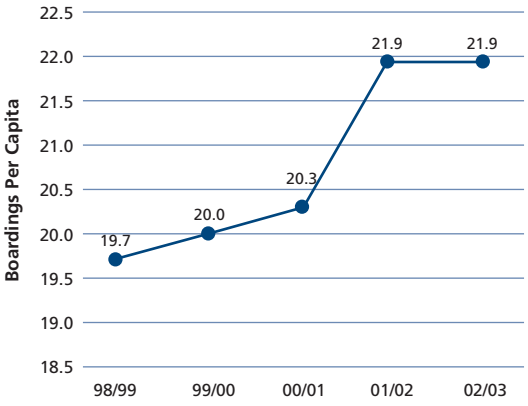
Sources: Caltrans, California Motor Vehicle Stock Travel and Fuel Forecast, November 1998; Master Plan of Arterial Highways; and California Department of Finance

Transit Performance

Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) bus passenger boardings in 2002/03 totaled 65,124,000. After a jump in 2001/02, boardings per capita in 2002/03 leveled at approximately 22 boardings per capita, the same as the previous year.

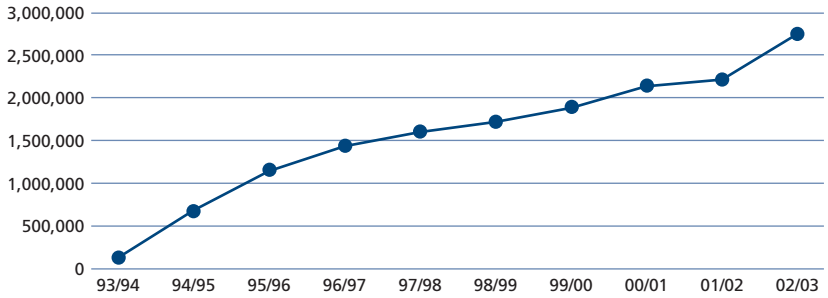
Ridership on the three Metrolink commuter rail lines that serve Orange County continues to increase with over 2.7 million riders on all lines in 2002/03. The Orange County line which runs between Oceanside and downtown Los Angeles grew to approximately 1.53 million riders in 2002/03 and the Inland Empire Line, running between San Bernardino and San Juan Capistrano, grew to 815,511 riders.[1] In May of 2002, Metrolink began service on a new 91 line, which links downtown Riverside, Fullerton, and downtown Los Angeles. This line, which parallels the severely congested SR-91, increased nine-fold in its first year of operation from 41,940 (May and June of 2002) to 391,078 in 2002/03.

OCTA Bus Passenger Boardings, 1999-2003



Sources: Orange County Transportation Authority and California Department of Finance (www.dof.ca.gov/html/Demograp/Hist_E-4.xls and www.dof.ca.gov/html/Demograp/NewHist_E-4.XLS)

Number of Commuter Rail Riders
Orange County, Inland Empire/Orange County and 91 Lines, 1994-2003

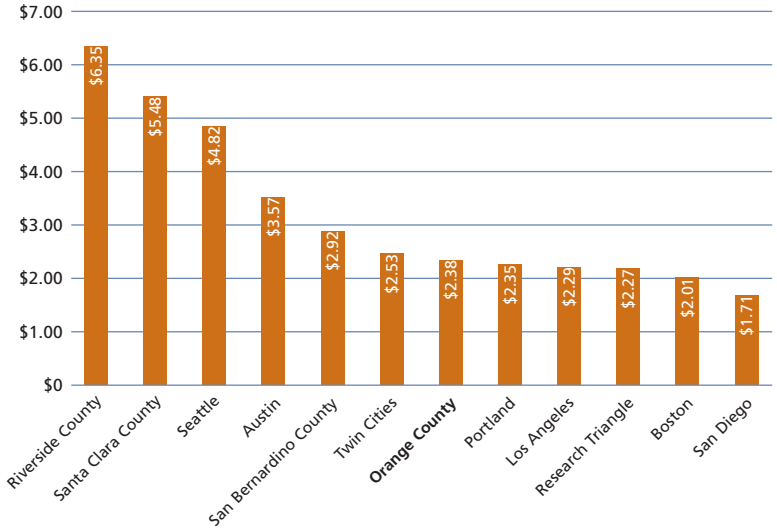


Source: Orange County Transportation Authority

[1] In 2002/03 OCTA began "Rail to Rail," a program that allows Metrolink monthly pass holders to ride Amtrak for free. Amtrak provides similar service to the Orange County line, and the 1.53 million number includes Metrolink riders on Amtrak's trains.

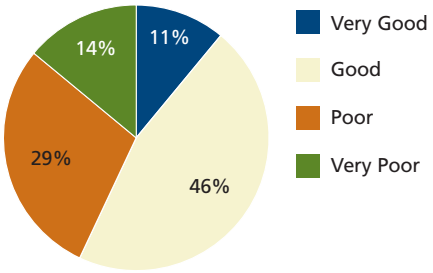
Comparing Orange County to peer metropolitan areas, Orange County's system operating costs per boarding and system expenditures per capita are among the lower range of costs for peer metropolitan areas, indicating that Orange County has a low-cost and efficient bus system. Despite the increase in recent years, Orange County's bus ridership is lower per capita than all peer areas except Riverside County, San Bernardino County and the Research Triangle. Overall, survey results indicate that county residents are satisfied with the transit system; 57% of Orange County residents polled in 2003 stated that transit service was "good" or "very good."

System Operating Costs Per Boarding, 2001



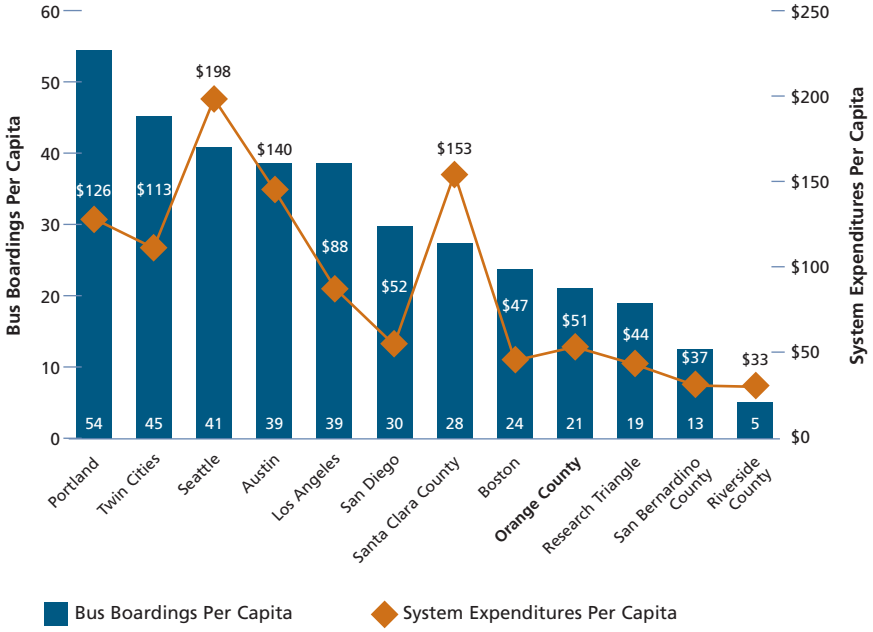
Source: Federal Transit Administration, National Transit Database, 2001 (www.ntdprogram.com)

Residents' Rating of Public Transportation in Orange County, 2003



Source: California State University, Fullerton/Orange County Business Council

Bus Boardings and System Expenditures Per Capita, 2001



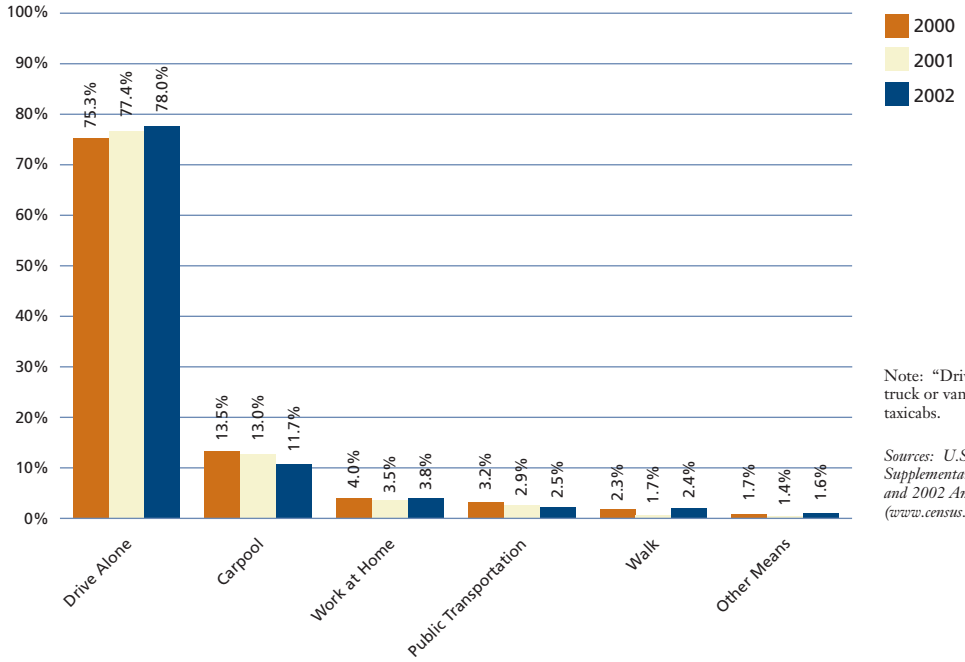
Note: The Federal Transit Administration calculates per capita boardings on a calendar year basis, while OCTA calculates on a fiscal year basis, which accounts for the slight difference in figures for Orange County.

Source: Federal Transit Administration, National Transit Database, 2001 (www.ntdprogram.com)

Alternative Modes of Travel

The percentage of Orange County residents driving alone has been inching up since 2000, while the percentage of commuters using carpools or riding transit has been decreasing. However, the changes from 2001 to 2002 for all modes were in the statistical error range and thus do not show significant trends. In 2002, 78% of Orange County commuters drove alone. Among the comparison regions, in 2002 Orange County had the 4th lowest proportion of commuters using public transportation, but tied with Minneapolis for the third highest proportion of commuters working from home.

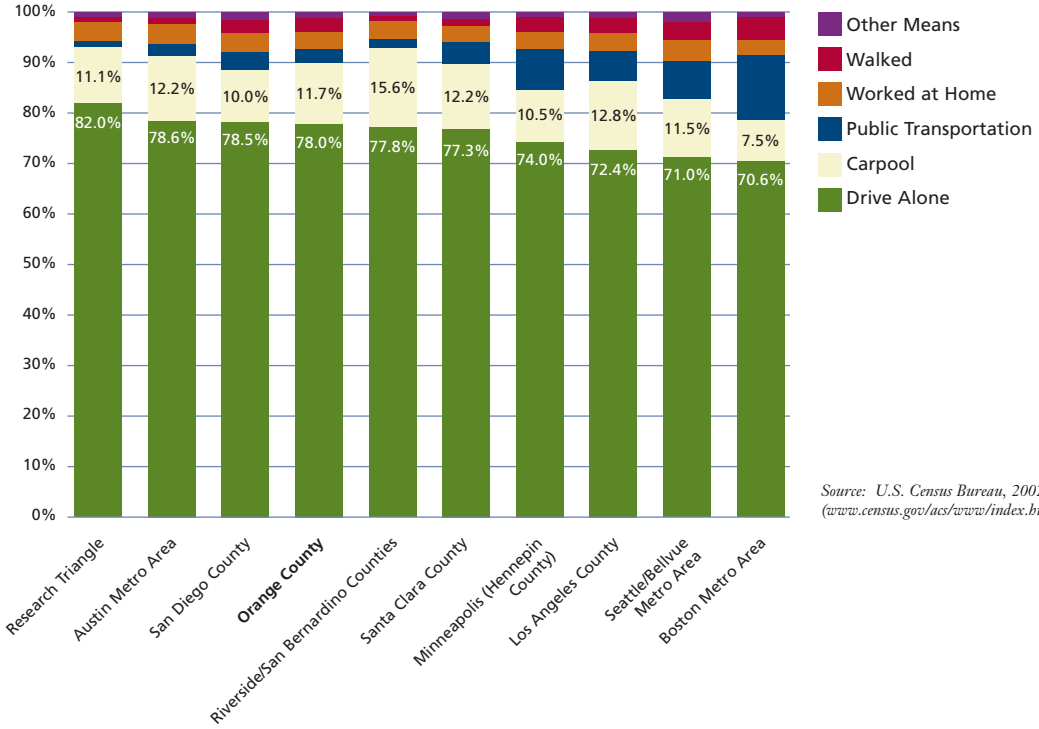
Primary Mode of Travel to Work
Orange County, 2000-2002



Note: "Drive Alone" and "Carpool" include car, truck or van. "Public Transportation" includes taxicabs.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Supplementary Survey, 2001 Supplementary Survey, and 2002 American Community Survey (www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html)

Primary Mode of Commuting to Work
Regional Comparison, 2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey (www.census.gov/acs/www/index.html)

Technology and Innovation

Orange County is a national leader with a diversified technology sector and strong Internet use. Growth in venture capital and locally generated technology degrees are critical for future prosperity.

Cluster Diversity Declines Again; Still High Relative to Peers

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures how diversified our high-tech economy is relative to other metropolitan areas in the country. The indicator uses the concept of a location quotient. A location quotient measures whether a region's employment in an industry is more or less concentrated than national employment in the same industry. The indicator counts the number of technology sectors for which employment is more concentrated at the local level than at a national level. A diversified technology sector will include concentrations in many high-tech employment clusters, so larger numbers for the indicator show a more diversified technology employment base.

Why is it Important?

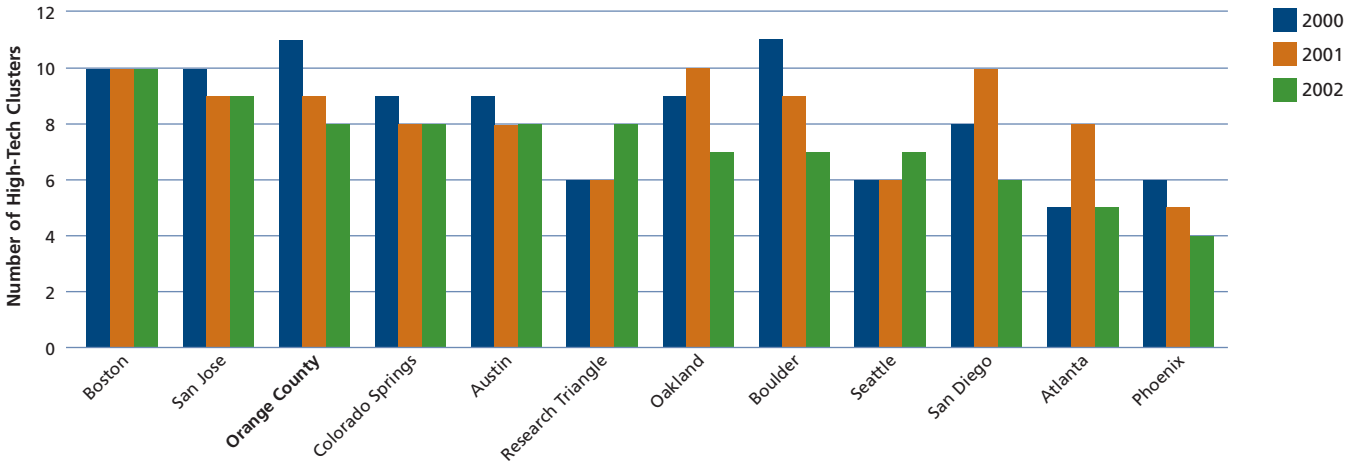
High-technology industries provide strong economic growth potential, better than average salaries, and opportunities for significant profit. Gaining a broad representation of high-tech industries in Orange County will ensure future economic prosperity for the region as these industries attract talent, finances and firms. Diversity in the local high-tech cluster base is important because it helps insulate Orange County's economy from unanticipated downturns in any particular cluster or industry segment. Too much reliance on any particular industry segment may exacerbate economic recessions.

How is Orange County Doing?

Since 1998 (when tracking for this indicator began), Orange County has consistently been one of the most diverse high-tech economies in the United States. In 2002, Orange County lagged behind only Boston and San Jose in the measure of high-tech diversity and was tied with Colorado Springs, Austin and the Research Triangle for third place in the national rankings.[1]

The diversity of the county's high-tech economy has shielded the county from the more serious impacts of the recent slowdown in technology. The county's diverse technology base also provides a strong foundation on which to build future high-tech business growth.

High-Tech Cluster Diversification, 2000-2002



Source: Milken Institute

[1] The Research Triangle is the Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area of North Carolina.

County Remains Among National Leaders in Internet Access

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the percentage of adults who have access to the Internet either at home or work.

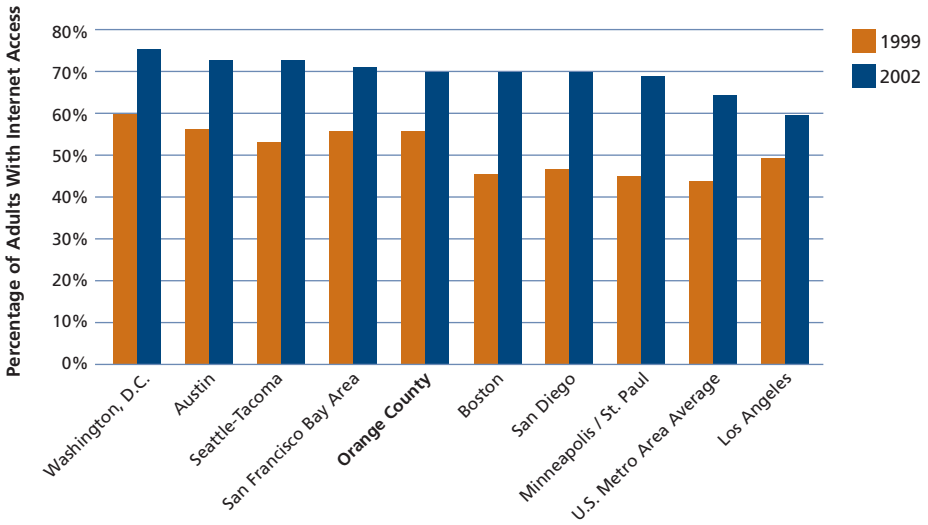
Why is it Important?

The Internet is rapidly becoming a mainstream media with far-reaching impacts on every aspect of our lives. On a community level, the Internet encourages the interaction of a variety of demographic, cultural, retail, social, business, and media groups. On an economic level, the explosive growth of the Internet is affecting not only high-tech firms, but changing the way a broad range of firms conduct business and commerce in general. The level of Internet access among Orange County residents measures how the county's population compares to other urban areas in accessing and using this new technology.

How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County is among the national leaders in adult Internet access rates. Internet usage among adults in Orange County rose substantially from 1999 to 2002 – from 56% of the county's adults having access in 1999 to 70% in 2002. This compared with a national average (across 75 large metropolitan areas) of 64% in 2002. Among peer metropolitan areas, Orange County tied for 5th in Internet access in 2002, behind Washington, D.C., Austin, Seattle-Tacoma, and the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1999, Orange County was tied for 2nd in Internet access among the same peer metropolitan areas.

Internet Usage Among Adults, 1999 and 2002



Source: Scarborough Research

Venture Capital Availability Continues to Lag Peer Regions

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures access to venture capital financing for early stage companies by looking at investments in metropolitan regions from 1999 through June of 2003. The fraction of national venture capital investments going to top metropolitan areas in the first half of 2003 is also shown.

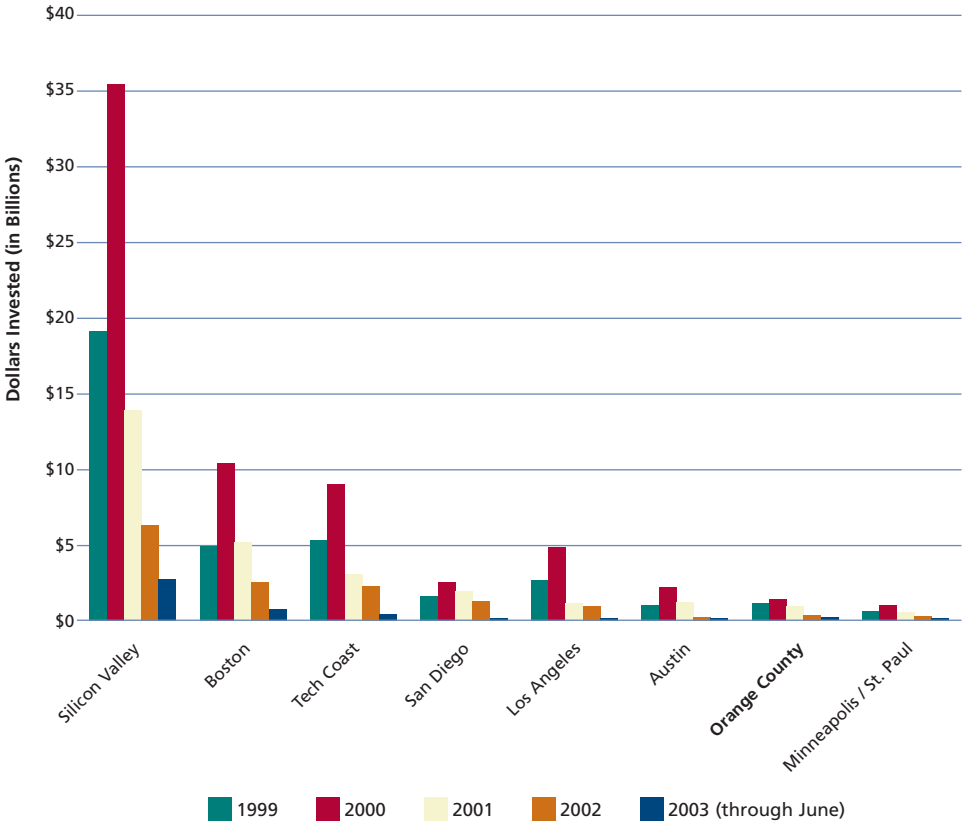
Why is it Important?

Few things are as important for a regional economy's long-term viability as the development of technological potential, human resources and innovative capacity. Venture capital is an important factor in facilitating the growth of new entrepreneurial companies, especially in high-tech industries. This indicator helps gauge one element of the county's ability to innovate, capitalize on new ideas, grow new companies, and enhance prosperity.

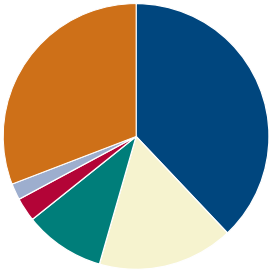
How is Orange County Doing?

At the national level, venture capital investments in 2002 were smaller than in any year since 1997. Due to the stock market decline, even promising start-ups are finding it increasingly difficult to find early-stage funding resources. Venture capital in Orange County rose from $263 million in 1996 to $1.5 billion in 2000, and then fell to $178 million for the first half of 2003. In the first half of 2003, Orange County's investments lagged behind San Diego ($309 million), Los Angeles ($250 million) and Austin ($219 million). Among peer regions, Orange County only exceeds Minneapolis/St. Paul ($103 million). While Orange County's share of national venture capital is only about 2%, the larger Tech Coast region (Orange, Los Angeles, and San Diego Counties) received 9.8% of all national venture capital dollars in the first half of 2003, placing the broader region behind Boston for the third leading source of venture capital funding. This suggests that venture capital opportunities exist in Southern California, but Orange County's share of those opportunities lags behind similarly-sized San Diego.

Venture Capital Investments
Metro Area Comparison, 1999-2003



Metropolitan Region Share of National Venture Capital Investments, 2003 (January through June)



- Silicon Valley 37.9%
- Boston 16.5%
- Tech Coast 9.8%
- Austin 2.9%
- Minneapolis / St. Paul 2.0%
- All Others 30.8%

Note: Tech Coast is Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties.

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers/Thomson Venture Economics/National Venture Capital Association MoneyTree™ Survey

Computer and Internet Access Improves

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the number of K-12 students per computer in Orange County schools and compares this to state and national levels. Lower numbers of students per computer implies better access to computer resources. The indicator also reports the number of K-12 students per classroom with Internet access in Orange County and California.

Why is it Important?

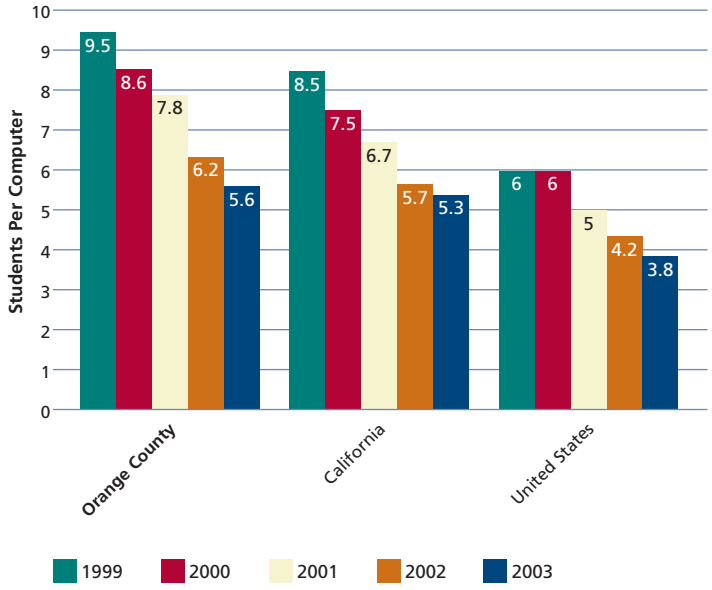
Computer skills are some of the most important technical skills that a student can possess in the new knowledge-driven economy. The Internet is a major research tool for students and an instructional device for teachers. Many experts agree that a ratio of four to five students per computer represents a reasonable level for the effective use of computers in schools.

How is Orange County Doing?

The county has made improvements both in computer access and Internet access in schools in recent years. The average number of K-12 students per computer in the county dropped from 9.5 in 1999 to 5.6 in 2003. Yet Orange County still lags state and national averages for students per computer. In California, there is an average of 5.3 K-12 students per computer, and in the U.S. there is an average of 3.8 students per computer.

Looking at Internet access, the California Department of Education reports that in 2003 Orange County had an average 24.6 students per classroom with Internet access, while in the same year California had an average of 22.7 students per classroom with Internet access. This compares with 27.2 Orange County students per classroom with Internet access in 2002.

Number of K-12 Students Per Computer, 1999-2003



Sources: California Department of Education (http:/data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest) and MDR (Market Data Retrieval) – a division of Dun & Bradstreet (www.schooldata.com/Trends/trends_files/frame.htm)

Computer Science Degrees Increase 19% Between 2001 and 2002

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the number of technology-related degrees conferred by local universities.

Why is it Important?

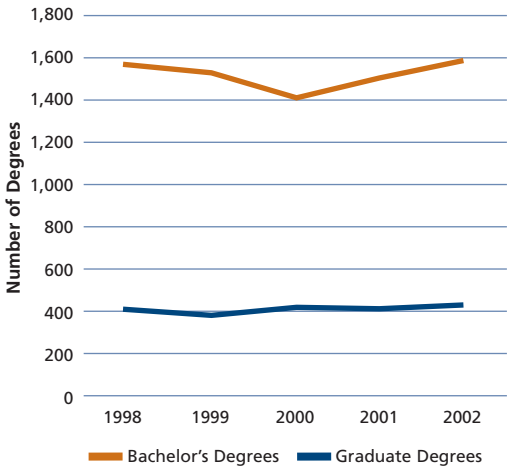
Effective workforce development and training is vital to Orange County's continued economic wellbeing. This is particularly true in recent years, as growth in Orange County's high-tech sector spurs the local demand for graduates with technical skills. High-tech jobs also provide good wages for employees.

How is Orange County Doing?

The number of technology-related graduate degrees awarded in Orange County has been stable at approximately 400 since 1994 when tracking for this indicator began. However, during this time there has been a shift in the subjects studied leading to growth in certain fields. Adding together graduate and undergraduate degrees, Computer Science and Information and Computer Science degrees awarded in Orange County increased from 400 to 476 between 2001 and 2002 (an increase of 19%). Graduate degrees in these fields increased from 83 to 108 between 2001 and 2002 (an increase of 30%). Likewise, the number of undergraduate degrees earned in the county in fields related to technology increased by 4% in 2002, building on the increase of 8% in 2001. Specifically, undergraduate degrees in Engineering, Information and Computer Science, and Computer Science increased 47% from 1998 to 2002.

Given the importance of technology in the county's economy, and the growth of Orange County's population, one would expect to see increases in the total number of technology-related degrees. While the shift in degrees appears to reflect changes in the county's economy, the overall number of technology-related degrees may not be keeping pace with the county's needs.

Tech-Related Degrees Granted, 1998-2002



Sources: California State University, Fullerton, Chapman University, and University of California, Irvine

Number of Tech-Related Bachelor's Degrees Conferred at Orange County Universities

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Biological Sciences	688	593	477	505	516
Biology	125	122	133	121	113
Engineering	241	226	239	330	313
Information and Computer Sciences	156	189	213	198	230
Computer Sciences	66	95	78	119	138
Physical Sciences	172	239	244	222	224
Other Sciences	95	52	18	13	37
Total	**1,543**	**1,516**	**1,402**	**1,508**	**1,571**

Note: Other Sciences includes environmental science, health science, food science, and nutrition.

Number of Tech-Related Graduate Degrees Conferred at Orange County Universities

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Biological Sciences	63	47	43	33	42
Biology	16	13	17	13	12
Engineering	177	141	152	148	154
Information and Computer Sciences	31	17	49	55	67
Computer Sciences	24	25	21	28	41
Physical Sciences	69	75	115	111	93
Other Sciences	36	42	37	42	36
Total	**416**	**360**	**434**	**430**	**445**

Note: Other Sciences includes physical therapy, food science and nutrition.
Sources: California State University, Fullerton, Chapman University, and University of California, Irvine

Education

Positive trends: rising academic performance scores, more students taking the SAT, and more students becoming proficient in English. To watch: declining UC/CSU eligibility, and Orange County's large enrollment of English Learners.

Most Career Education Students Find Jobs Related to Their Coursework

Description of Indicator

This indicator uses data from the Orange County Regional Occupation Programs (ROPs) to assess the status of career training and workforce development in Orange County. Orange County ROPs provide on-the-job, school-based, or training center-based career and technical skill courses and certificate programs for high school students and adults.

Why is it Important?

Career education is a critical component of the county's education and workforce development system. It provides supplemental skills for college-bound high school students, offers opportunities for adults re-entering the workforce or changing careers, and supplies the local economy with a diverse and well-trained labor force.

How is Orange County Doing?

Each year, approximately 30,000 high school students and 25,000 adults are enrolled in Orange County ROP courses at their high school, worksite, or local training center. In 2001/02, 44% of those enrolled were Latino, 32% were White, and 15% were Asian. Of those concentrating in a particular course of study, 61% completed the course of study in 2001/02, up from 53% the previous year. ROPs encourage high school students enrolled in their programs to get their high school diplomas and 86% of 12th graders did so in 2000/01 and 2001/02.

Tracking students after they complete their course of study provides an indication of the value of career education for the student personally and for the local economy. Fully 90% of those who completed their course of study in June of 2001/02 were either in active military duty, enrolled in further education, or employed six months after completing the program. Showing a relatively close match between the skills taught and the demands of the local economy, 61% of those employed after completing the program in June of 2001/02 were employed in a field related to their course of study six months later.

Orange County ROP Summary, 2001/02

Percentage of students concentrating in a course of study who completed the course of study (Completion Rate)	61%
Percentage of 12th grade high school students taking ROP courses that graduated from high school (Graduation Rate)	86%
Percentage of students completing a course of study who entered active military duty, pursued further education or got jobs (Placement Rate)	90%
Percentage of students employed in jobs related to their course of study	61%

Sources: Capistrano-Laguna, Coastline, Central County, and North County Regional Occupation Programs

Dropout Rate Decreases; Number of College-Educated Remains Above Peer Southern California Regions

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the educational attainment of Orange County residents over 25 years of age, compared to neighbor and peer regions. It also measures the percentage of Orange County public high school students who drop out in a given year.

Why is it Important?

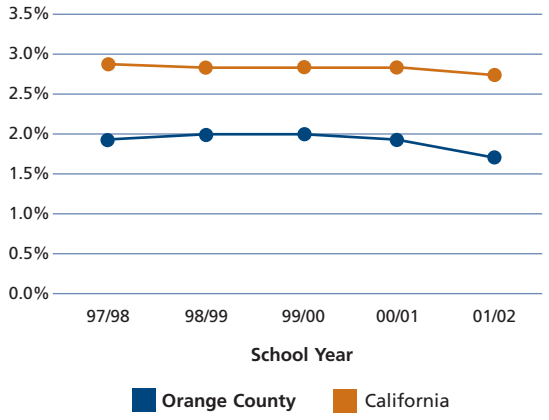
Educational attainment is important not only for personal success, but for sustaining the local economy with a skilled workforce. A high school diploma or college degree opens many career opportunities that are closed to those without these achievements. Additionally, the education level of residents is evidence of the quality and diversity of our labor pool – an important factor for businesses looking to locate or expand in the region.

How is Orange County Doing?

In a given year, Orange County has one of the lowest high school drop out rates in the state. Both the Orange County drop out rate (1.7%) and the California rate (2.7%) declined in 2001/02.

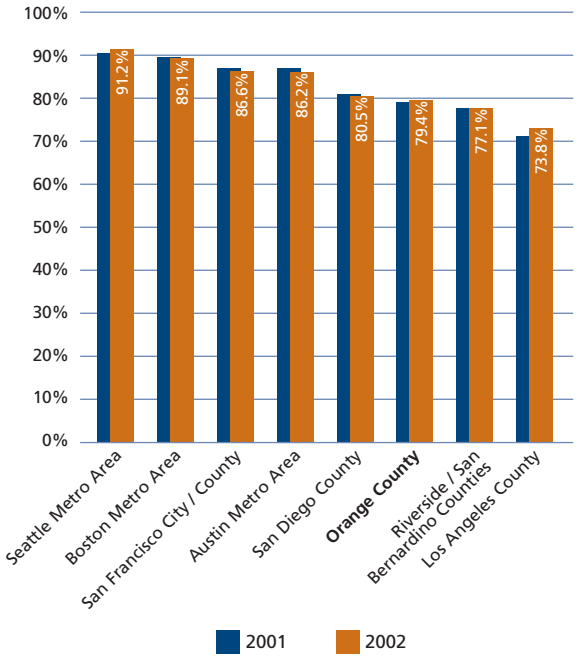
In 2002, the percentage of Orange County residents over 25 with a high school diploma increased slightly, as did the percentages of the Seattle Metro Area and Los Angeles County. These three were also the only three regions to see improvement in the percentage of residents over 25 who earned a Bachelor's degree. Orange County remains the Southern California region with the highest percentage of Bachelor's degree earners (33%). Yet, when compared to Northern California and out of state peers, Orange County has fewer residents over 25 with a Bachelor's degree.

Annual Drop Out Rate for Grades 9 through 12
1997/98-2001/02



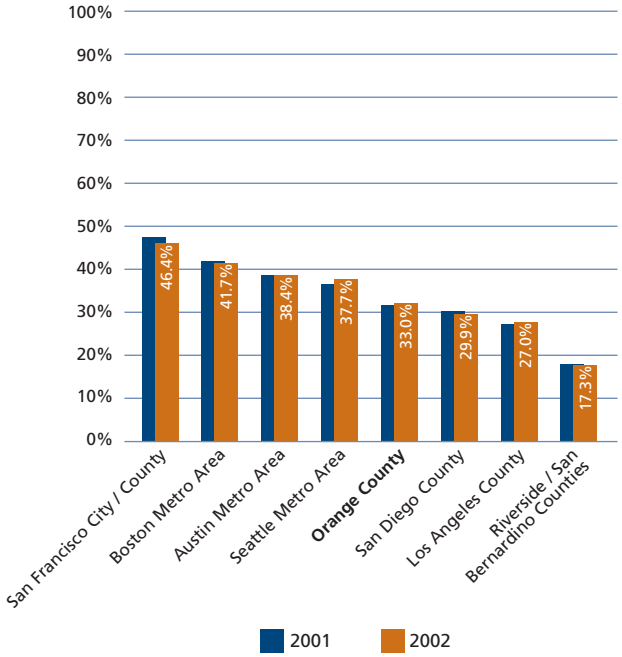
Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

Percent Over 25 Who Completed High School
2001 and 2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Data Tables (www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/index.htm)

Percent Over 25 Who Completed a Bachelor's Degree
2001 and 2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Data Tables (www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/index.htm)

UC/CSU Eligibility Declines; More Students Take the SAT

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the number of public high school graduates who have fulfilled minimum course requirements to be eligible for admission to University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) campuses. Also measured is the percentage of high school graduates in each of Orange County's districts that are taking the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

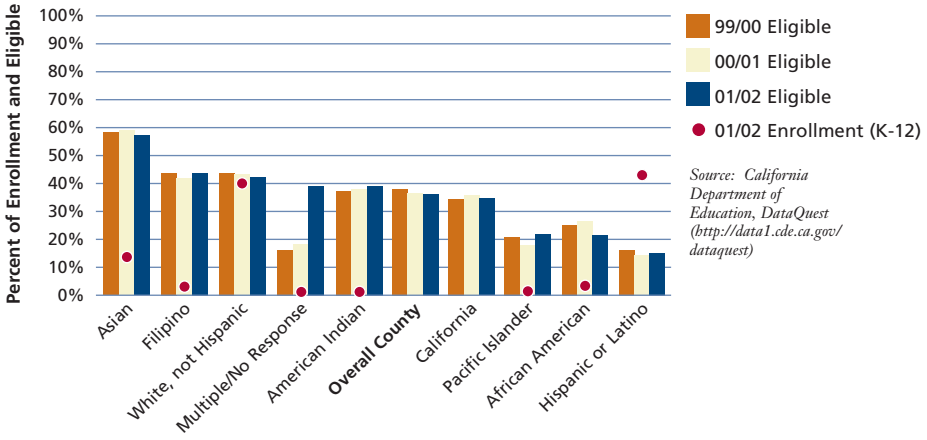
Why is it Important?

A college education is increasingly important for many jobs in Orange County. To gain entry to most four-year universities, high school students must complete the necessary course work as well as perform well on standardized tests. Latinos make up a majority of K-12 enrollment yet have the lowest rate of students taking the classes needed to get into college. This trend could negatively impact local workforce supply and limit opportunities for a significant portion of the county's population.

How is Orange County Doing?

College Readiness trends over the past three years are mixed, with UC/CSU eligibility trending downward and the percentage of students taking the SAT trending upwards. Since 1999/00, the percentage of Orange County students taking the coursework necessary to be eligible for a UC or CSU campus has declined by 5.5%. In comparison, the California rate has not changed significantly. The county's average SAT score has remained fairly steady keeping Orange County close to the top compared to the nation, state and peer regions. The average number of Orange County students taking the SAT has increased by two percentage points since 1999/00.

Percent of Graduates Who Completed UC/CSU Coursework Compared to County Enrollment, 1999/00-2001/02

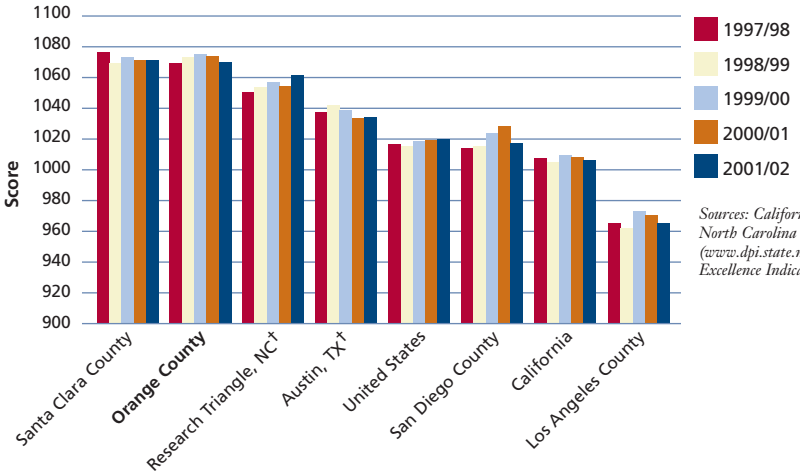


Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest)

Percent of Students Taking the SAT

School District	2001/02	Three-Year Trend
Irvine Unified	68%	↑
Laguna Beach Unified	68%	↑
Los Alamitos Unified	56%	↔
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	52%	↔
Brea-Olinda Unified	52%	↓
Tustin Unified	51%	↑
Saddleback Valley Unified	51%	↑
United States Average	**46%**	N/A
Newport-Mesa Unified	45%	↔
Capistrano Unified	45%	↑
Orange Unified	44%	↓
Orange County Average	**42%**	↑
Fullerton Joint Union High	42%	↑
Huntington Beach Union High	39%	↔
California Average	**37%**	↑
Garden Grove Unified	35%	↔
Anaheim Union High	35%	↑
Santa Ana Unified	29%	↑

SAT Scores
Metro/State Comparison, 1997/98-2001/02



Sources: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/); North Carolina State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Division of Accountability (www.dpi.state.nc.us/accountability/reporting/index.html#sat); and Texas Education Agency, Academic Excellence Indicator System Performance Reports (www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis)

† Research Triangle includes Orange, Durham and Wake Counties, North Carolina. Austin region as defined by Texas Education Agency.

Academic Performance Scores Jump

Description of Indicator

This indicator summarizes the average Academic Performance Index (API) score for each school district for 2002 and 2003. The API – ranging from a low of 200 to a high of 1000 – is calculated for each school based on the performance of individual pupils on a variety of standardized tests. Except for the Stanford 9, the 2003 API consists of exactly the same components as the 2002 API. The California Achievement Test, Sixth Edition Survey (CAT/6) has replaced the Stanford 9. The elements that remain the same are:

- The California English-Language Arts (ELA) Standards Test for grades two through 11
- The California Mathematics Standards Test for grades two through 11
- The California History/Social Science Standards Test for grades 10 and 11
- The California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) for high schools

Previous Indicators reports showed average district API for elementary school districts only; this report shows data for all schools. Individual school scores are available from the California Department of Education at: http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/.

Why is it Important?

The Academic Performance Index enables school administrators and the public to evaluate how well Orange County schools are performing academically.

How is Orange County Doing?

On average, Orange County's API remained steady between 2001 (710) and 2002 (709), but shot up in 2003 (735). All Orange County districts witnessed significant improvements in the past year and nearly all schools met their state-set growth targets for 2003. Similar patterns were seen around the state. Part of the jump in scores can be explained by the shift from the Stanford 9 to the CAT/6. The Stanford 9 measures students' performance with their peers across the country and not against an individual state's curriculum, while the CAT/6 was designed to match up with California's mandated curriculum.[1] In other words, the exam more closely tests what students have been taught. Despite the change, the CAT/6 still allows for national comparison.

Average API Scores for Orange County School Districts
2002 and 2003

	2002 API	2003 API
Irvine Unified	846	862
Fountain Valley Elementary	817	841
Los Alamitos Unified	809	831
Laguna Beach Unified	795	831
Cypress Elementary	811	828
Brea-Olinda Unified	790	826
Saddleback Valley Unified	807	820
Huntington Beach City Elementary	798	815
Capistrano Unified	783	791
Ocean View Elementary	769	790
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	749	774
Centralia Elementary	735	758
Tustin Unified	732	754
Savanna Elementary	745	753
Fullerton Elementary	720	742
Newport-Mesa Unified	720	737
Orange County Average	**709**	**735**
Orange Unified	701	731
Westminster Elementary	694	725
Huntington Beach Union High	706	720
Garden Grove Unified	680	719
Buena Park Unified	692	708
Fullerton Joint Union High	678	703
Magnolia Elementary	653	701
La Habra City Elementary	669	695
Anaheim Union High	614	651
Anaheim Elementary	607	644
Santa Ana Unified	570	613

Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

[1] Chavez, Ericka, Schools Celebrate Jump in API Scores, Sacramento Bee, October 25, 2003

Percent of English Learners Now Considered Fluent Increases

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the percentage of enrolled students who are English language learners in Orange County public schools over the past 10 years. Also shown is the percent of Orange County English Learners redesignated to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) as well as Orange County English Learner enrollment compared to neighboring and peer California counties. Children for whom English is a second language are given a test upon enrollment in school, and yearly thereafter, to assess their English fluency. Students are identified as either English Learner (students who are not fluent in English), initially Fluent English Proficient (students for whom English is a second language, but are initially identified as fluent in English), or redesignated Fluent English Proficient (students initially identified as English Learner, but are now considered fluent in English).

Why is it Important?

Students who have limited English speaking skills often face academic, employment and financial challenges. An educated workforce with good communication skills is important for a strong economy.

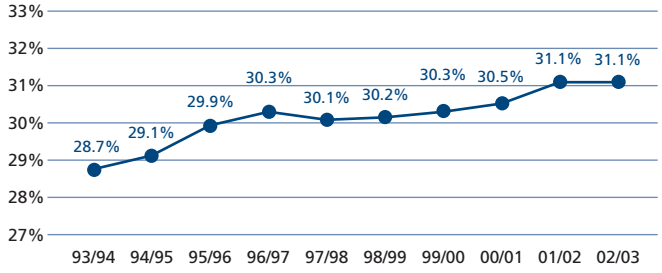
How is Orange County Doing?

Over recent years, the percentage of English Learners in Orange County has steadied. In 2002/03 there was no change in the percentage of English Learners (31.1%) from the previous year.

The number of Orange County FEP students rose from 2001/02 to 2002/03 and, with the exception of a dip in 2001/02, Orange County continues its upward trend in the number of students redesignated as FEP. The 2001/02 dip is attributed to last year's initiation of a new methodology for redesignating students FEP.

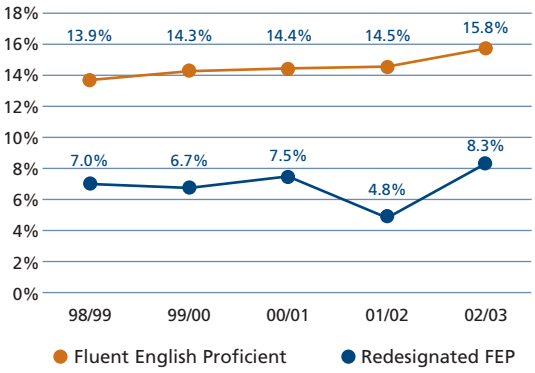
Compared to neighboring and peer California counties, Orange County had the second largest enrollment of English Learners in the 2002/03 school year (31.1%). Of those compared, Los Angeles County had the highest percent of English Learners (33.9%) while San Bernardino had the lowest (19.1%). Among peers, only Orange County did not experience an increase in English Learners in the past year. Santa Clara County had the greatest percent increase (up 2.9%).

English Learners as Percent of Total Enrollment, 1994-2003



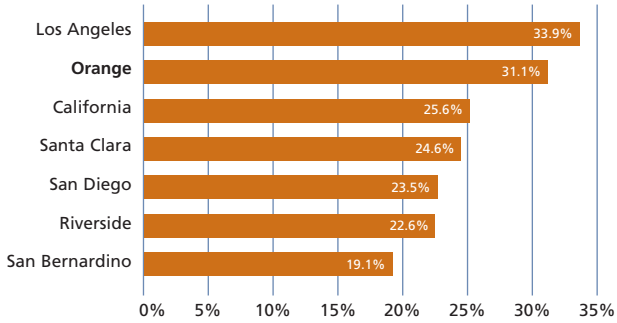
Sources: Education Data Partnership (www.ed-data.k12.ca.us) and California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

Percent of Enrollment Comprised of Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Students and Students Redesignated FEP, 1999-2003



Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

English Learners as a Percent of Total Enrollment
County Comparison, 2002/03



Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

Community Health and Prosperity

We have a low death rate for children under five and 91% of mothers receive prenatal care, contributing to falling rates of premature and low birth weight babies. But many youth are unfit. Cancer, stroke and heart disease plague our adults. The poorest of our community struggle with layoffs, low wages and homelessness as public assistance caseloads and child poverty indicators rise.

County Achieves Healthy People 2010 Goal for Early Prenatal Care for the First Time

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the percentage of live births to Orange County women who began prenatal care during the first three months of pregnancy from 1998 to 2002, with racial and ethnic detail. Rates of early prenatal care in Orange County are also compared to peer counties and California overall.

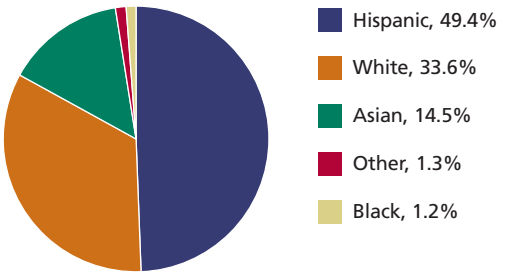
Why is it Important?

Early prenatal care provides an effective and cost-efficient way to prevent, detect and treat maternal and fetal medical problems. It provides an excellent opportunity for health care providers to offer counseling on healthy habits and lifestyles to lead to an optimal birth outcome. Higher levels of low birth weight and infant mortality are associated with late or no prenatal care.

How is Orange County Doing?

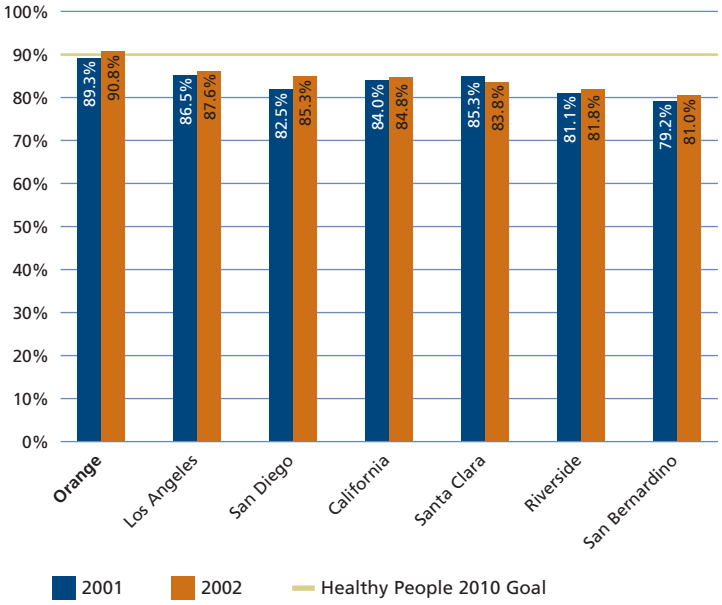
With 90.8% of Orange County mothers receiving early prenatal care in 2002, Orange County achieved the Healthy People 2010 early prenatal care goal of 90% for the first time. All ethnic and racial groups in Orange County showed improvement in 2002, lessening the disparity among groups. Among peer counties, with the exception of Santa Clara County, each witnessed an increase in early prenatal care levels between 2001 and 2002, but only Orange County met the Healthy People 2010 goal. Over the past five years, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties have had the fastest rate of improvement, about a 2% increase annually.

Live Births in Orange County
by Race and Ethnicity, 2002



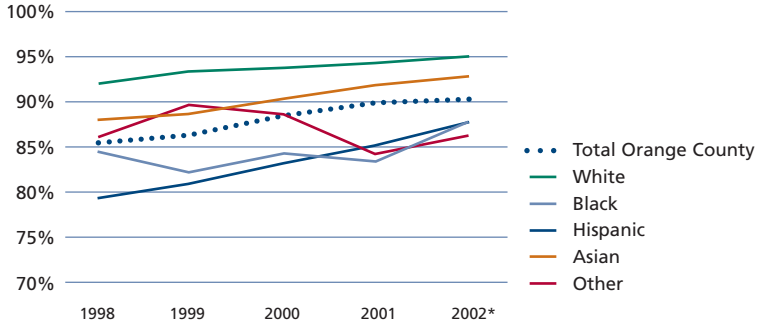
Sources: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology and Assessment and California Department of Health Services, Birth Records

Percent of Mothers Receiving Early Prenatal Care
County Comparison, 2001 and 2002



Source: California Department of Health Services, Birth Records (www.dhs.ca.gov/hisp/chs/OHIR/vssdata/tables.htm)

Percent of Mothers Receiving Early Prenatal Care
by Race and Ethnicity, 1998-2002



** 2002 data is considered preliminary.*

Note: The ethnic category Hispanic includes any race; the racial categories White, Asian and Black are all non-Hispanic.

Sources: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology and Assessment and California Department of Health Services, Birth Records

What is Healthy People 2010?
Healthy People 2010 is a national health promotion and disease prevention initiative which establishes national health objectives to improve the health of all Americans, eliminate disparities in health, and improve years and quality of healthy life.

Deaths Due to Prematurity or Low Birth Weight Fall Again

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the leading causes of death for infants (under one year) and children ages one through four years in Orange County (shown as raw number of deaths) and deaths for children ages birth through four years due to all causes compared to peer California counties (shown as number of deaths per 100,000 children ages birth through four years).

Why is it Important?

Awareness of the leading causes of death for children can lead to intervention strategies that can help prevent mortality. Many of these deaths are preventable through improved prenatal care and education.

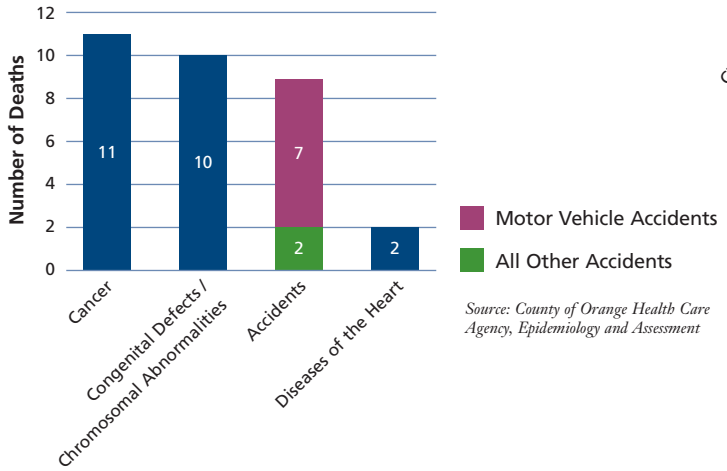
How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County's total rate of death for children under five years of age fell in 2001 to 102.5 deaths per 100,000, slightly below the 1999 rate. Among peer counties, Orange County has the second lowest rate.

Congenital defects or chromosomal abnormalities (such as spina bifida or Down's syndrome) continue to top the list of leading causes of death for infants, although the number is down from the previous year. The second leading cause of infant death, prematurity or low birth weight, has been on a downward trend since this report began tracking it three years ago. In 2001 there was one death for every 230 infants.

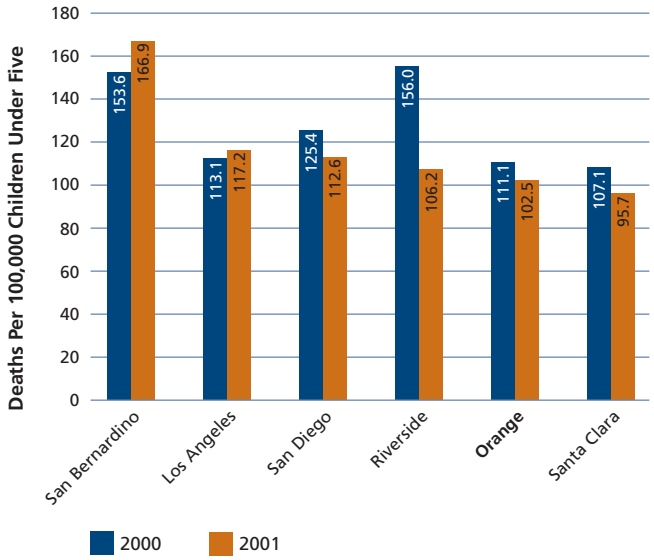
For children ages one through four, there were the same number of accidents in 2001 as 2000 (9), but they fell to the third leading cause of death in 2001 owing to more deaths due to cancer (11) and congenital defects (10). Heart disease (2) was ranked as the fourth leading cause of death. The remaining 10 deaths in this age group were each attributable to different causes, thus all tying for the fifth leading cause of death. In 2001 there was one death for every 4,628 children ages one through four.

Leading Causes of Death for Children Ages One through Four
Orange County, 2001



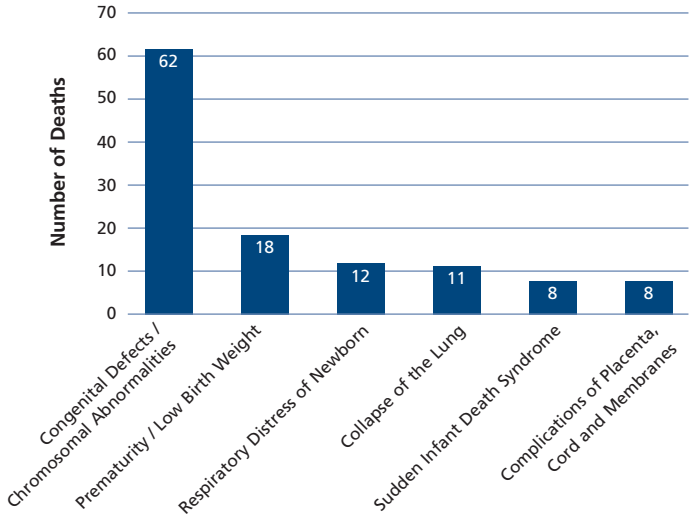
Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology and Assessment

Death Rate Due to All Causes for Children Under Five
County Comparison, 2000 and 2001



Source: California Department of Health Services, Death Records

Leading Causes of Death for Infants (Under One)
Orange County, 2001



Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology and Assessment

First Cases of Hepatitis B in Years; Immunization Rate Slowly Increasing

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures reported cases among children under six years of age (0-5) of vaccine-preventable diseases which children are required to be vaccinated against before entering kindergarten. The required immunization series includes: five doses diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP or DTP), two doses measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR), three doses hepatitis B, and four doses polio. Also measured are immunization rates in Orange County and California for children at two years of age.

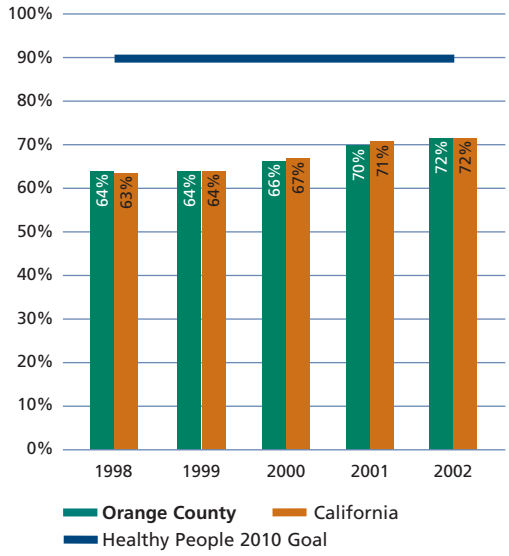
Why is it Important?

Immunization is considered to be one of the most important interventions available for preventing serious diseases among infants and children. The Healthy People 2010 immunization objective is for 90% of young children (age 1½ to 2¾) to be protected by universally recommended vaccines.

How is Orange County Doing?

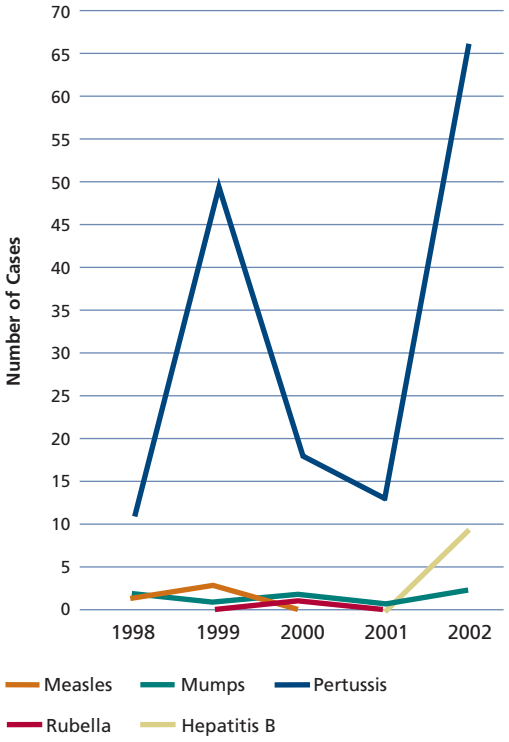
Nine cases of hepatitis B were reported in 2002 after many years of little or no incidence. All but one of the cases were perinatal suggesting the mothers of these infants were not immunized before being infected with hepatitis B virus, carried the virus during pregnancy, and passed the virus on to their newborn. Pertussis (whooping cough) spiked again in 2002 with 66 cases, higher than the most recent spikes in 1996 and 1999. Since the majority of the pertussis cases occurred in children under one year of age and the fourth dose of DTaP is usually given between 15 and 18 months, the large number of children with pertussis suggests new transmission to children not yet fully immunized for age (i.e., under 18 months of age) or un-/under-immunized. The cases of measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles) remain low. California and Orange County continue to slowly increase their rates of children adequately immunized at age two, both hitting 72% in 2002.

Percent of Orange County Children Immunized at Two Years of Age, 1998-2002



Sources: California Department of Health Services, Immunization Branch, 9th Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County 2003, and County of Orange Health Care Agency

Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Among Children Under Six Years of Age, Orange County, 1998-2002*



* There were no reported cases of diphtheria, tetanus or polio during this period among children under six years of age.

Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency, Epidemiology and Assessment

One in Ten Orange County Youth Have Asthma

Description of Indicator

This indicator uses 2001 data to compare asthma symptom prevalence (persons who reported being diagnosed with asthma by a physician at some point in their lives and reported symptoms of asthma during the preceding 12 months) and asthma diagnoses among Orange County children under 18 years of age to peer counties and the state. Asthma is characterized by recurrent episodes of breathlessness, wheezing, coughing, and chest tightness triggered by respiratory infections, house dust mites, cockroaches, animal dander, mold, pollen, cold air, exercise, stress, tobacco smoke and indoor and outdoor air pollutants. This data will be updated every two years.

Why is it Important?

Asthma prevalence has more than doubled in the past two decades, with children under five experiencing the highest degree of increase. Nationwide, in 1998, as many as 53 out of 1,000 (3.8 million) children had experienced an asthma attack in the previous 12 months, 5.8 million children visited their doctor for asthma related complaints, over 867,000 children visited emergency departments, and 246 children died. Experts are not certain why the prevalence is rising, but the personal and societal costs are mounting.[1]

How is Orange County Doing?

Asthma symptom prevalence was approximately 8.3% (or one in 12) for Orange County children. This compares favorably to the statewide pediatric asthma symptom prevalence average of 9.6%. Among peer counties, San Bernardino County had the most severe asthma symptom prevalence (13.1%) and highest percentage of children ever diagnosed with asthma (16.3%). One in 10 Orange County children has been diagnosed with asthma in their lifetime. Of those Orange County children diagnosed with asthma, 42% take medicine for asthma, somewhat less than the California average (48%). When Orange County parents were asked how often their child's physical activity is limited due to asthma, 64% reported their child experienced some limitation of activity (ranging from 'rarely' to 'always'), slightly higher than the California average of 60%.

[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, New Asthma Estimates: Tracking Prevalence, Health Care, and Mortality (http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/) and Department of Health and Human Services, Action Against Asthma: A Strategic Plan for the Department of Health and Human Services, May 2000 (http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/sp/asthma/overview.htm#epidemic)

Why is Asthma Prevalence Growing?

Although the causes of the rise in asthma over the past two decades are not known, the most likely reason is an interaction between environmental and genetic factors. Genetically inherited susceptibility to become allergic is the most important predictor of a person developing asthma, but this alone cannot be responsible for the dramatic and rapid increase in asthma prevalence since the genetic make-up of the population changes slowly.

The possible environmental factors are numerous. Many studies have demonstrated that exposure to indoor allergens and tobacco smoke are risk factors for more severe asthma. Some studies suggest that indoor allergen exposure is a risk factor for the initial onset of asthma. People now spend more time indoors, thus increasing exposure to indoor allergens and pollutants. Research has revealed that exposure to house dust mite allergen can cause the development of asthma in susceptible children. Exposure to tobacco smoke is associated with the development of asthma in younger children, however, maternal smoking during pregnancy is thought to have a stronger adverse affect than exposure after birth. Limited but suggestive evidence was found for associations between cockroach allergen exposure or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) infection and the development of asthma in infants. Outdoor air pollution is also a potential factor. A UCLA researcher found that diesel exhaust particles (DEP) caused the immune system to make "allergic" antibodies to substances that normally would not trigger such a reaction, suggesting that DEPs may be involved in the early stages of allergic sensitization that lead to asthma.

There are other possible, but less well-studied and more controversial, factors that may affect the development of asthma. One hypothesis is that certain infections in early life may block the allergic immune response and thereby protect against asthma. Other factors postulated to cause asthma include the diet during the prenatal period and early infancy and obesity in adolescents and adults.

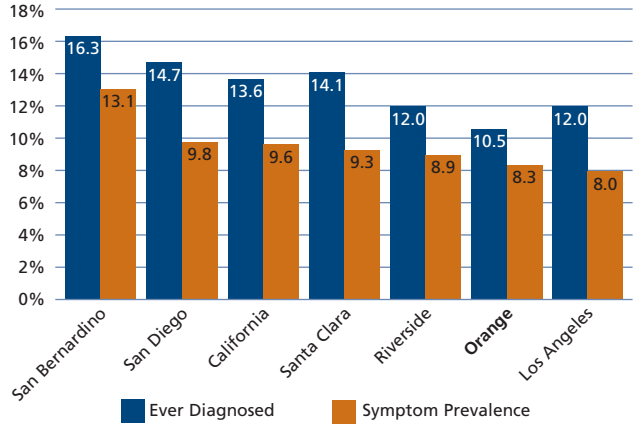
Sources: Department of Health and Human Services, Action Against Asthma, May 2000 and MedlinePlus (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/asthma.html)

Minorities and Poor Hardest Hit by Asthma

Although asthma affects Americans of all ages, races, and ethnic groups, low-income and minority populations experience substantially higher rates of fatalities, hospital admissions and emergency room visits due to asthma. Socioeconomic factors such as poverty, substandard housing that results in increased exposure to certain indoor allergens, lack of education about asthma, inadequate access to health care, and the failure to take appropriate medications may all contribute to the risk of having a severe asthma attack or, more tragically, of dying from asthma.

Source: Department of Health and Human Services, Action Against Asthma, May 2000

Children Ever Diagnosed with Asthma and Asthma Symptom Prevalence Among Children
County Comparison, 2001



Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2001 California Health Interview Survey (www.chis.ucla.edu)

Fitness Improves but Two-Thirds of Youth are Still Unfit

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures physical fitness of children by performance in six areas: aerobic capacity, body composition (percent of body fat), abdominal strength, trunk extension strength, upper body strength, and flexibility. Also measured is the percentage of children from low-income families who are considered overweight (body mass index equal or greater than the 95th percentile).

Why is it Important?

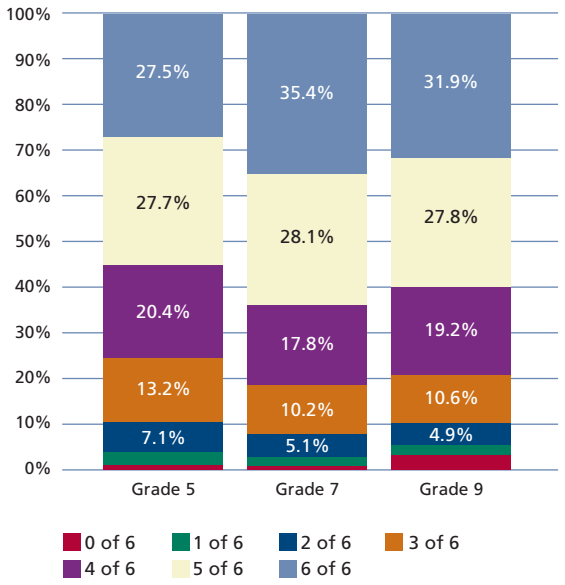
A sedentary lifestyle and being overweight are some of the primary risk factors for many health problems. Building a commitment to fitness and having a healthy body weight can have a positive impact on children's health now and in adulthood.

How is Orange County Doing?

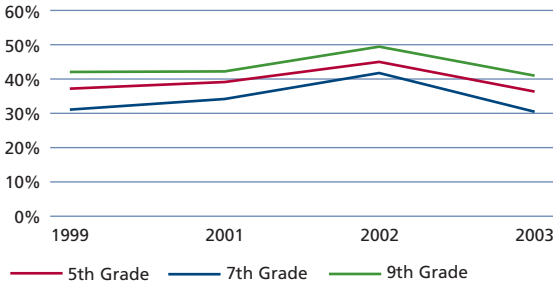
In 2003, more Orange County students were able to meet minimum fitness standards than in 2002 and performed between 4% and 8% better than the California average. However, the percentage of unfit students is still high. Two-thirds of 5th, 7th, and 9th graders could not meet the six minimum fitness standards to be considered fit in 2003. Youth in 9th grade consistently have poorer aerobic capacity than youth in 5th and 7th grades. More girls than boys meet the aerobic capacity standards until 9th grade when boys begin to out-perform girls.

Among youth ages two to 20 from low-income Orange County families, 19.5% were overweight in 2002. When broken down by age, 17.0% of two- to five-year olds (compared to 16.3% in 2001) and 21.1% of five- to 20-year olds (compared to 19.7% in 2001) were overweight. Among racial and ethnic groups, Hispanic youth have the highest proportion of overweight. Orange County now has a higher proportion of overweight youth ages five to 20 from low-income families than the United States and California averages and all the counties compared.

Percent of Orange County Children Achieving Six Fitness Standards, 2003



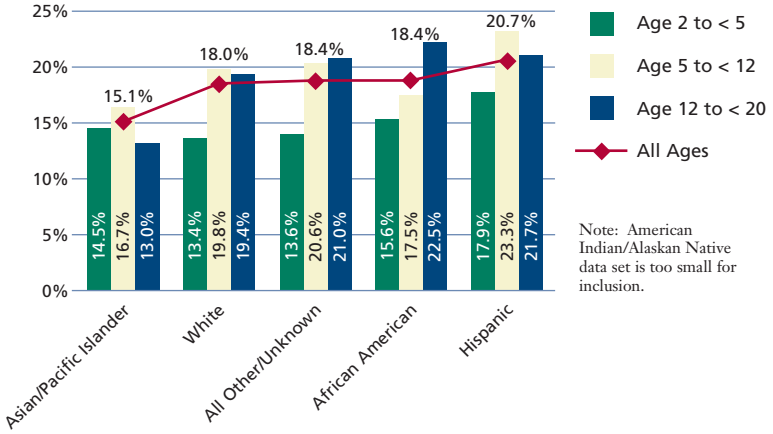
Percent of Orange County Youth Unable to Achieve Aerobic Capacity Standards, 1999-2003



Note: The fitness test was not administered in 2000.

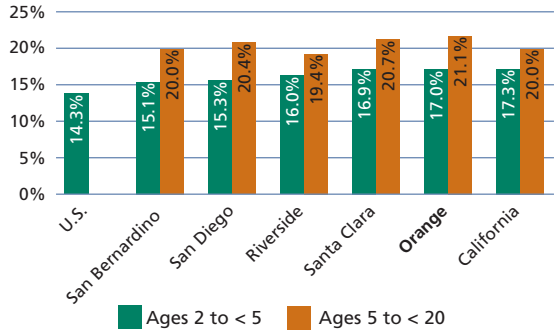
Source: California Department of Education (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest)

Percent of Low-Income Orange County Youth Who are Overweight by Race/Ethnicity, 2002



Note: American Indian/Alaskan Native data set is too small for inclusion.

Percent of Low-Income Youth Who are Overweight County Comparison, 2002



Note: U.S. data for ages five to 20 is not available. Data for Los Angeles County is divided into five areas and thus not included.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2002 Pediatric Nutrition Surveillance System and County of Orange Health Care Agency, Child Health and Disability Prevention Program

Child Care Costs Rise Three Times Faster than Family Income

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures child care quality and affordability using a variety of metrics including: increases in family income and average annual child care worker pay compared to increases in the average annual cost of licensed center-based child care for infants (up to 24 months) and preschoolers (age two through five); the average yearly cost of infant, preschool and school-age (six and up) center- and home-based care in Orange County, peer California counties and the state; the supply and demand for child care slots; and the number of licensed center-based early care and education programs accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and licensed home-based programs accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). Accreditation by the NAEYC or NAFCC is voluntary and requires early care and education providers to meet additional quality standards.

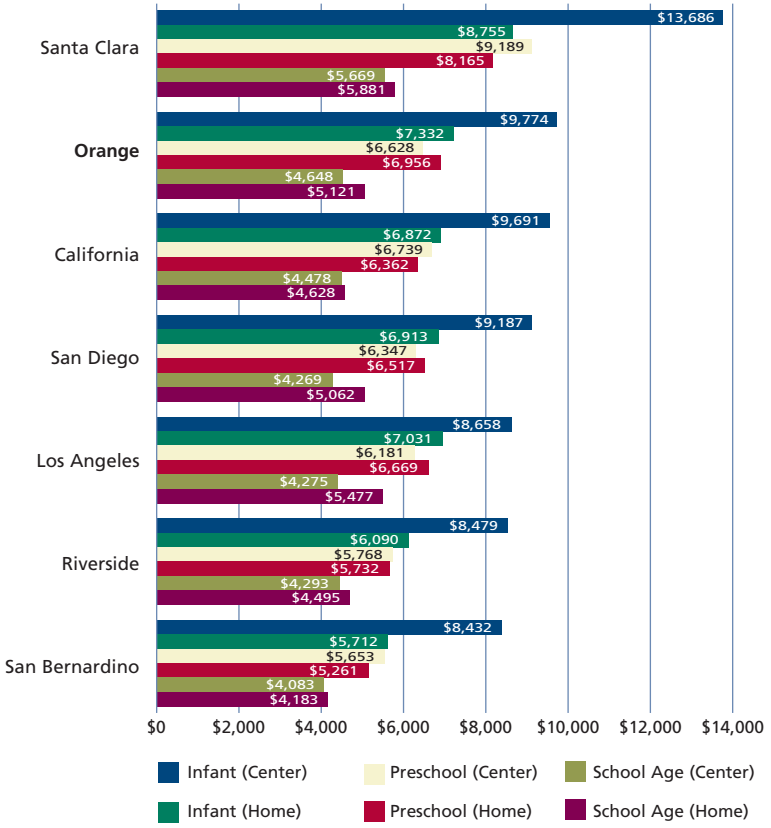
Why is it Important?

High-quality early child care and education ensures children will have a stimulating and supportive environment in which to learn the skills they need to be successful in school and life. Affordable child care is essential to enable working families to maintain economic self-sufficiency. High child care costs and the gap between supply and demand of licensed slots places a significant burden on working parents.

How is Orange County Doing?

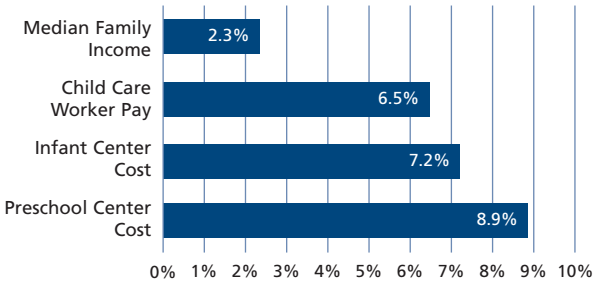
Orange County child care costs are above average, ranking second highest among the counties compared. Between 2000 and 2002 center-based child care costs rose more than three times as fast as the median family income but only somewhat faster than average annual child care worker pay. The rise in cost is most likely a function of the gap between child care demand and supply. As of 2003, there were an estimated 298,053 children potentially needing child care and 81,840 licensed child care slots which is an increase of 3,695 slots over the previous year. However, it still leaves an estimated shortfall of approximately 216,213 spaces, a proportion that ranks Orange County among the lowest of California's 58 counties in its supply of licensed child care slots per estimated need. As of December 2003, seven additional Orange County child care centers were accredited by the NAEYC and five more centers have completed the process and are waiting for validation visits. Out of 2,048 home-based programs 13 homes are accredited by the NAFCC. No new home-based programs were accredited in 2003. Taken together, 2.8% of all programs are quality accredited, an increase of 0.3% from the previous year.

Average Child Care Costs
County Comparison, 2002



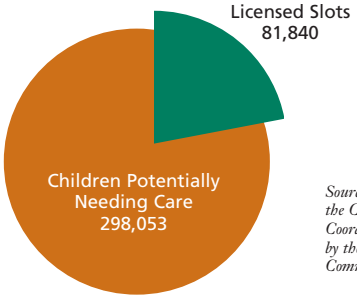
Source: California Child Care Resource and Referral Network

2000-2002 Percent Increase in:



Sources: California Child Care Resource and Referral Network; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, State and County Employment and Wages from Covered Employment and Wages, 2000-2002 (http://www.bls.gov/data/home.htm); California State University, Fullerton, Center for Demographic Research, Orange County Progress Report 2003.

Child Care Slot Supply and Demand, Orange County, 2003



Sources: Need Assessment conducted by the County of Orange, Child Care Coordinator. Licensing data provided by the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division.

Indicators of Family Wellbeing Point to Growing Financial Hardship

Description of Indicator

As a means of measuring Orange County familiesê progress toward self-sufficiency and economic stability, this indicator measures the caseloads of core public assistance programs including CalWORKs (provides cash assistance and employment services), Food Stamps (provides resources to buy food), and Medi-Cal and Healthy Families (provide health care coverage), and compares these to measures of economic status including household income as approximated by the number of children eligible for free or reduced price school lunches.[1] This indicator also measures the number of homeless families and individuals, and the problem of residential overcrowding by looking at CalWORKs grant levels and fair market rents in Orange County.

Why is it Important?

Most families in Orange County do well, despite the countyê high cost of living. The families struggling to get by are the focus of this indicator. They are susceptible to stress, unstable family relationships, and homelessness. Achieving self-sufficiency and economic stability can have lasting and measurable benefits for both parents and children.

How is Orange County Doing?

The data suggest that those near or below the poverty level continue to be affected by the recession, despite signs of economic recovery. Layoffs, tight labor markets and static wage levels combined with rising rental housing and child care costs continue to present challenges (see pages 15, 19, and 43).

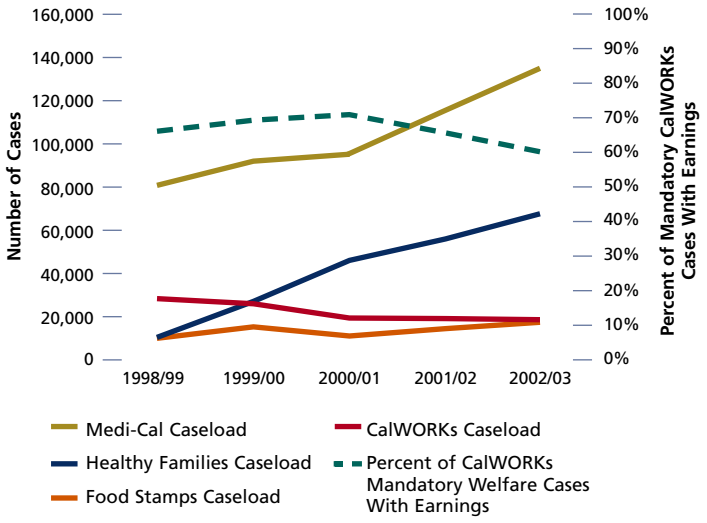
Public Assistance

The steady and steep decrease in the CalWORKs caseload since the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 was signed into law seems to be leveling. In the past two years, the caseload has decreased by about 1% annually, compared to annual decreases of 9% to 19% in previous years. While the caseload remains relatively stable, the percentage of CalWORKs recipients with jobs dropped over the past two years from 74% in 2000/01 to 60% in 2002/03. Meanwhile, the caseloads for other public assistance programs which do not have time limits, such as Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, and Food Stamps, are rising. The trends are largely a function of layoffs in entry-level and low-wage occupations, lower overall income levels, regulation changes, and outreach efforts by program operators to inform income-eligible individuals of programs available to them.

Overcrowding

In Orange County, the 2003 monthly CalWORKs grant for a family of three without other income was $704 and the median monthly rent for a two-bedroom apartment (2004 Fair Market Rent as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) was $1,220, resulting in a gap of $516 per month just to cover rent. Even a family with a full-time minimum wage earner would feel this pressure: wages of $1,080 a month and a CalWORKs grant of $277 (reduced due to earned income) would result in approximately 90% of family income going toward rent (compared to the recommended 30%) and would leave only $137 for other expenses. To compensate, families often share housing arrangements they might not choose otherwise, placing strain on personal relationships, housing stock, and city and county services.

Major Public Assistance Program Caseloads
Orange County, 1999-2003



Sources: County of Orange Social Services Agency and State of California, Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board, Healthy Families

[1] Since CalWORKs recipients generally also receive Food Stamps and Medi-Cal, the separate counts of Food Stamps and Medi-Cal presented in this report represent the additional "non-assisted" caseloads (families in which some or all members do not receive CalWORKs).

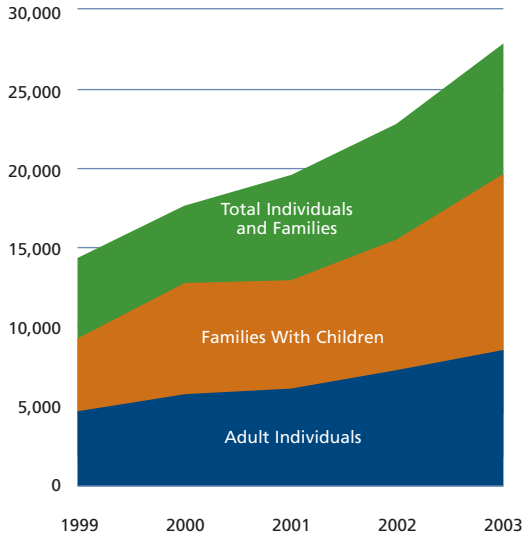
Homelessness

The number of homeless individuals and families in Orange County continues to grow, from 23,134 in 2002 to 27,947 in 2003. A person is considered homeless if they have no fixed or regular nighttime residence (including motels), have received an eviction notice, or are staying in a temporary shelter or place that is not designed for housing, such as a car or garage. Families with children represent 70% of the total homeless population. Nearly 65% of the homeless in Orange County have jobs, indicating that having a job does not guarantee the ability to afford housing. A growing number of families live in motels because they cannot afford the high upfront costs to rent an apartment (first and last month's rent and/or a security deposit). Financial hardship also often results in bad credit which can lock families out of the county's tight rental housing market. Programs like Section 8, which provides rental assistance, do not have enough funds to meet the demand.

Income and Poverty

The number of children living in families with incomes low enough to be eligible for free or reduced price school lunches serves as a proxy for child poverty. Most school districts, and Orange County overall, saw increases in the number of children eligible to participate in this program. A child is eligible for subsidized school meals if his or her parents' income is below 185% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The FPG for 2003 ranges from $12,120 for a family of two, to $18,400 for a family of four, and up to $30,960 for a family of eight. To be eligible for reduced price school meals, household income must be less than $22,422 for a family of two, $34,040 for a family of four, and $57,276 for a family of eight.

Estimated Number of Homeless in Orange County 1999-2003



Source: County of Orange, Housing and Community Development Department

Percent and Number of Children Eligible for Free or Reduced Price School Meals, 2002/03*

School District	Percent	Number	Change From Prior Year (%)
Anaheim Elementary	84%	18,649	↓
Santa Ana Unified	75%	47,638	↑
Magnolia Elementary	73%	5,122	↑
La Habra City Elementary	68%	4,364	↓
Buena Park Elementary	66%	4,222	↓
Westminster Elementary	62%	6,266	↔
Garden Grove Unified	60%	30,083	↑
Savanna Elementary	54%	1,344	↑
California	**49%**	**3,006,877**	↑
Centralia Elementary	45%	2,381	↑
Orange County Average	**39%**	**198,167**	↑
Newport-Mesa Unified	38%	8,531	↑
Fullerton Elementary	37%	5,070	↓
Tustin Unified	34%	6,145	↑
Ocean View Elementary	34%	3,413	↑
Orange Unified	33%	10,788	↓
Cypress Elementary	29%	1,382	↑
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified	26%	6,870	↑
Brea-Olinda Unified	18%	1,122	↔
Capistrano Unified	18%	8,584	↑
Huntington Beach City Elementary	14%	946	↑
Saddleback Valley Unified	13%	4,485	↑
Fountain Valley Unified	11%	713	↔
Laguna Beach Unified	9%	242	↔
Los Alamitos Unified	9%	799	↑
Irvine Unified	7%	1,724	↑

*Elementary and unified school districts only.

Source: California Department of Education, DataQuest (http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

One in Seven Adults Report Needing Mental Health Help; Less than Half Receive it

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the percentage of California, Orange County and peer county adults (18+) who indicated a need for help with an emotional or mental health problem in the past 12 months and the percentage of adults who visited a specialist for an emotional or mental health problem in the past 12 months. Also presented is time spent feeling down in the past four weeks and whether psychological counseling was received in the past 12 months for teens (12-17) in Orange County compared to California. All data is for 2001 and will be updated every two years.

Why is it Important?

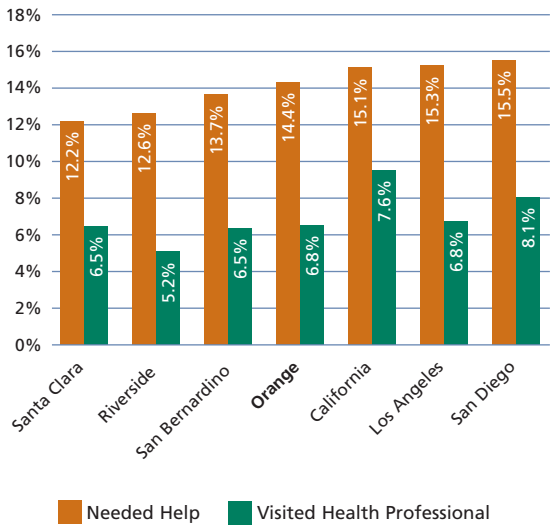
Mental health disorders often go unreported and untreated. Untreated, mental health disorders can worsen, leading to difficulties in the home and workplace, and in severe cases, suicide.

How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County adults are in the mid-range among areas compared in terms of needing help for emotional or mental problems (14.4%). Only 6.8% visited a specialist indicating a gap of 7.6% who did not seek help for their problem. Of those needing or receiving emotional or mental health care, 7% reported difficulties or delays in getting help. Of the 84% of Orange County adults with health insurance coverage (see Health Insurance Coverage, page 50), 15% reported that mental health care is not covered by their plan.

Most (62%) Orange County teens do not report symptoms of depression; however, 23% report being depressed a little of the time and 14% report being depressed some of the time. About 11% of Orange County youth have received psychological or emotional counseling in the past 12 months, very similar to the California rate.

Percent of Adults (18+) Needing and Receiving Help for an Emotional or Mental Problem in the Past 12 Months
County Comparison, 2001



The Mental Health/Drug Abuse Connection
Nationwide, approximately 48% of the U.S. population aged 15-54 has had an alcohol, drug abuse, and/or mental disorder in their lifetime. Depressed individuals are more inclined to drink, smoke or use drugs, and more than half of individuals reporting a substance abuse problem in their lifetimes have also had mental disorders.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (www.samhsa.gov)

Orange County Teens' (Ages 12-17) Response to:

	Most of the time*	Some of the time	A little of the time	Not at all
How much of the time during the past four weeks have you felt so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer you up?	1%	14%	23%	62%
	Yes	**No**		
In the past 12 months, have you received any psychological or emotional counseling?	11%	89%		

* Statistically unstable

Source: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, 2001 California Health Interview Survey (www.chis.ucla.edu/index.html)

Juvenile Drug-Related Arrests Decline; Treatment Rate Increases

Description of Indicator

Direct measures of substance abuse are elusive, so the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs uses a variety of indicators to help gauge the extent of the problem. Two of these are measured in this indicator: the rates of drug-related crime among adults and juveniles and drug-related hospital discharges.[1]

Why is it Important?

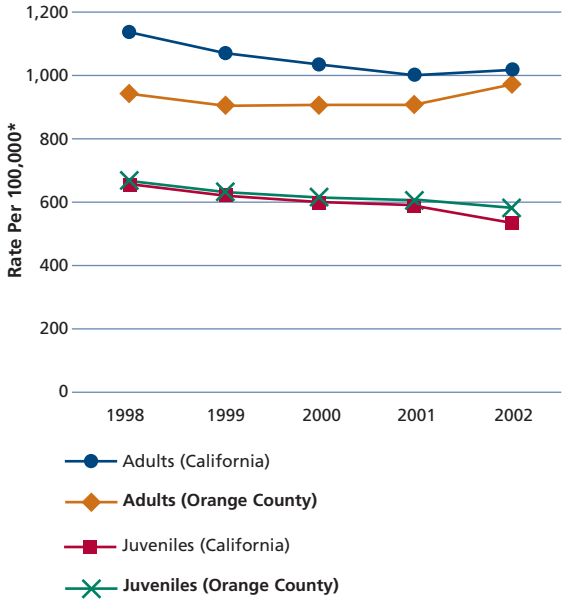
A broad spectrum of public health and safety problems are intimately linked with substance abuse including addiction, traffic accidents, domestic violence and other crime, unintended pregnancy, and serious diseases such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, and birth defects.

How is Orange County Doing?

Data from 2002 reveal that juvenile drug-related arrests continue to decline in Orange County and California. Slightly more Orange County youth than the California average are arrested for drug-related crime. Adult drug-related crime in Orange County in 2002 rose to a level not seen since 1998. California's adult arrest rate also increased but not as sharply as Orange County's.

Ending a five-year downward trend, the rate of Orange County residents getting treatment for substance-related conditions increased in 2000. Orange County has the second lowest treatment rate among the counties compared. This statistic suggests two equally plausible trends: 1) that fewer substance-addicted residents are getting the treatment they need, and 2) that Orange County has fewer substance-addicted residents than most of the counties compared.

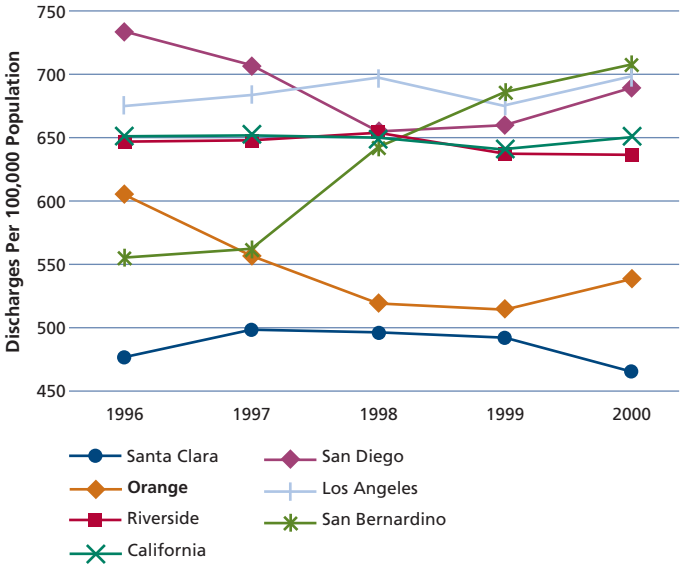
Drug-Related Arrests (Felonies and Misdemeanors) for Adults and Juveniles
California and Orange County, 1998-2002



* Rate for juveniles is calculated with the population ages 10 though 17. The rate for adults is calculated with the population ages 18 through 65.

Source: California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (http://caag.state.ca.us/cjsc/pubs.htm)

Alcohol and Drug-Related Hospital Discharges
County Comparison, 1996-2000



Source: California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Indicators of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

[1] The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development collects inpatient discharge data from all non-federal acute care hospitals in California. Freestanding chemical dependency hospitals, as well as units of acute care hospitals treating patients for alcohol abuse, are included in the database.

Heart Disease and AIDS Show Greatest Improvement but Fall Short of Health Objectives

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the health status of the Orange County population in 2001 compared to the state using mortality rates (age-adjusted deaths per 100,000 people) and morbidity rates (cases per 100,000 people) and shows the county's progress toward achieving Healthy People 2010 National Objectives.[1] Also shown is whether Orange County's rates improved or worsened from the previous year and how Orange County ranks among all 58 California counties (a rank of one is best).

Why is it Important?

Viewing Orange County in relation to statewide averages and national health objectives helps identify public health problems that are comparatively more (or less) pronounced in Orange County and can inspire new public health initiatives to address problems.

How is Orange County Doing?

Orange County continues to achieve the Healthy People 2010 goal for deaths due to homicide and motor vehicle accidents. For the remaining commonly measured health status indicators the county did not achieve the national objectives. In terms of mortality, drug-related deaths (7.2 per 100,000) are farthest from achieving the Healthy People 2010 goal (one per 100,000) and lung cancer deaths (45.4 per 100,000) are the closest to achieving the goal (44.9 per 100,000). In terms of morbidity, AIDS cases (10.9 per 100,000) and tuberculosis cases (9.1 per 100,000) are both relatively far from the goal of one per 100,000 for both diseases. Despite Orange County's low rank in cases of AIDS and tuberculosis, 44th and 47th respectively, the county remains above the state averages for these diseases because there tend to be more cases of these diseases in highly populated, urban counties. If California was a county it would fall between 50th and 51st for AIDS and 48th and 49th for tuberculosis.

Heart disease and AIDS showed the greatest degree of improvement from the previous year. However, heart disease remains the leading cause of death for Orange County residents. Among all 58 California counties, Orange County ranks close to the bottom in deaths due to heart disease (53rd). The county's largest fall in California rank was for deaths due to breast cancer, from 19th in 2000 to 28th in 2001. For three years in a row, more Orange County residents died of cancer, stroke, and heart disease than the average Californian.

What is Healthy People 2010?
Healthy People 2010 is a national health promotion and disease prevention initiative which establishes national health objectives to improve the health of all Americans, eliminate disparities in health, and improve years and quality of healthy life.

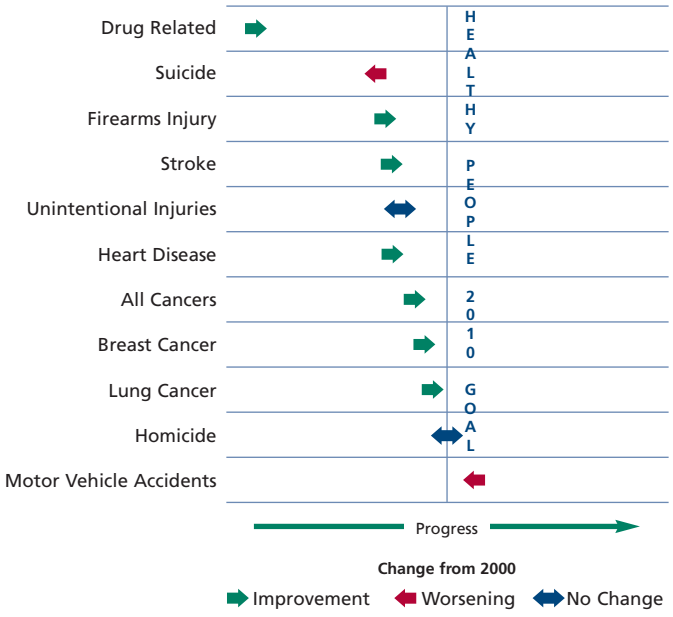
Orange County Age-Adjusted Death Rates Compared to the California Average, 2001*

Rank	Cause of Death	County's Rate is Better than California Average
6	Firearms Injury	•
8	Unintentional Injuries	•
12	Suicide	•
13	Motor Vehicle Accidents	•
17	Lung Cancer	•
17	Drug-Related	•
23	Homicide	•
28	Breast Cancer	•
31	All Cancers	
31	Diabetes	•
42	Stroke	
44	AIDS (case rate)	•
47	Tuberculosis (case rate)	•
53	Heart Disease	

* Ordered by Orange County's rank among California counties (one is best, 58 is worst). Tuberculosis and AIDS are measured by case rates, not death rates.

Source: California Department of Health Services, County Health Status Profiles 2002 (www.dhs.cahwnet.gov/)

Age-Adjusted Death Rates: Progess Towards Healthy People 2010 Goals
Orange County, 2001



[1] Counties with varying age compositions (e.g. a county with a large population of elderly vs. a county with a large population of children) can have widely disparate death rates since the risk of dying is mostly a function of age. To enable county comparisons, age-adjusted death rates, which control for this variability, are used rather than crude death rates. The data is comprised of three-year averages (1999-2001).

Most Seniors Healthy and Financially Stable; Crime Increases

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the status of Orange County seniors (those 65 years of age or over) through economic, crime, and health measures.

Why is it Important?

Due to increasing longevity and the imminent retirement of the Baby Boom generation, the proportion of seniors in Orange County will rise significantly over the next decade. Their economic and physical wellbeing not only impacts seniors themselves, but also their families and the demand for services.

How is Orange County Doing?

Economic

In 2001, median household income for seniors was $35,973, less than the county median household income of $57,457. While Census estimates found 9.3% of Orange County seniors with incomes below the poverty thresholds for seniors, assets like real estate are not figured in this estimate. Fully 79% of Orange County seniors own their own home, compared to 60% of the general population.

Crime

Violent crime against Orange County seniors rose an average of 10% each year from 1998 to 2002, putting the county just behind Riverside County for the highest rate of increase among peers. However, on a per capita basis, crime against seniors in the county is lower than peers and the California average. While the average number of adult abuse reports received each month by the County of Orange Social Services Agency (SSA) dipped slightly in the past year, from 1998/99 to 2002/03 the number of reports increased 42%. Adult abuse includes self-neglect (the most common form of abuse) as well as abuse by others, such as neglect or financial, physical, or emotional abuse. Abusers are most likely a family member or friend. The increase in crime against seniors is primarily attributed to an aging population, increased community awareness, and expansion of the types of abuse that must be reported.

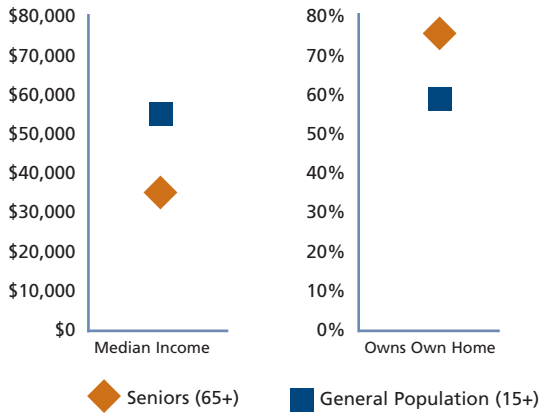
Health

One in five Orange County seniors considers themselves in excellent health, compared to one in eight California seniors. Most Orange County seniors rate their health as very good or good (58.4%). Orange County seniors were also less likely to rate themselves in poor health (7.1%) than the California average (8.0%). Those in poor health often need assistance with daily living. As of June 2003, the number of seniors receiving In-Home Supportive Services through the County of Orange SSA increased 20% in one year for the second year in a row (from 5,378 to 6,589).

Six percent of Orange County seniors reported needing help with mental or emotional problems in the past 12 months, compared to 14% of the Orange County adult population.[1] However, seniors often underreport depression or emotional problems. An alternative method of assessing emotional wellbeing is to survey for the occurrence of stressful life events like losing a spouse (severe life stressor) or stopping driving (modest life stressor). The 2002 Orange County Health Needs Assessment found that 27% of seniors reported seven or more stressful life events in the past year, increasing their chances of depression or serious illness.

[1] University of California, Los Angeles, 2001 California Health Interview Survey

Orange County Senior Median Household Income and Homeownership Rate Compared to Orange County Overall, 2001



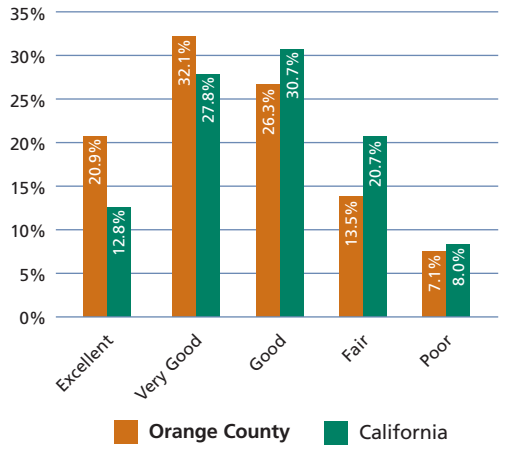
Source: 2001 Supplementary Survey Summary Tables (http://factfinder.census.gov)

Violent Crime Against Seniors
County Comparison

Rate Per 100,000 Persons Over 65 (2002)		Five-Year Average Annual Percent Change (1998-2002)	
Los Angeles	419	Riverside	13%
California	204	**Orange**	**10%**
San Bernardino	168	San Bernardino	7%
Riverside	151	Los Angeles	1%
San Diego	121	Santa Clara	1%
Santa Clara	95	California	0%
Orange	**76**	San Diego	-9%

Sources: California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center and U.S. Census Bureau, 2002 American Community Survey

Self Assessment of Health Status by Orange County and California Seniors 65+, 2001



Sources: Orange County Health Needs Assessment Spring Report 2002 (Orange County data) and 2001 California Health Interview Survey (California data)

County Matches State Average for Health Insurance Coverage

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the percentage of adult residents (ages 18+) who have health insurance coverage, compared to peer counties and California. Orange County detail is provided for children, racial/ethnic breakdown, age, and the most frequently cited reasons for being uninsured.

Why is it Important?

Access to quality health care is heavily influenced by health insurance coverage. Because health care is expensive, individuals who have health insurance are more likely to seek routine medical care and to take advantage of preventive health screening services than those without such coverage – resulting in a healthier population and more cost-effective health care.

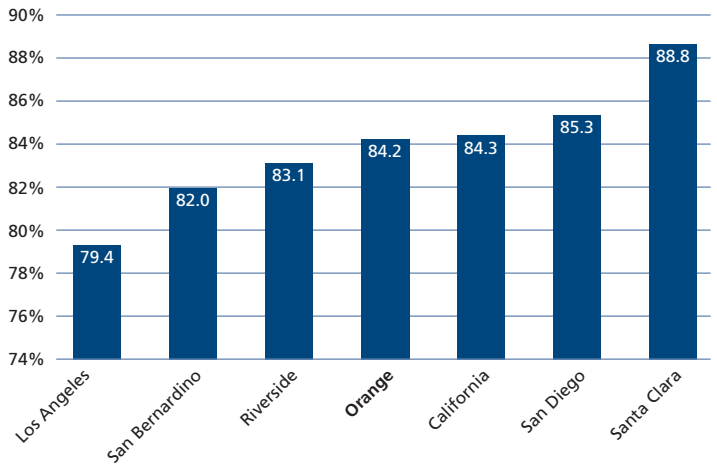
How is Orange County Doing?

In 2001, at 84.2%, Orange County falls in the middle of the counties compared for the percentage of adult residents who have health insurance coverage. When seniors, who have nearly 100% coverage rates, are removed from the calculation, the rate falls to 81.8%.[1] Fully 91% of children (0-17) in Orange County are covered.[2] Whites are more likely to have coverage than the other racial and ethnic groups compared. The Healthy People 2010 target for health insurance coverage is 100%.

As adult residents age they appear to have greater opportunities, financial means, or motivation for obtaining health insurance coverage. In Orange County, 65% of 20-24 year olds are insured versus 90% of 50-54 year olds. The primary reason cited by those who do not have coverage was that it was too expensive and they could not afford it (42.1%). The second and third most common reasons for lack of coverage were due to changing or losing jobs (12.2%) and feeling healthy and therefore having no need for it (8.9%).

[1] Data for adults and seniors, with age and racial/ethnic detail, is drawn from the 2001 results of the debut UCLA California Health Interview Survey which will be updated every two years. For comparison purposes, the Orange County Health Needs Assessment (OCHNA) reported 88.2% of Orange County adults (18+) had health insurance coverage in 2001, up from 83.3% in 1998.
[2] Data for children is drawn from the 2001 results of the OCHNA.

Rate of Health Insurance Coverage (Ages 18+)
County Comparison, 2001



Percent Currently Insured (Ages 18-64) by Race / Ethnicity
Orange County, 2001

Latino	64%
Asian	77%
Other Single/Multiple Race	78%
White	91%

Note: Due to small samples, the data for Pacific Islanders, African Americans, and Native Americans/Alaskan Natives is unstable and thus not provided.

Source: University of California, Los Angeles, Center for Health Policy Research, California Health Interview Survey, 2001 (http://www.chis.ucla.edu/index.html)

Public Safety

Ranking high among peers as a safe place to live, Orange County's investment in public safety and anti-gang measures pays off.

Number of Children Removed from Home Decreases for Fourth Year

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the average monthly caseload of children (under 19 years of age) in out-of-home care from 1998/99 to 2002/03 (with a relative, foster family, or group home). Removal from the home occurs after substantiation of child abuse or neglect and a determination by the Juvenile Court that the child cannot be adequately protected while remaining at home. Also shown is the caseload of children in out-of-home care per 1,000 children in Orange County compared to peer California counties and California overall.

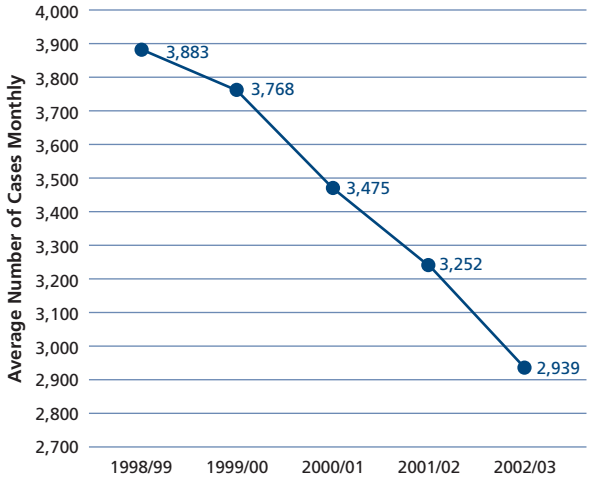
Why is it Important?

Out-of-home placement is often the final act to protect children from dangerous circumstances after repeated attempts to stabilize their families.

How is Orange County Doing?

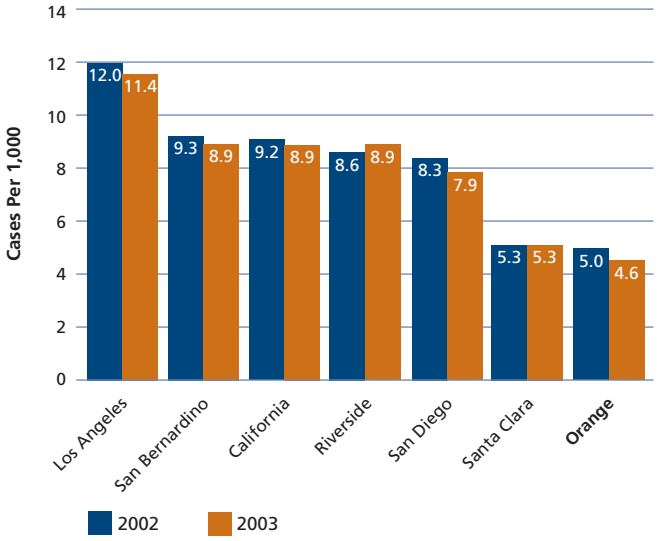
The number of children in out-of-home care in 2002/03 decreased for the fourth year in a row, down 10% from 2001/02. In 2003, Orange County's out-of-home care prevalence rate decreased slightly to 4.6 children per thousand children in out-of-home care. This trend coincides with efforts in recent years to prevent abuse and end out-of-home placement for children as quickly as possible through family reunification with support services, guardianship, or adoption.

Children in Out-of-Home Foster/Relative Care
1999-2003



Source: County of Orange Social Services Agency, Children and Family Services

Children Ages 0-18 in Out-of-Home Care
County Comparison, July 2002 and 2003



Note: Due to ongoing refinements, the 2002 figures published in the 2003 Community Indicators report vary slightly from those shown here.

Source: University of California, Berkeley, Center for Social Service Research, Performance Indicators for Child Welfare Services in California, Child Welfare Supervised Foster Care Prevalence Rates (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/childwelfare/)

Juvenile Felony Arrests Fall for Seventh Year; Adult Arrests Increase

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures annual felony arrests for persons under 18 years of age (juveniles) and persons 18 years of age and over (adults). It also compares Orange County's total felony arrest rate to the statewide average and peer counties. Felonies are the most serious offenses and include crimes such as murder, rape, robbery, and burglary.

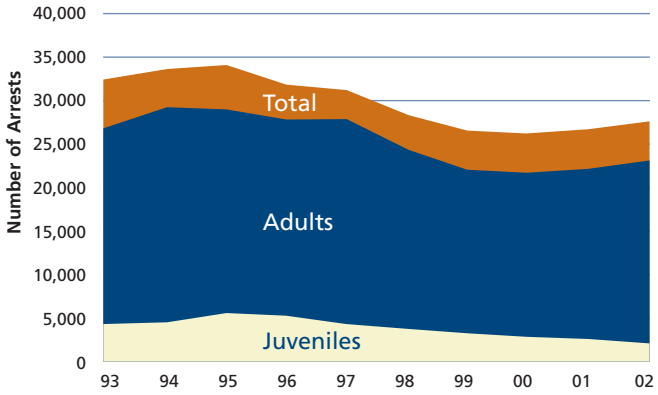
Why is it Important?

Tracking juvenile and adult felony arrests helps the community understand the level of serious crime in Orange County and the extent that youth and adults contribute to that crime. The 15-19 year old age cohort (which includes both juveniles and adults) has the highest rate of criminal behavior in Orange County. While youths make up a small portion of overall felony arrests, criminal justice experts argue that intervening early with at-risk youth can help reduce criminal activity in their adult lives.

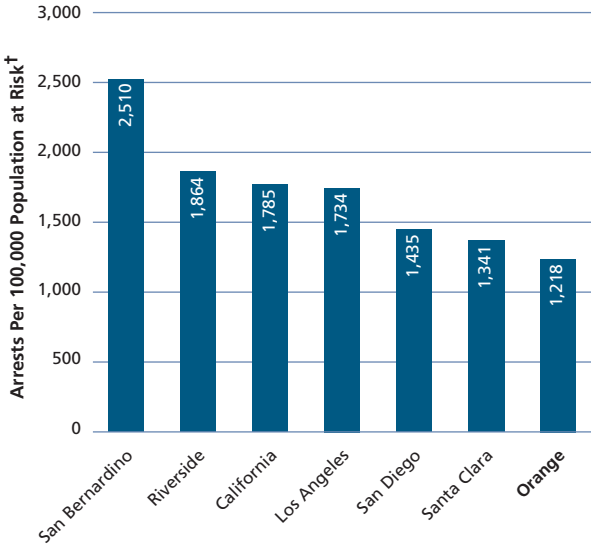
How is Orange County Doing?

Total felony arrests rose 3.5% in 2002. This increase was due to a rise in adult arrests to 23,750 (an increase of 5.2%). Juvenile felony arrests continued their downward trend in 2002, with 3,319 arrests (a decrease of 7%). Among peer counties, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Clara Counties witnessed decreases in 2002, while San Bernardino and Riverside Counties and the state overall witnessed increases. Orange County has the lowest felony arrest rate among the counties compared.

Adult and Juvenile Felony Arrests
Orange County, 1993-2002



Felony Arrest Rate
County Comparison, 2002



† The total "population at risk" are those 10-69 years of age.

Source: California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (http://caag.state.ca.us/cjsc/pubs.htm)

Orange County Moves to Second Safest Among Peers

Description of Indicator

This indicator uses the California Crime Index and the FBI Crime Index to compare crime rates among counties and to track crime rate trends from 1998 to 2002. The indices measure reported violent and property felonies per 100,000 people. Violent crime includes homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crime includes burglary and auto theft. The FBI Index includes all these plus larceny-theft and arson.

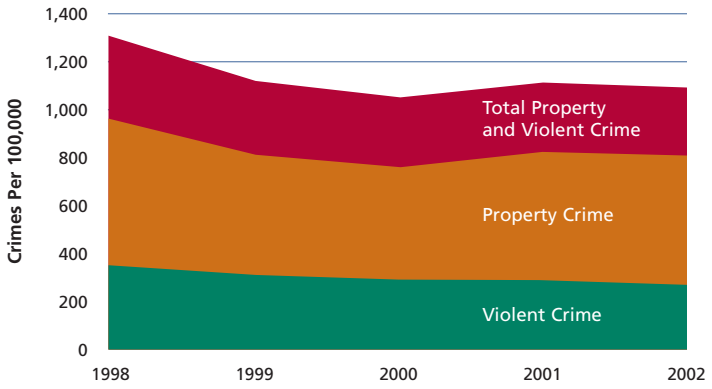
Why is it Important?

Crime impacts both real and perceived safety in a community. Crime has leveled off in the new millennium and is not following the same sharp downward trend witnessed in the 1990s. Certain populations, especially Latinos, still view crime as one of the most important problems in Orange County.[1]

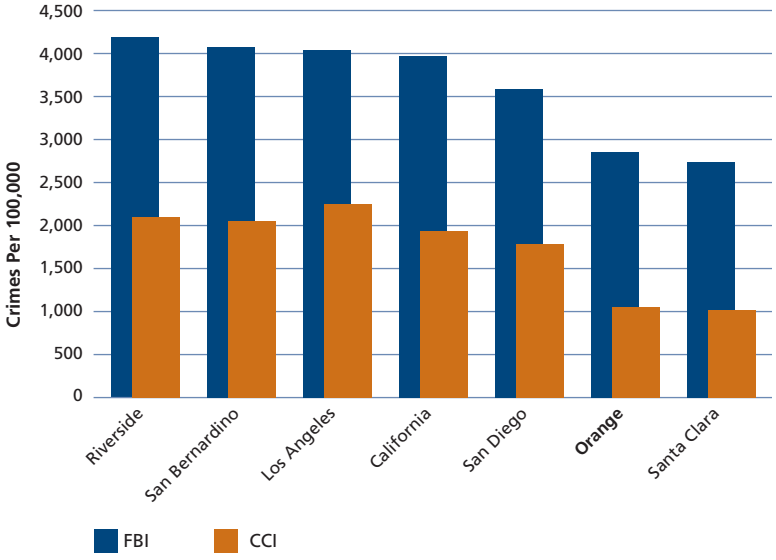
How is Orange County Doing?

Due to decreases in both property and violent crimes, Orange County's California Crime Index fell slightly in 2002 from 1,115 to 1,094 crimes per 100,000 people. One out of 91 Orange County residents was a victim of a crime in 2002. Violent crime, making up 25% of the total number of crimes, decreased again slightly in 2002. Like Orange County, the state also witnessed a slight decrease in violent crime but an overall rise in the crime rate due to a rise in property crimes. Orange County has the second lowest overall FBI Crime Index rate and California Crime Index rate among the counties compared.

California Crime Index
Orange County, 1998-2002



California Crime Index (CCI) and FBI Index
County Comparison, 2002



Source: California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General, Criminal Justice Statistics Center

[1] Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey: Special Survey of Orange County, 2002.

Gang-Related Homicides Reach Five-Year High

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures gang-related crime filings and homicides. Also measured are the numbers of identified gang members and the number of identified gangs in Orange County. For additional information, the 2002 Gang Cases Report from the County of Orange Office of the District Attorney is available at www.ocgov.com/da/press/2003gangreptpr.htm.

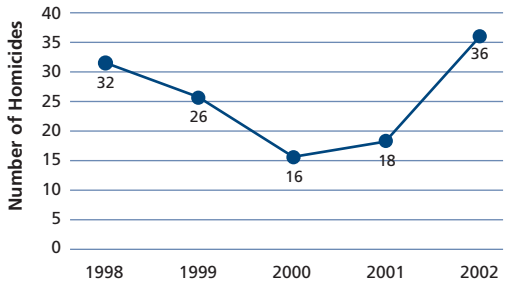
Why is it Important?

Over the past few years, due to public demand, significant resources have gone toward existing anti-gang units and the development of new units to reduce gang-related crime in Orange County. This indicator can help the community gauge the effectiveness of these programs and help determine future needs.

How is Orange County Doing?

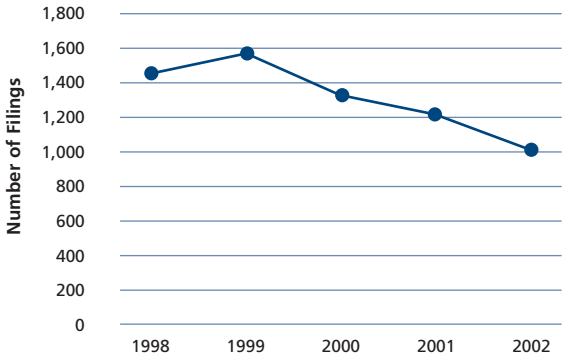
Gang-related homicides rose to a five-year high of 36, but still remain less than the peak of 74 in 1993. The number of gangs and gang membership increased slightly for the first time in three years. Between 2001 and 2002, the number of gangs increased 2% and the number of gang members increased 1%. Roughly following the five-year trend in gangs and gang membership, gang-related filings by anti-gang units have decreased for the past four years.

Gang-Related Homicides
Orange County, 1998-2002



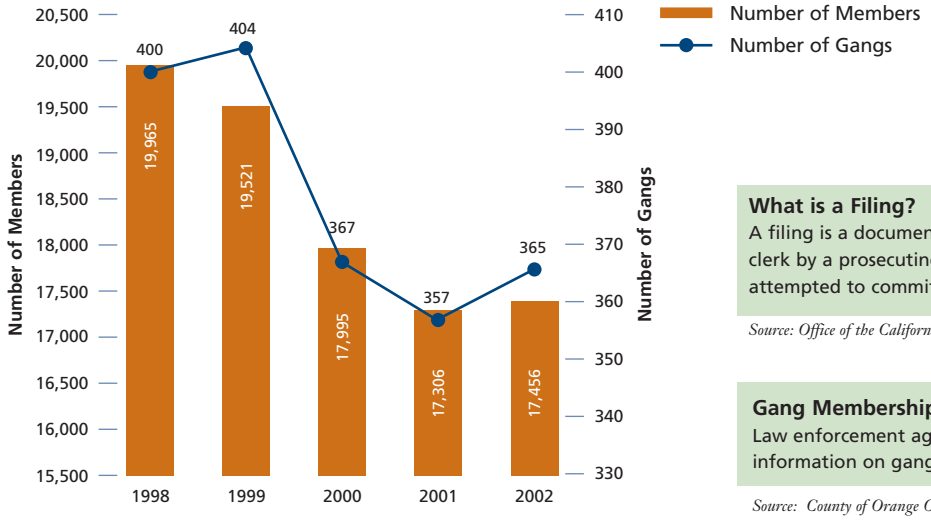
Source: County of Orange Office of the District Attorney

Filings by Anti-Gang Units
Orange County, 1998-2002



Source: County of Orange Office of the District Attorney

Gangs and Gang Membership
Orange County, 1998-2002



Sources: County of Orange Office of the District Attorney and CalGangs

What is a Filing?
A filing is a document filed with the municipal court clerk or county clerk by a prosecuting attorney alleging that a person committed or attempted to commit a crime.

Source: Office of the California Attorney General

Gang Membership
Law enforcement agencies, using a detailed set of criteria, submit information on gang members to the CalGangs database.

Source: County of Orange Office of the District Attorney

Hate Crime Falls Sharply; County Has Lowest Rate Among Peers

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the number of reported hate crime incidents in Orange County. When bias against another person's race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or ethnicity drives a criminal act, the offense is classified as a hate crime.

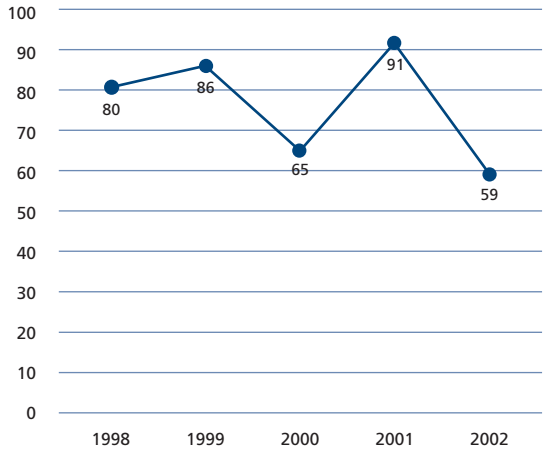
Why is it Important?

Hate crimes are among the most threatening crimes because the perpetrator views his or her victim as lacking full human worth due to their skin color, language, religion, sexual orientation, or disability. In addition, a hate crime impacts the entire group to which the victim belongs, spreading concern throughout the community.

How is Orange County Doing?

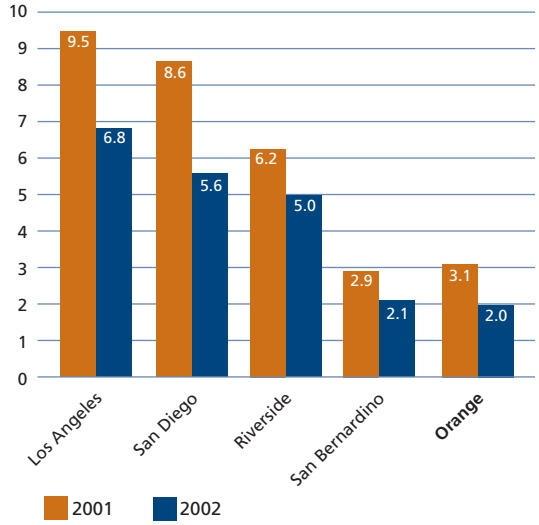
Hate crime events fell to the lowest level since this report began tracking in 1995. In 2002, there were 59 hate crime events and 80 victims. The number of hate crime events per 100,000 decreased sharply in Orange County and all the counties compared.

Hate Crime Events in Orange County, 1998-2002



Source: California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Hate Crime in California Report, 1998-2002 (http://caag.state.ca.us/cjsc/)

Hate Crime Events Per 100,000
County Comparison, 2001 and 2002



Sources: California Department of Justice, Criminal Justice Statistics Center, Hate Crime in California Report, 2001-2002 (http://caag.state.ca.us/cjsc/) and California Department of Finance, Table E-1, (www.dof.ca.gov/HTML/DEMOGRAP/E-1table.xls)

Environment

Fewer beach closures, significant acres of protected natural habitat, 364 days of healthful air quality, and an adequate supply of water contribute to Orange County's quality of life in 2003.

Closures on the Decline; Postings and Discharges Rise

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the number of beach mile days of postings and ocean water closures, as well as the causes for closures, and the number of unauthorized waste discharges (sewage spills), excluding tertiary recycled water discharges.

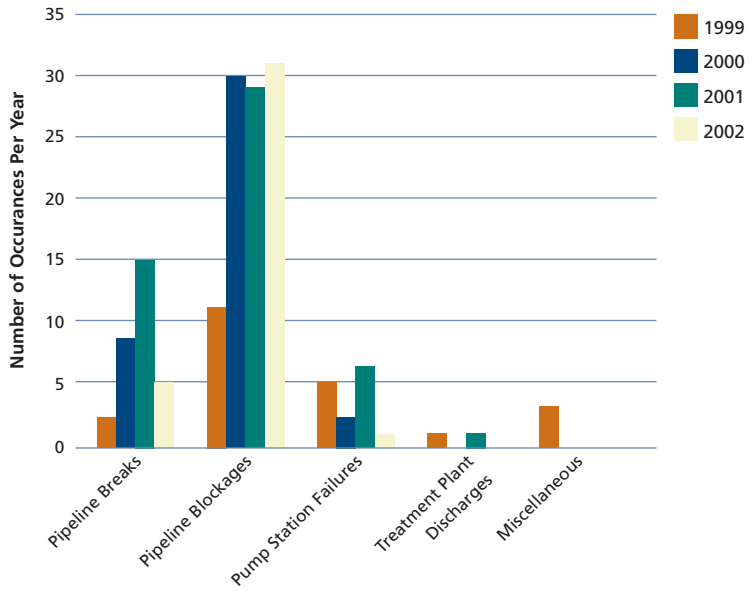
Why is it Important?

Unhealthful coastal conditions negatively impact beachgoers, beach businesses and the marine environment. When ocean waters are closed, tourists and local beachgoers are discouraged from visiting Orange County's beaches, resulting in less consumer traffic in the beach communities and diminishing our overall sense of quality of life. Pollutants enter the ocean through urban runoff, spills and dumping, exposing marine life to toxic substances and degrading habitats.

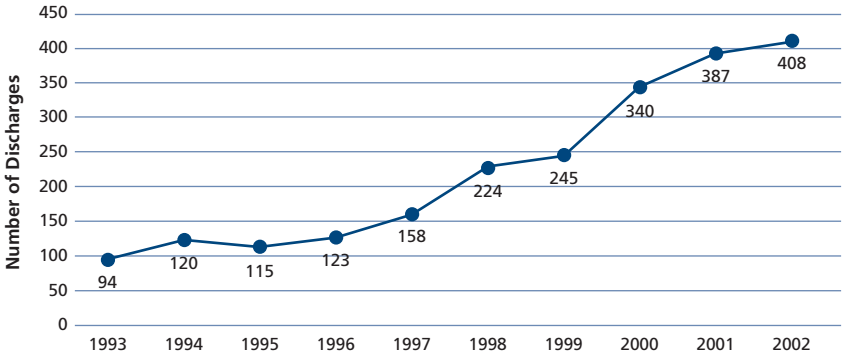
How is Orange County Doing?

There were fewer ocean water closures in 2002 than the previous year, but unauthorized discharges and postings continue to rise. Pipeline blockages, which result in unauthorized waste discharges, remain the primary cause of beach closures. By law, ocean waters must be closed when sewage has been spilled into streams, creeks, and rivers that discharge into recreational ocean waters. The number of reported sewage spills in 2002 climbed 5% in one year and 334% over the past 10 years. Possible causes for the increase include: an aging sewer infrastructure, a need for increased pipeline maintenance, increased reporting by sanitation district or city staff of spills in their jurisdiction on public or private land, or a combination of the above. Despite the rise in spills, they have not been severe enough to warrant large-scale and long-term closures as in previous years. In addition to beach closures, the County of Orange Health Care Agency is required by law to post warning signs (referred to as a "posting") when the water quality exceeds state standards. There was a 13% increase in beach mile days of postings between 2000, when tracking began, and 2002. Poor water quality leading to postings is largely attributed to urban runoff. The 2002 Infrastructure Report Card, summarized in the 2003 Orange County Community Indicators report, gave Orange County a "D" grade in the urban runoff/flood control infrastructure category.

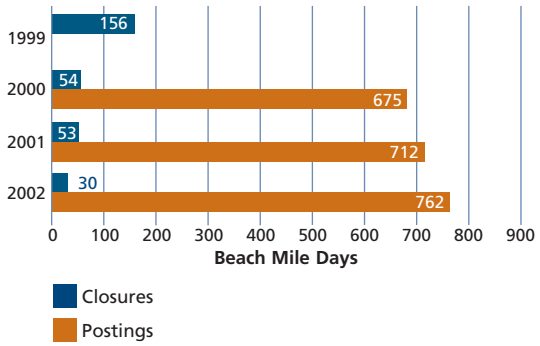
Ocean Water Closure Causes, 1999-2002



Unauthorized Waste Discharges in Orange County, 1993-2002
(Excluding Tertiary Recycled Water Discharges)



Ocean Water Closures and Postings, 1999-2002

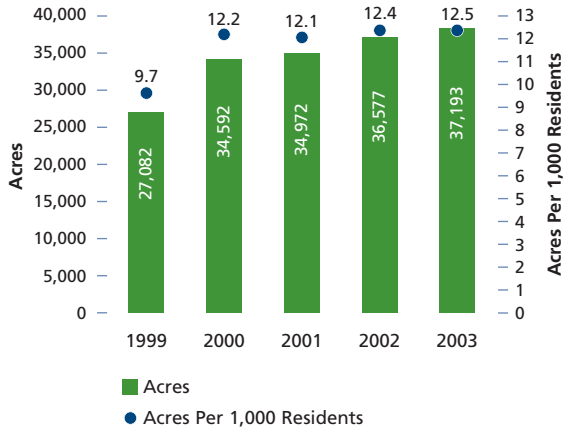


Source: County of Orange Health Care Agency

What are Beach Mile Days?
Due to AB 411, 1999 marked the baseline year for counting closures in "beach mile days." Beach mile days are calculated by multiplying the number of days of closure by the number of miles of beach closed. This method of counting closures is an improvement over the previous method which did not take into account the amount of beach affected by the closure.

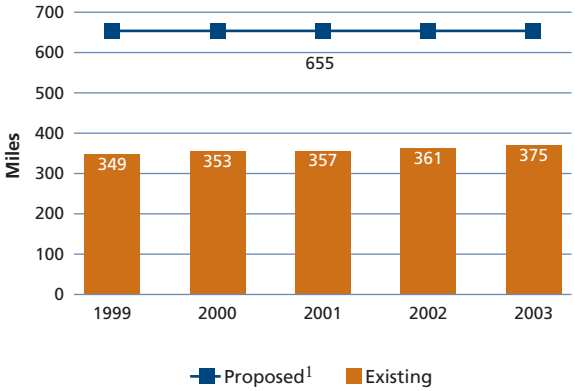
County Adds More Park Acres and Trail Miles

County Regional Parks, 1999-2003



Note: Includes wilderness and nature preserves and properties that have been irrevocably offered (but not currently owned by the County).

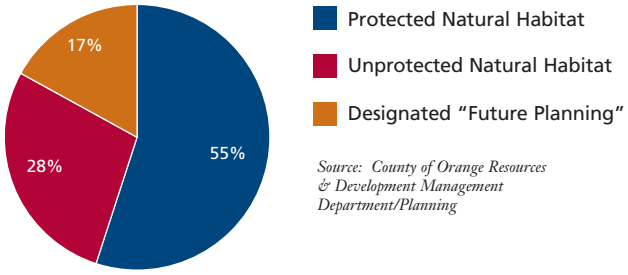
Miles of County Regional Bikeways and Trails, 1999-2003



[1] The County of Orange Master Plan states 80% of the proposed miles should be completed by 2010.

Sources: County of Orange Resources & Development Management Department/Harbors, Beaches and Parks and California Department of Finance

Natural Habitat Resources, 2002



Source: County of Orange Resources & Development Management Department/Planning

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the change in acres of regional parks and regional hiking, biking, and riding trails from 1999 to 2003.

Why is it Important?

Orange County's parks, trails and beaches contribute to a high quality of life. They provide a variety of recreational opportunities and offer relief from the urban environment. Measuring acreage and mileage change enables residents to track the County's progress in preserving open space and providing regional trail linkages.

How is Orange County Doing?

Between October 2002 and 2003, 1.25 miles of off-road paved bikeway and 12.75 miles of unpaved regional trail were added throughout the county.

As of October 2003, there are 37,193 acres of County regional parkland – 616 acres more than in 2002, due primarily to one major acquisition in the Santiago Oaks Regional Park. Federal, state, local and city parks further add to recreational options for residents. These resources, combined with the 42 miles of beach in Orange County, make up the regional recreational resources available to all Orange County residents and visitors.

About Half of Undisturbed Natural Habitat is Protected

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures acres of natural habitat resources in Orange County. The land is categorized as protected, unprotected (developable), or future planning (planning for the area has not yet commenced or is not yet complete), and includes public and private lands, regional and state parks, Cleveland National Forest lands, marine refuges, and land protected under the Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP). All other lands not included in these categories are considered developed, disturbed or agriculture.

Why is it Important?

Protecting habitat helps preserve biodiversity by providing plants and animals with the environment they need to survive.

How is Orange County Doing?

As of October 2002, Orange County has 120,485 acres of protected natural habitat. Some 60,452 acres of natural habitat are currently unprotected and 36,873 acres are designated "future planning."

Note: Due to ongoing improvements in Geographic Information System (GIS) acreage tracking and adjustments and modifications due to the Natural Communities Conservation Program (NCCP) process, the 2002 figures should not be directly compared to the 2000 figures published in previous Community Indicators reports.

16 Cities Met Diversion Target; Hazardous Waste Collection Improves

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures: the annual tonnage of solid waste (both commercial and household) deposited in Orange County landfills, the percent of waste diverted from landfills by cities in Orange County, the pounds of household hazardous waste collected (such as oil, paint, and batteries) and the number of annual participants, and commercial and household daily disposal rates among peer counties.

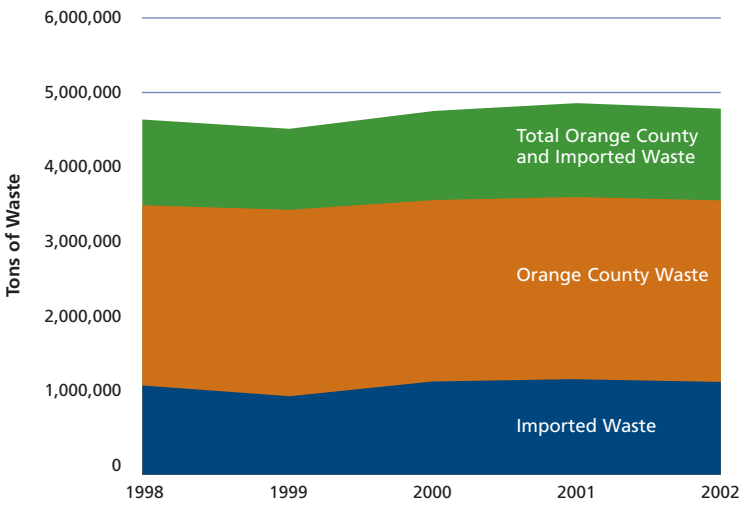
Why is it Important?

Diverting recyclable, green, and hazardous wastes from landfills extends the life of landfills, decreases the need for costly alternatives, and reduces environmental impact.

How is Orange County Doing?

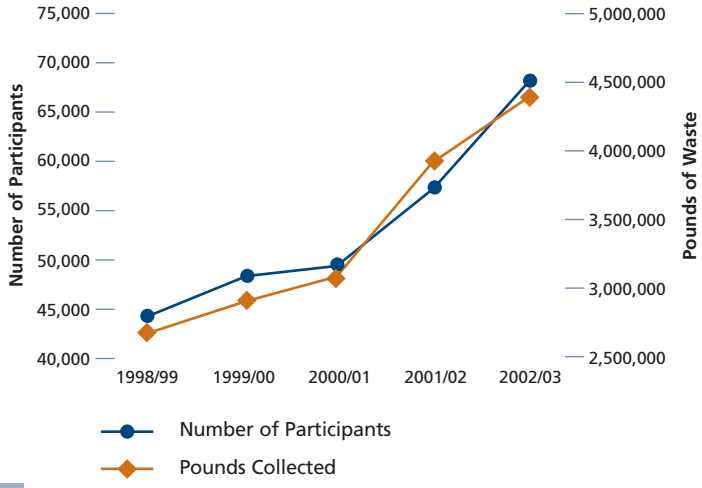
The amount of waste generated in the county and disposed in County landfills in 2002 fell by about 26,000 tons for a total of 3.7 million tons. This is the second highest amount since 1994. The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) certified that 16 Orange County cities met the 2000 diversion target and all others either made a good faith effort toward meeting the goal, were given a time extension to meet the 50% diversion rate required by law, or were given an alternative diversion rate, thereby avoiding fines of up to $10,000 per day. The preliminary figures for 2001 show 15 jurisdictions met the 50% target.[1] In 2002/03, the number of pounds of household hazardous waste collected (4.4 million) and the number of annual participants bringing the waste to regional collection centers (68,224) increased by 13% and 19%, respectively, since the previous year. Among peer counties, Orange County has one of the highest daily resident disposal rates and falls in the middle for daily commercial disposal rates.

Solid Waste Disposal in Orange County Landfills, 1998-2002



Source: County of Orange Integrated Waste Management Department

Pounds of Household Hazardous Waste Collected and Number of Participants
Orange County,1999-2003



Source: County of Orange Integrated Waste Management Department

Disposal Rates
County Comparison, 1999

	Resident Daily Disposal	Employee Daily Disposal	Percent of Total Wastestream That is: Household	Commerical
San Diego	0.9	12.2	14%	86%
Los Angeles	1.0	14.7	14%	86%
Santa Clara	1.4	6.7	26%	74%
Riverside	1.8	12.6	33%	67%
Orange	**2.1**	**10.4**	**29%**	**71%**
San Bernardino	3.3	6.8	61%	39%

Note: Calculated as pounds per resident per day (household waste) or pounds per employee per day (commerical waste).

Source: California Integrated Waste Management Board (www.ciwmb.ca.gov/Profiles/County/)

[1] Diversion rates by jurisdiction are available at www.ciwmb.ca.gov/igcentral/divmeasure/stepbystep.htm.

Median Air Quality Value is in "Moderate" Range

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the trend in the number of days per year when air quality in the South Coast Air Basin (which includes Orange, Los Angeles and parts of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties) was unhealthy according to the Air Quality Index (AQI). Also shown is the number of days in 2002 when air quality in Orange County was good, moderate, unhealthy for sensitive groups, or unhealthy for all people.

Why is it Important?

Poor air quality can aggravate the symptoms of heart or lung ailments, including asthma, and can cause irritation and illness in the healthy population, especially active children and adults. Long-term exposure increases cancer risks. While air quality has steadily improved since the 1970s, Orange County is located in the South Coast Air Basin, one of the most polluted air basins in the United States.

How is Orange County Doing?

There was only one day of unhealthy air in Orange County in 2002 and 21 days of air considered unhealthy for sensitive groups, such as asthmatics (see page 41, Pediatric Asthma). Recent research suggests that children with severe asthma (defined as needing medication daily) start suffering from symptoms when air quality is in the "moderate" range.[1] The median Air Quality Index value for 2002 was 52, on the low end of the "moderate" range. The maximum value was 153. Among the four counties in the South Coast Air Basin, only San Bernardino County experienced an increase in unhealthy air in 2002. Orange County's coastal location contributes to the county consistently having the lowest air pollution level in the region. As a whole, the South Coast Air Basin is still a "non-attainment area" which means it persistently does not meet federal air quality standards.

Air Quality Index

The Air Quality Index (AQI) converts pollutants found in a community's air to a number on a scale from 0 to 500. The number 100 corresponds to the National Ozone Standard established by the Clean Air Act. Levels over 100 are considered unhealthful.

AQI Index Values	Health Categories	Health Cautions for Ozone
0 - 50	Good	None
51 - 100	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion.
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Active adults and children with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
151 - 200	Unhealthy	All people, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
201 - 300	Very Unhealthful	All people should avoid strenuous outdoor activities (201-274) or remain indoors (275+).
301 - 500	Hazardous	All people should avoid all outdoor exertion.

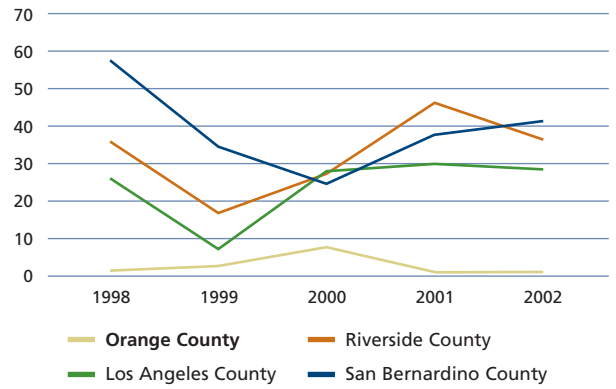
Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Air Quality Index: A Guide to Air Quality and Your Health, June 2000 (www.epa.gov/airnow/)

Orange County Air Quality, 2002

Number of Days When Air Quality Was...			
Good	Moderate	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Unhealthy
176	167	21	1

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, AIRData (www.epa.gov/air/data/index.html)

Number of Days When Air Quality Was Unhealthy in the South Coast Air Basin, 1998-2002



Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, AIRData (www.epa.gov/air/data/index.html)

[1] Journal of the American Medical Association, October 8, 2003 (http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/news/fullstory_14210.html)

Water Usage Slows to Match Population Growth Rate

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures Orange County annual urban (residential and commercial) water usage in acre-feet compared to the county's population. It also shows, by source, the projected water use and supply through 2020 and the current cost of water.

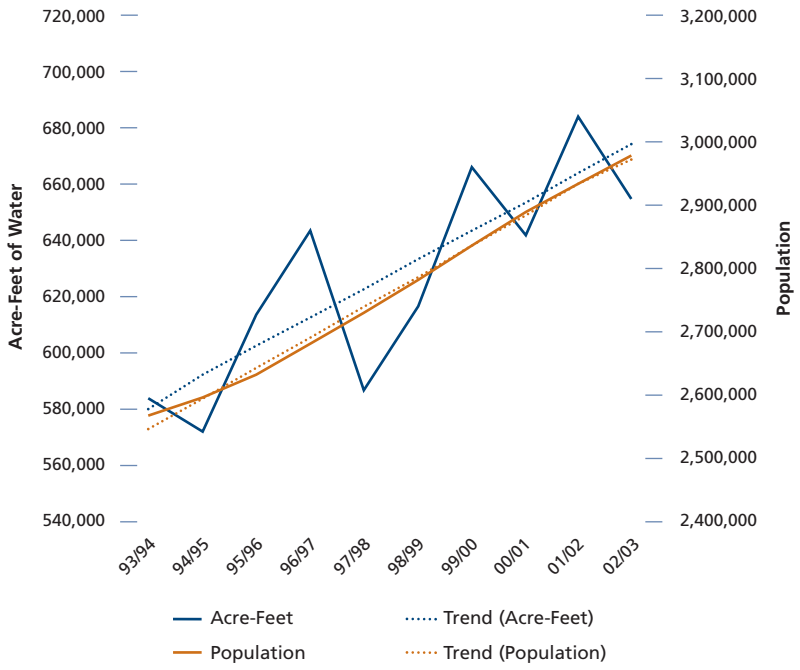
Why is it Important?

Orange County has a diverse water supply. About half comes from local groundwater and the other half comes from surface water imported from outside the region. Some portions of the county receive as much as three-quarters of their water from local sources. As population increases, demand on these resources also increases, which may lead to higher water prices and shifts in supply.

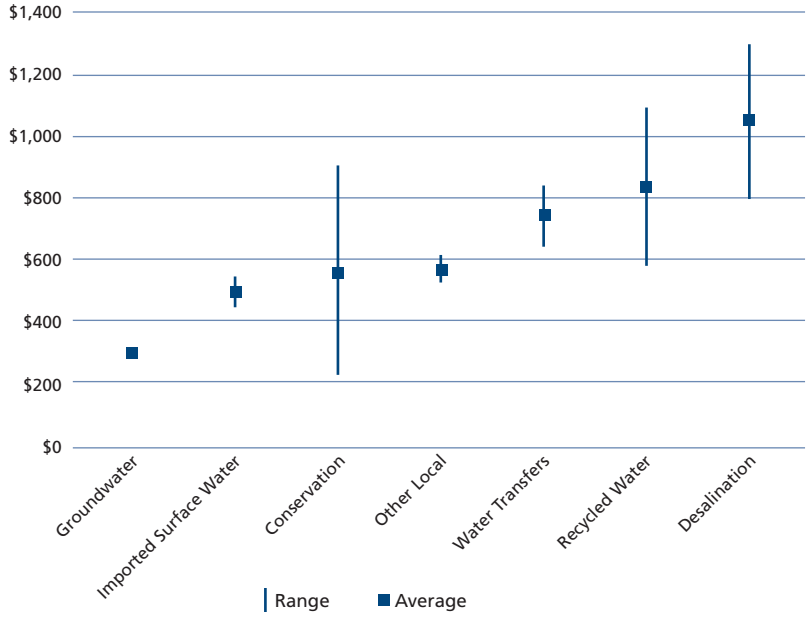
How is Orange County Doing?

In 2002/03, Orange County residents and businesses used 655,492 acre-feet (214 billion gallons) of water, a decrease of 32,000 acre-feet (or 10 billion gallons) from the previous year. Between 1993/94 and 2002/03, the average annual rate of change in water consumption (1.5%) roughly matched the average annual rate of change in population (1.7%). The region has experienced five consecutive years of dry to average rainfall conditions which reduced local water supply sources. To meet projected demand, estimates of water usage in 2020 call for increases in all sources of water but the proportions of each source are expected to change. Imported water could comprise 31% of the total supply in 2020, down from the current 44%. The most significant increase could be in conservation, from approximately 3% currently to 11% in 2020. Recycled water could account for 15% to 20% of the replenishment source for groundwater beginning in 2007. Seawater desalination is being studied by several entities and may be an important source in the future.

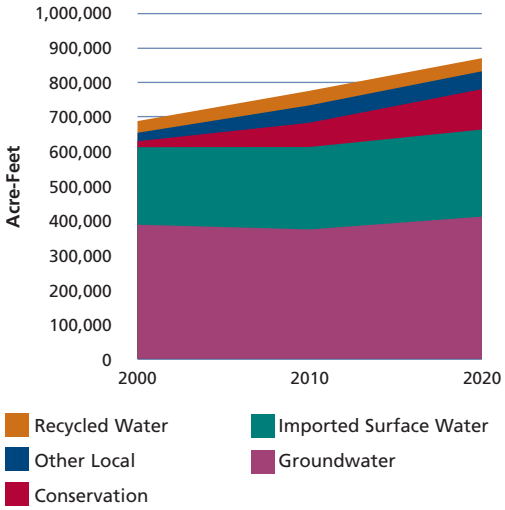
Urban Water Usage and Population Trends, 1994-2003



Cost of Water Per Acre-Foot to Wholesaler by Source, 2003



Orange County Water Use and Supply, 2000-2020



Sources: Municipal Water District of Orange County, Orange County Water District, and California Department of Finance (Tables E-4 and E-5)

Civic Engagement

Most residents think things are going well - better in the county than the state. Most businesses give to charitable causes. While recall election turnout spiked, the trend in voter participation is down as is community involvement.

Formal Civic Involvement is Low

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures Orange County residents' participation in their community's civic life. Specifically, this indicator looks at the number of times in the past year (2002) that Orange County residents: worked on a community project, went to a club meeting, attended a sports event for children, did volunteer work, and attended religious services. This indicator also reports the extent of Orange County residents' membership in formal clubs in 2002.

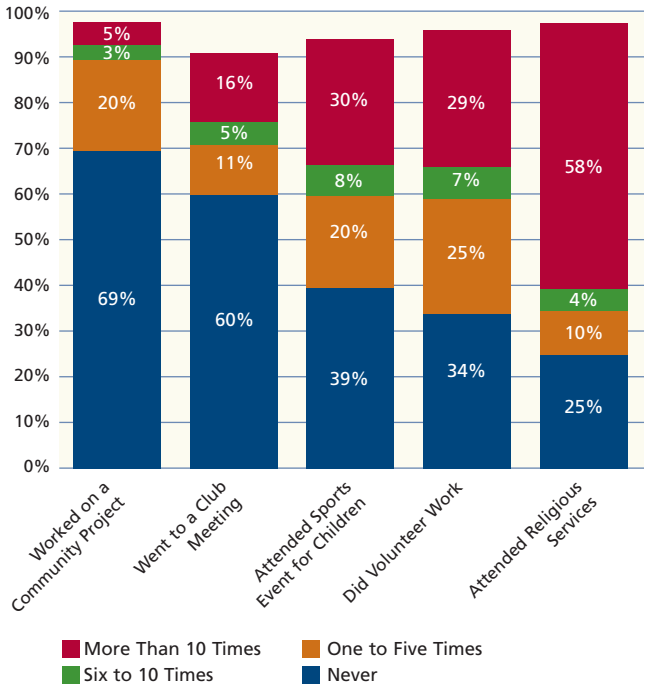
Why is it Important?

Nationwide there has been a decline in Americans' direct participation in politics and civic affairs over the last generation.[1] This erosion of civic and political engagement could have detrimental effects on the functioning of our communities, civic life in general, voting trends, the strength of our local, regional, and national identity, and our personal and social connections with others.

How is Orange County Doing?

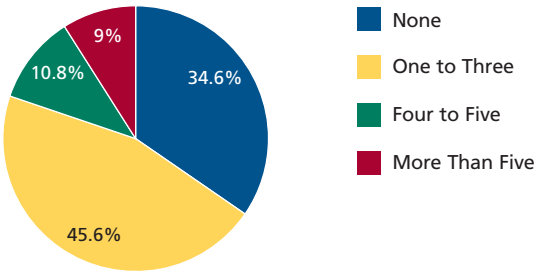
Orange County residents reflect the national trend toward reduced levels of formal civic involvement. Many residents polled in 2002 stated that, in the past year, they did not participate in a community project (69%), attend a sports event for children (39%), or attend a religious service (25%). While 65% of residents polled reported being a member of a formal club, 60% of residents polled stated they had not attended a club meeting in the past year. Over the past three years that the survey has been conducted, change has not been significant. Between 2001 and 2002 a slight upward trend in participation rates can be perceived, particularly in the percentage of residents who attended religious services or volunteered.[2]

In the Past Year (2002), Percent of Orange County Residents Who:



Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to non-response of survey participants on items.

Orange County Residents' Membership in Formal Clubs, 2002



Source: California State University, Fullerton Center for Public Policy/ Orange County Business Council

[1] Putnam, Robert. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.
[2] Changes from the previous year that fall within the estimated survey confidence interval of 5% to 7% may not be statistically significant.

Businesses Rate Corporate Giving as Very Important

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the levels and types of charitable giving by corporations in Orange County, including how corporations and businesses are involved in giving, their perceived value of community involvement, and why corporations give to charitable causes.

Why is it Important?

Charitable giving by corporations and businesses is an important source of resources – both financial and human – for nonprofit entities in Orange County. Measuring how businesses support the community in Orange County helps document their contribution to the county's quality of life. Understanding how businesses perceive their role in the charitable giving process can give insight into how to increase business resources that flow to the non-profit sector. In addition, business giving can influence individual decisions about non-profit support.

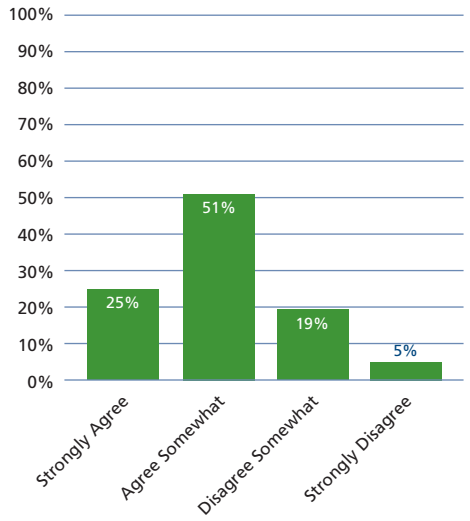
How is Orange County Doing?

In 2003, 87% of Orange County businesses reported some kind of community involvement or charitable giving. About half (51%) rate business charitable giving as "very important" to community life and another 40% rate business giving as "somewhat important." Larger businesses attach more importance to corporate charitable giving.

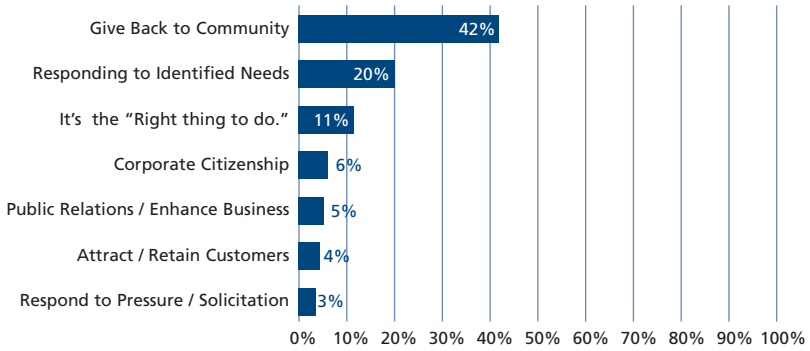
The top reasons businesses make charitable contributions are to "give back to the community" (42%) and "responding to identified needs" (20%). Fully 76% of businesses surveyed believe that charitable organizations are more effective at providing services now than five years ago.

The most common ways of giving are through cash donations (78%), donating goods or products (67%), sponsoring special events (62%) and volunteer activities (54%). The most frequent ways for businesses to make giving decisions are evaluating requests by a committee (29%), receiving guidance from the owner or president (27%), or evaluating proposals submitted through a corporate foundation (21%).

Charitable Organizations are More Effective at Providing Services Now than Five Years Ago, 2003



Reasons for Corporate Giving, 2003



Source: 2003 Community Involvement Survey of Orange County Corporations and Businesses, California State University, Fullerton and Orange County Business Council

2003 Recall Election Sparks Higher Voter Turnout

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures general election participation among Orange County registered voters. It also contains voter participation among the voting age population for presidential elections for Orange County, California, and the nation. The most recent measure is the participation rate of registered voters in the 2003 Special Recall Election.

Why is it Important?

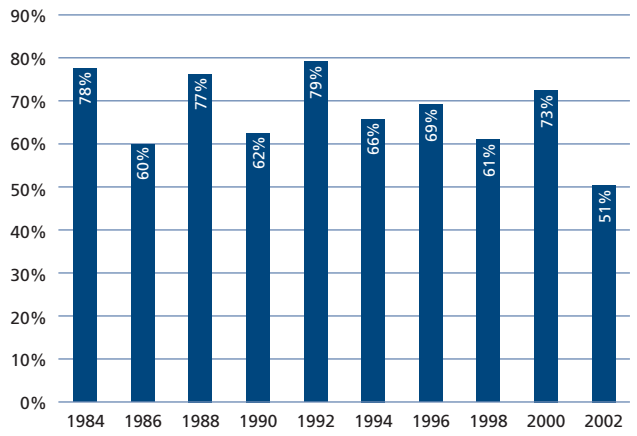
Voter participation measures civic interest and the public's optimism regarding their impact on decision-making. A high level of citizen involvement improves the accountability of government and the level of support for community programs.

How is Orange County Doing?

Voter participation among Orange County registered voters in the 2003 Special Recall Election was 59% compared to the 51% participation rate in 2002 and an average of 62% in mid-term elections from 1986 through 1998. Orange County voter participation in the 2003 election equaled the state participation rate and was higher than all surrounding counties except for San Diego. Despite the surge in interest in this special election, participation rates remain below historical averages, indicating a longer-term trend of declining participation.

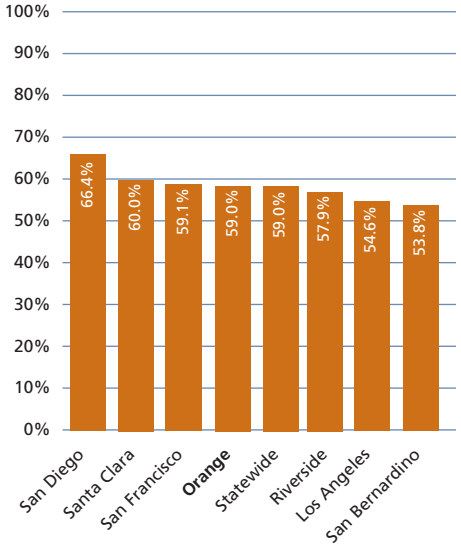
Both presidential and mid-term election registered voter participation in Orange County were stable in the late 1980s and early 1990s but began a downward trend in the mid-1990s. However, among the voting age population, Orange County has consistently had a higher turnout than California and roughly mirrors national rates.

Orange County General Election Turnout Among Registered Voters, 1984-2002



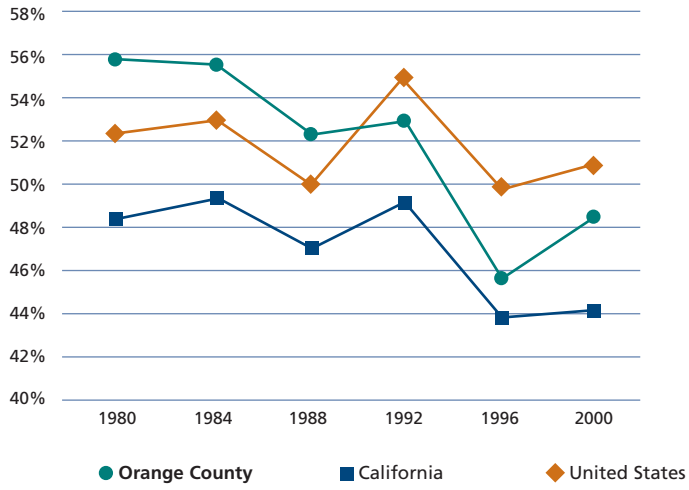
Sources: County of Orange Registrar of Voters (www.oc.ca.gov/election/General/1b-4.htm) and League of Women Voters (www.smartvoter.org/svhome/2002/11/05/ca/or/)

Recall Election Turnout
County Comparison, 2003



Source: California Secretary of State (http://vote2003.ss.ca.gov/Returns/status.htm#Races)

Presidential Election Turnout Among the Voting Age Population, 1980-2000



Source: Federal Election Commission (www.fec.gov/elections.html)

Top Issues are Traffic Congestion and Affordable Housing

Description of Indicator

This indicator measures the perception of wellbeing and quality of life in Orange County, and whether county residents believe the county and state are going in the right direction.

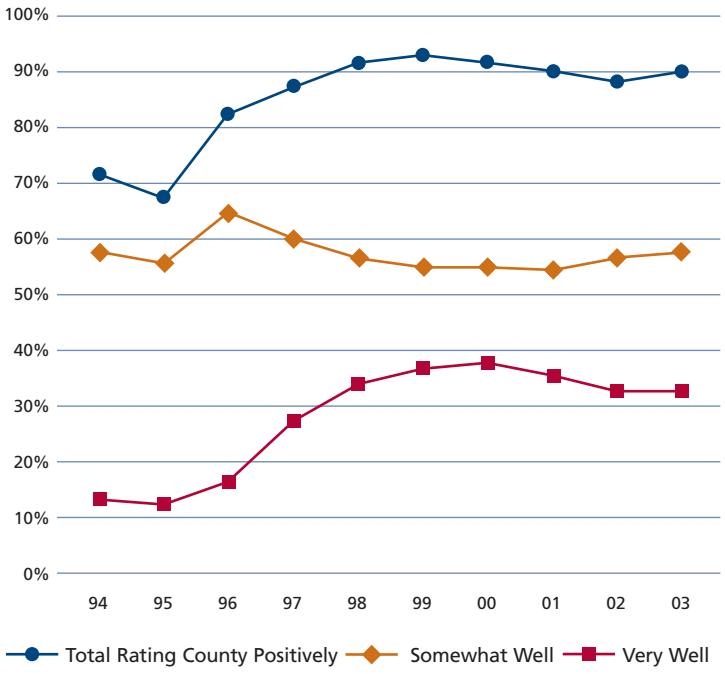
Why is it Important?

Perception of wellbeing reflects individuals' level of satisfaction with home, work, leisure, finance and governance – in short, with life in Orange County. Knowing what residents consider problems informs decision makers about which issues to address.

How is Orange County Doing?

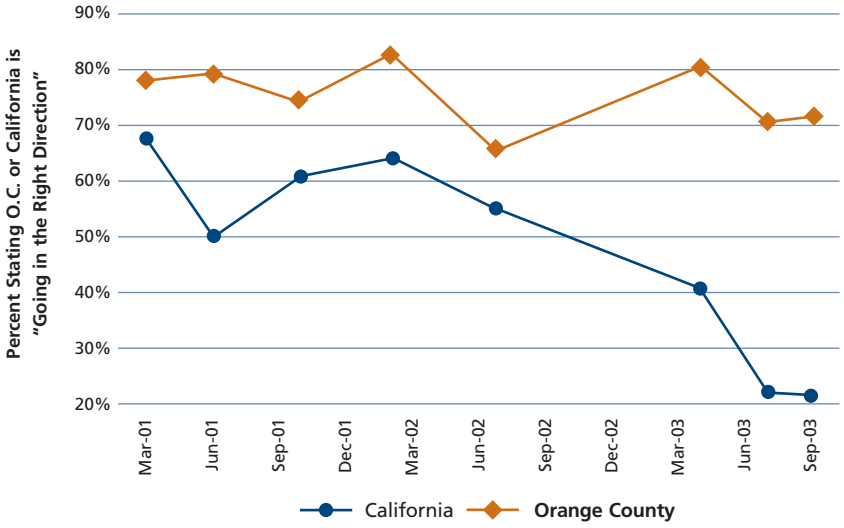
Orange County residents appear to remain satisfied with how their lives are going. According to the 2003 Public Policy Institute of California survey, 90% of residents stated "things are going well." Residents also generally believe the county is going in the right direction, but they are not as positive about the state. In September 2003, 72% of Orange County residents responded that the county is "going in the right direction" but only 22% believed the same for the state. The current gap – nearly fifty percentage points – is the largest recorded, including surveys taken during the 2001 electricity crisis. The top issues that Orange County residents rank as a "big problem" or "somewhat of a problem" are the same as in 2002: traffic congestion (89%) and affordable housing (82%). These are followed by population growth and development (74%), air pollution (70%), and lack of job opportunities (64%). Availability of parks and open space is considered "not a problem" by 63% of the respondents.

Percent of Orange County Residents Indicating "Things Are Going Well," 1994-2003



Sources: Orange County Annual Survey (1993-2000) and Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey, Special Survey of Orange County, in collaboration with University of California, Irvine (http://ocsurveys.lib.uci.edu/) (2001-2003)

Orange County Resident Opinion of the Direction of Orange County and California
March 2001-September 2003



Note: The data points reflect the actual month when the survey was taken, which was not always in regular quarterly intervals.

Sources: California State University, Fullerton Center for Public Policy and Orange County Business Council

The Community Indicators report would not be possible without the data provided by the following agencies and the expertise of their representatives:

Anaheim City Elementary School District
Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County
California Child Care Resource and Referral Network
California Department of Education
California Department of Social Services/Community Care Licensing
California Department of Transportation, District 12
California Institute for County Government
California Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board
California State University, Fullerton
Capistrano-Laguna Beach Regional Occupation Program
Center for Demographic Research at California State University, Fullerton
Center for Health Policy Research at University of California, Los Angeles
Center for Public Policy at California State University, Fullerton
Center for Social Service Research at University of California, Berkeley
Center for the Collaboration for Children at California State University, Fullerton
Center for the Study of Emerging Markets at California State University, Fullerton
Central Orange County Regional Occupation Program
Chapman University
Children and Families Commission of Orange County
Coastline Regional Occupation Program
County of Orange County Executive Office
County of Orange Health Care Agency/Environmental Health
County of Orange Health Care Agency/Epidemiology and Assessment
County of Orange Health Care Agency/Nutrition Services
County of Orange Housing and Community Development Department
County of Orange Housing Authority
County of Orange Integrated Waste Management Department
County of Orange Office of the District Attorney
County of Orange Registrar of Voters
County of Orange Resources & Development Management Department/ Harbors, Beaches and Parks
County of Orange Resources & Development Management Department/Planning
County of Orange Social Services Agency/Adult Protective Services
County of Orange Social Services Agency/Children and Family Services
County of Orange Social Services Agency/Family Self-Sufficiency
Institute for Economic and Environmental Studies at California State University, Fullerton
Magnolia School District
Municipal Water District of Orange County
National Association for Year-Round Education
North Orange County Regional Occupation Program
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Community College Districts
Orange County Department of Education, Facilities and Operations
Orange County Executive Survey
Orange County Health Needs Assessment
Orange County Transportation Authority
Orange County Water District
Orange County's United Way
Orange Unified School District
Public Policy Institute of California
Santa Ana Unified School District
South Coast Air Quality Management District
Tustin Unified School District
University of California, Irvine

Additional Data Sources

California Association of Realtors
California Budget Project
California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs
California Department of Finance
California Department of Health Services
California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General
California Division of Tourism
California Employment Development Department
California Legislative Analysts Office
California Secretary of State
Dun & Bradstreet, Market Data Retrieval
Entrepreneur Media, Inc.
Federal Transit Administration
League of Women Voters
Meyers Group
Milken Institute
National Association for the Education of Young Children
National Association of Family Child Care
National Low Income Housing Coalition
National Venture Capital Association
North Carolina State Board of Education
PricewaterhouseCoopers, LLC
Scarborough Research
Texas Education Agency
United States Bureau of Economic Analysis
United States Bureau of Labor Statistics
United States Census Bureau
United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
United States Conference of Mayors
United States Department of Health and Human Services
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
United States Environmental Protection Agency
United States Federal Election Committee
United States Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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Orange County Community Indicators 2004 Project Team

Michael Ruane (Project Director), Children and Families Commission of Orange County
Kari Rigoni (Project Manager), County of Orange
Lisa Burke, Burke Consulting
Trish Kelly, Economic Development Consultant
Kari Parsons, Parsons Consulting
Wallace Walrod, Orange County Business Council

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www.orangecounty.uli.org

Orange County
Community Indicators Project

10 Civic Center Plaza
Santa Ana, CA 92701

(714) 834-7257
ocindicators@ocgov.com
www.oc.ca.gov