



ABILENE CHAMBER

DAILY BUSINESS BRIEF

Skimming the daily updates for your business so you don't have to.

SUMMARY OF GOVERNOR ABBOTT'S REMARKS

- Here to let Texans know about abundant hospital capacity that exists to treat Texans with COVID-19
- In the middle of a short period of time where we must coexist with COVID-19, still exists in Texas & will continue to be the case until medicines are available to treat those with COVID-19
- In March and April there was a nationwide effort to slow spread to prevent hospitals from being overrun, and this goal has been achieved; fewer Texans test positive than any other large state, few who test positive need to go to the hospital and beds are available
- Remain focused on maintaining abundant hospital capacity
- More important than number you hear about are the reasons behind those numbers, i.e. June 10 had most Texans who tested positive for COVID-19, but Jefferson County and Beaumont had a large outsize impact on positive test rates, Pecos County had a large jump due to data error
- Today there will be another new high for positive tests at 2,622, influencing this are counties like Collin which had 120 test positive, above the usual daily average, Hays County had 265 test positive today, but 0 the day before meaning no report previously and numbers today were batched together
- There is a reason that some counties are testing positive at a higher rate, many counties seeing a majority of positive tests from people under 30 going to bar-type settings; this trend informs strategies
- Example of this includes TABC announcement yesterday warning bars and restaurants of possible suspension of liquor license for any violation of regulations
- Standards were developed by doctors and if standards are followed there should not be an increase, enforcement by TABC should bring these settings more into line
- Texas was very aggressive in recent weeks to test congregate settings like nursing homes and prisons, jails and prisons have returned the highest positivity rate in the state; since we have tested the majority of congregate settings, there is reason to believe that those testing positive should decline a little bit
- Seeing an increase in those who are hospitalized due to COVID-19, today it will be reported that there are ~2,500 are hospitalized due to COVID-19 but this is a small percentage of beds available; COVID-19 patients represent a small portion of patients using beds across the state
- In DFW, we had 64 hospitalizations today, but 300 beds were made available; same is true of the Houston area
- We are better prepared to deal with COVID-19 than we were in March and April, hospitals have more PPE, new drugs like Remdesivir, new treatment methods

[Click here](#) for more.

UPDATED: U.S. CHAMBER GUIDE TO PPP LOAN FORGIVENESS

Last evening, the U.S. Chamber published an updated version of the previously shared Guide to PPP Loan Forgiveness. The updates were made to reflect the changes made to the PPP following the passage of the Paycheck Protection Program Flexibility Act—which eases rules around how small businesses can use their loan funds—earlier this month.

The U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) are responsible for updating the application form and instructions for loan forgiveness. You can find the most up-to-date information [here](#).

[Click here](#) to view the U.S. Chamber's updated Guide to PPP Loan Forgiveness.

GASOLINE DEMAND MORE RESPONSIVE TO PRICE CHANGES THAN ECONOMISTS ONCE THOUGHT

Recent advances in applied work have overturned decades of conventional wisdom regarding how consumers respond to gasoline price fluctuations. Real (inflation-adjusted) gasoline prices have fluctuated substantially since the 1970s. Understanding the responsiveness of gasoline demand to these price changes is crucial to understanding the macroeconomic effects of gasoline price fluctuations, assessing the impact of refinery supply disruptions, determining gasoline tax rates, and evaluating policies targeting pollution, congestion and climate change.

[Read more.](#)

ABILENE'S HOUSING MARKET RANKS IN TOP 50

A recent analysis of housing markets across the U.S. ranks 15 Texas cities, including Abilene, in the top 50. Smart Asset, a financial planning company, used data from the Federal Housing Administration to evaluate 357 metro areas. The results were drawn from comparing data on home price growth and volatility.

Mark LoCastro, Smart Asset spokesperson, says Abilene ranked 30 in their list of the most stable housing markets in the U.S. "Home values in the area increase 134% throughout the past 25 years. The odds of a drop of at least 5% within 10 years of purchase was zero in the Abilene area." LoCastro told KACU. LoCastro says it's too early to tell how the coronavirus pandemic will impact U.S. housing markets.

[View the full report here.](#)

BARS, RESTAURANTS WARNED TO FOLLOW GOVERNOR'S ORDER OR FACE LICENSE SUSPENSION

The Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission is warning all bar and restaurant operators that they must follow the state's protocols to help ensure health and safety as Texas reopens or face license suspensions. These requirements include indoor customer capacity limits of 50% for bars and 75% for restaurants, along with social distancing of at least 6 feet between groups of customers.

TABC is strictly monitoring bar and restaurant activity and will pursue emergency liquor license suspensions if there are violations that are a threat to public health and safety. TABC has the authority to suspend any license that poses a continuing threat to the public welfare. The first infraction will result in up to a 30-day license suspension, and the second infraction will result in up to a 60-day suspension.

[Read more.](#)

Drilling Down: Permian Basin revival looming on the horizon

"A drilling revival may soon be underway in the Permian Basin of West Texas where a flurry of permits for new horizontal wells have been filed.

Some 42 companies filed for 109 drilling permits with the Texas Railroad Commissions from June 3 to 9. That's more than double the 53 permits filed one week prior."

[Read more.](#)

You don't want to miss these upcoming event for your business.

6/18 RURAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM The purpose of this meeting is to receive comments on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2024 Rural Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Abilene District. [More info.](#)

6/23 WATER SEMINAR Join Kenneth Jorgensen (Professor, Aalborg University, Denmark) – "Water Agency" and Julia Hayden (Internationally Recognized Body Whisperer, Author, and Founder of the Gaia Storytelling Lab at the European School of Governance in Berlin, Germany) – "Make Water, Not War!" [More Info](#)

6/25 WEST TEXAS SUCCESS VIRTUAL JOB FAIR Join Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas on Thursday, June 25, 2020 from 9:00 am to 9:00 pm* for a virtual job fair (employers will be active at their virtual booths until 5:00 pm). [More info.](#)

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- [An Enhanced Pathway Forward](#)
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- [Hiring? Add your job to AbileneWorks.com for free](#)
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