



### **American Society of Civil Engineer Gives Texas Infrastructure "C-"**

Today, weeks after Hurricane Harvey destroyed the cities of Port Aransas and Rockport and flooded Houston and South Texas, the Texas Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE Texas Section) released the *2017 Report Card for Texas' Infrastructure*. The report grades seven categories of infrastructure. Bridges received the highest grade of "B," while five categories received "D" grades: Dams, Drinking Water, Flood Control, Highways and Roads, and Wastewater.

"The flooding that followed Hurricane Harvey is a reminder of the value of infrastructure—and how much life grinds to a halt when our bridges, wastewater treatment plants, and utility lines are out of service," said Travis Attanasio, P.E., CFM, ASCE Texas Section Vice President for Professional Affairs. "As we rebuild, we have an opportunity to modernize our infrastructure so that it is better equipped for our growing population, and more resilient to weather events."

Four grades in the Report Card improved in this report: Aviation, Bridges, Dams, and Drinking Water. The Report Card also finds that Texas is a leader in bridge health, with one of the lowest numbers and percentages of structurally deficient bridges in the country.

However, the *2017 Report Card for Texas' Infrastructure* finds that much of the state's infrastructure requires investment and upgrades to keep up with its needs. Of note:

- 50% of all bridges in Texas have been in service over 40 years, and 20% have been in service over 60 years. Most bridges built during this timeframe had a design life of 50 years.
- In 2015, dams received \$15 million to address repair and rehabilitation needs. However, the inventory of dams continues to age, which equates to mounting financial needs for the future.
- An estimated 6,915 water utilities provide clean drinking water to 93% of Texas' population. Substantial water challenges will be created by unprecedented population growth projected in the next 50 years, from 29.5 million in 2020 to more than 51 million by 2070.
- Nine Texas cities rank in the Top 100 per the national congestion rankings for annual delay per auto commuter. In those nine cities, each commuter is paying an extra \$890 on average per year due to congested roadways.
- Flood preparation, floodplain management and flood prevention are largely the domain of local jurisdictions as the state of Texas does not have a central authority to guide these activities. The lack of a central authority is the primary reason the grade of "D" remains unchanged from 2012.
- Wastewater sewers are subject to stormwater flooding overflows, producing a large influx to a water to the treatment plant, which overtaxes the infrastructure of the plant.

In addition to the grades and findings, the Report Card also offers solutions, which emphasize modernizing the state's infrastructure so it can meet future needs. Among the recommendations to raise the grades:

- Infrastructure needs increased, long-term, consistent state and local level investment.
- Leaders from all levels of government, business, labor, and nonprofit organizations must come together to ensure all investments are spent wisely.
- Civil engineers must prepare for the future by utilizing new approaches, materials, and technologies to ensure our state's infrastructure is more resilient and sustainable. *(Continued...)*

- When considering land use planning at the local level, the function of existing and new infrastructure must maintain the balance between the built and natural environments now and into the future.

The *2017 Report Card for Texas' Infrastructure* was created as a public service to citizens and policymakers of the state to inform them of the infrastructure needs in their community. By using school report card letter grades, civil engineers used their expertise to condense complicated data into an easy-to-understand analysis.

Over the past year, a team of professional engineers from Texas assessed the seven categories of infrastructure to reach the cumulative grade of "C-." The categories include Aviation (B-), Bridges (B), Dams (D), Drinking Water (D+), Flood Control (D), Highways and Roads (D), and Wastewater (D).

The previous iteration of the Texas Report Card from 2012 also graded transit, schools, navigable waterways, and energy. This year, the ASCE Texas Section's Infrastructure Report Card Committee chose to focus on a smaller set of categories.

ASCE State and Regional Infrastructure Report Cards are modeled after the national [Infrastructure Report Card](#), which gave America's infrastructure a grade of D+ in March.

To view the full *Report Card for Texas's Infrastructure*, visit: [InfrastructureReportCard.org/Texas](http://InfrastructureReportCard.org/Texas).

#### **QUESTIONS & MEDIA INQUIRIES?**

Contact: Becky Moylan

American Society of Civil Engineers

Senior Manager, Public Affairs & Infrastructure Initiatives

(202) 789-7853

[bmoylan@asce.org](mailto:bmoylan@asce.org)