

Catawba County Community Profile

Catawba County employees work hard every day to improve the lives of residents. While this work is hard, it is rewarding. Catawba County goes above and beyond to take care of its employees by offering some unexpected benefits in addition to the classics. We have competitive benefits, health, wellness, and invests in employees, equipping them with the skills they need to succeed in our high-performing organization. If you thrive in a fast-paced, outcome-oriented environment then we hope you will consider joining our team of passionate employees making a difference in the world.

Catawba County is located in the western part of North Carolina in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. With 58,500 households, the population of the county is over 155,000. The largest city is Hickory and the county seat is Newton. Catawba County has a diverse economy and is home to manufacturing including machinery, metal work, plastics, cable, and furniture; retail, and residential development. Production agriculture continues to be challenged by urbanization, but the county still has a large farm acreage. Catawba County's manufacturing and agricultural prowess is enhanced by a rich geography and diverse lifestyle. Catawba County is recognized as a center of the region's retail, shopping, entertainment, and cultural life. Education and technical training are a high priority for Catawba County and offer students and workers access to educational experiences.

The central county of North Carolina's fourth largest MSA (2012 population – 365,355), Catawba County includes the inhabitants of its 8 municipalities. These municipalities include Brookford, Catawba, Claremont, Conover, Hickory, Long View, Maiden, and Newton. The Hickory Metro area has been named the 10th best place to live and raise a family in the United States by Reader's Digest. The Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton MSA has also been named the top 6 MSAs in the country for Business Costs by *Forbes Magazine* for the past seven years. *Business North Carolina* reported that Catawba County's largest city, Hickory, was the 8th best city in the state for its quality of life. Catawba County was also listed by *Southern Development & Business* as the top mid-market in NC in their "Top 250 Best Places in the South to Locate Your Company."

Catawba County is renowned as the center of the region's retail shopping, entertainment and cultural life. Hickory is the shopping hub for the Hickory-Lenoir- Morganton MSA. A leading retail mall, furniture mart, convention center, movie theaters, retail shopping centers and hundreds of restaurants are also major attractions for visitors from throughout the region. Enjoy great one-stop shopping and a family-friendly environment at Valley Hills Mall. The Hickory Furniture Mart is the largest of its kind in the nation. It represents a complete selection of domestic and imported furniture and furnishings.

Catawba County's proximity to interstate access makes it a prime location for business. Interstate-40 runs east to west through Catawba County. Accessible via US Highway 321, Interstate-85 is reachable in approximately 30 minutes. Interstate-77 is also reachable in 30 minutes via Interstate-40. Catawba County is located within one hour of the City of Charlotte and the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. The Appalachian resort areas of Boone and Blowing Rock are within an hour's drive. The City of Asheville lies within an hour and a half to the west. Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and the Greensboro International Airport lie within an hour and a half to the east. The Annual Year Round Temperature is 68.8F, Average High Temp. (July) 84.6F, and Average Low Temp. (January) 51.1F.

Catawba County offers a wide range of Sports and Recreation for enthusiasts. Rock Barn Golf & Spa is home to the Greater Hickory Classic, a PGA TOUR Champions Tour Event. Other golf courses include the Catawba Country Club, the Lake Hickory County Club, Hampton Heights Golf Club, and Catawba Springs Golf Club. The Hickory Motor Speedway hosts the NASCAR Dodge Weekly Series and is known as the “Birthplace of the NASCAR Stars.” 2004 South Atlantic League Champion Hickory Crawdads (Class A Affiliate-Pittsburgh Pirates) offer minor league baseball at its best. Gyms and recreation centers offer numerous athletic, daycare and health and fitness opportunities for all ages at several facilities in the county. Additionally, the Catawba River provides many opportunities for boating and other recreations. Catawba County also has numerous parks providing opportunities from family picnics to hiking and fishing. Catawba County is home to two community theatres, a university theatre, a symphony, a choral society, and a first class art museum, Catawba County provides an array of artistic and cultural entertainment. Catawba County also offers a science museum, a history museum, concert associations, a youth symphony and a variety of musical groups from barbershop to bluegrass.

Catawba County’s more than 100 restaurants represent an extremely wide variety available to suit any taste and budget. With 20 hotels and 3 bed and breakfasts, Catawba County has a variety of accommodations to meet any taste and budget. Education and technical training continue to be high priorities for Catawba County. Post-secondary educational partners include Catawba Valley Community College, Lenoir-Rhyne University, a four-year liberal arts school, and Appalachian State University Center at Hickory, a joint education center offering graduate and undergraduate degrees, non-credit certificate courses, research, and specialized workforce training through such universities as Appalachian State University, NC State University, and the University of North Carolina. The new NC Center for Engineering Technologies provides facilities for applied research in engineering related fields and serves as a conduit to baccalaureate education delivered by the University of North Carolina system schools.

There are over 200 congregations in Catawba County representing a variety of Jewish, Protestant, Catholic and other beliefs. All major Protestant religions are represented.

