

MOUNTAINS OF OPPORTUNITY

Mercer County is located in the southern tip of West Virginia, approximately 100 miles from the State Capitol in Charleston. Bluefield and Princeton are the major cities with Princeton being the county seat.



Mercer County was founded almost a quarter of a century before the Civil War, incorporated by an act of the Virginia General Assembly and named for General Hugh Mercer, a Revolutionary War hero. The county is located within a 500 miles radius of more than 50 percent of the population of the United States.

TRANSPORTATION

Mercer County is a transportation center in southern West Virginia, with Princeton situated at the third most active interstate interchange in the state. An imposing new Travel Information Center located near the junction of I-77 and Rt. 460, draws hundreds of travelers from the 50,000 vehicles that pass through daily.

Interstate 77 is a major north-south route which enters West Virginia via Bluefield from Virginia to the south and continues north to Princeton where it becomes the West Virginia Turnpike to Charleston. To the north, I-77 provides an ideal link with such major population centers as Cleveland and via I-79 to Pittsburgh. I-77 links Mercer County to major population centers in the southern United States. I-64 east of Beckley, WV provides access to the Midwest and with U.S. Route 460 in



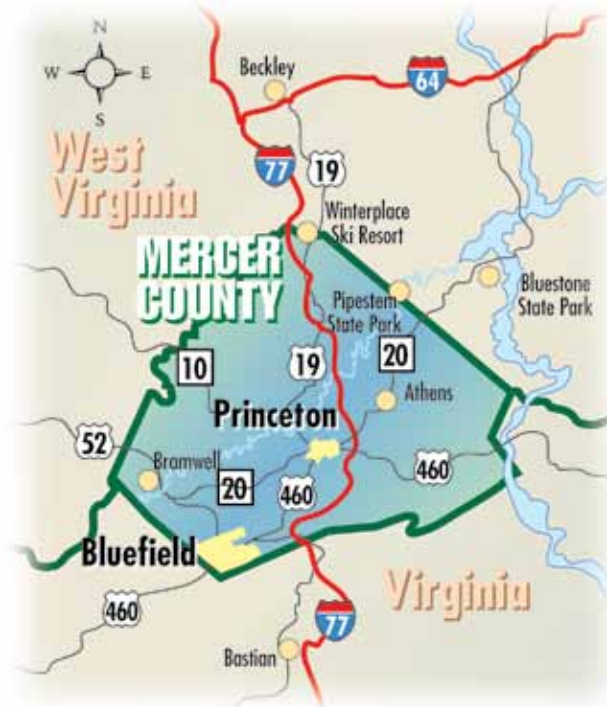
Virginia, the area has excellent service to the East Coast. I-64, I-77 and Rt. 460, provide convenient hookups with I-81, which extends from Tennessee to New England.

AIR SERVICE

Mercer County is served by the Mercer County Airport, which has a 4,743-foot runway and is approximately six miles from Bluefield and eight miles from Princeton. The airport also provides Hertz Auto Rentals. Mercer County Airport services are available from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. for private aircraft, tie-downs, all grades of fuel, and hangar parking.

BUS AND RAIL

The area is served by four major interstate trucking lines. Greyhound Corporation and Bluefield Transit Authority provide bus transportation. Rail service is available from the Norfolk Southern Railway.



Distance to cities in major markets:

Atlanta.....	413
Birmingham.....	473
Boston.....	766
Charleston, WV.....	88
Charlotte.....	160
Chicago.....	605
Cincinnati.....	300
Jacksonville.....	573
Memphis.....	541
New York.....	560
Philadelphia.....	394
Pittsburgh.....	315
Washington, DC.....	238

LIFESTYLES

A common reference by Mercer Countyans is: "Our business environment may be what draws people to us, but its our way of life that keeps them here."

The climate is ideal year-round. The high elevation helps to moderate summer heat and humidity. Excellent health care is



available at two community hospitals, a regional medical center and a rehabilitation center.

Residents enjoy an abundance of leisure activities including arts and crafts, theater productions, skiing, hunting, fishing, golf, a popular state park, all in their back yard.

Unique among local sporting attractions is Appalachian League baseball which includes the Bluefield Blue Jays and the Princeton Rays – farm clubs of the major league Toronto Blue Jays and Tampa Bay Rays.

EDUCATION

Education is the key to the county's continued quality of life. Over 1200 professional, supervisory and support personnel are employed in the county, serving over 11,000 students in the educational system.

College opportunities are plentiful with a four-year college and a university in the county, Concord University and Bluefield State College, offering undergraduate degree programs. Graduate degrees are available at both institutions via the West Virginia College of Graduate Studies (COGS).

American National University (ANU) is accredited by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) and offers degrees and diplomas in medical, business, and technology fields.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Mercer County is positioned for development well into the next century. A wide range of buildings are presently available and sites for office, commercial, industrial, manufacturing and warehousing operations are ready for development.

The Cumberland Industrial Park, located near the I-77 exit in Bluefield, offers a 50,000 sq. ft. building and other

available tracts. Turnpike Industrial Park and Virginian Industrial Park, located in Princeton, offer build-to-suit and/or land sales.

The area's quality stands of hardwoods make the county an attractive location for primary processors and secondary manufacturers of wood products. A U.S. Forest Services Laboratory and the Wood Education and Resource Center, located near Princeton, provide assistance in hardwood research, utilization and marketing.



Wood Education and Resource Center

THE LABOR ASSET

The county's labor pool is skilled and available to put its experience to work in new industries. Over 75 percent of Mercer County's work force is non-union, and labor relations are cooperative thanks, in part, to a labor/management council, the only one of its kind in West Virginia.

Flexible job training features a Guaranteed Work Force Program to accommodate the needs of individual employers.

RESOURCES AND UTILITIES

- Electric power is provided by American Electric Power at rates far below the national average.
- Natural gas is supplied by Bluefield Gas Company and Allegheny Gas Company with an average heating value of 1,030 BTU per cu. ft.
- The West Virginia American Water Company serves the area with a capacity of 10 million GPD.
- Telecommunications is provided by Frontier Communications including electronic and digital switching and high capacity fiber optic cables.

INCENTIVES

Low interest loan programs, state financial assistance, and conventional financing are only a few of the incentives provided to make projects become a reality. Private venture capital funds to provide equity capital investments in new and expanding businesses are attractive features as are state and local tax incentives.

MERCER COUNTY DATA

Population-2014 Estimate

Mercer County.....	61,785
Bluefield.....	10,473
Princeton.....	6,441

Climate

Mercer County has four distinct seasons.

Average annual temperature.....	52°
Average maximum temperature.....	60°
Average minimum temperature.....	44°
Average annual degree days.....	5200
Average annual rainfall.....	38.4"
Average annual snowfall.....	35-45"

Median household income

Mercer County.....	\$34,160.00
--------------------	-------------

Number of households 26,509

Hospitals 3

INFORMATION

To learn more about living and doing business in Mercer County, West Virginia, call, write or Fax
The Development Authority of Mercer County
 1500 West Main Street
 Princeton, WV 24740

Janet Bailey, Executive Director
 Phone: 304/431-8521 • Fax: 304/487-5616
 E-Mail: mercercounty@citlink.net
 Website: www.mercercoeda.com

MERCER C O U N T Y W E S T V I R G I N I A

