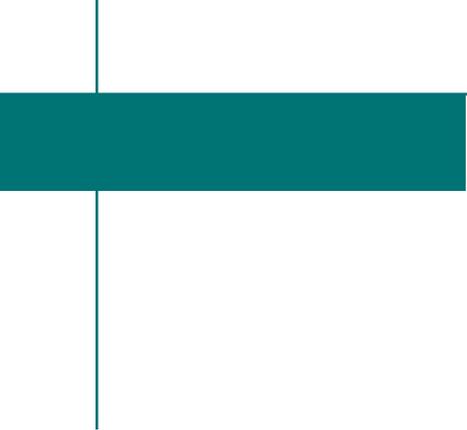




Revised 2013



Charlotte County Owner's Manual



The *2013 Charlotte County Owner's Manual* is created and produced by the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioner's Public Information Office.

Public Information Office
Murdock Administration Complex
18500 Murdock Circle, Suite 538
Port Charlotte, FL 33948

Cover photo: John Elias

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Welcome & History



Welcome to Charlotte County, Florida. Thank you for choosing this beautiful county to call home. Located around the banks of Charlotte Harbor, Charlotte County features an abundance of beautiful vistas, sporting activities for all ages, and a relaxed lifestyle. Charlotte County Government has created this Owner's Manual to acquaint you with our government, local organizations and the many resources available in your community.

We encourage you to visit the county government in Charlotte County or access the many resources online at www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

History

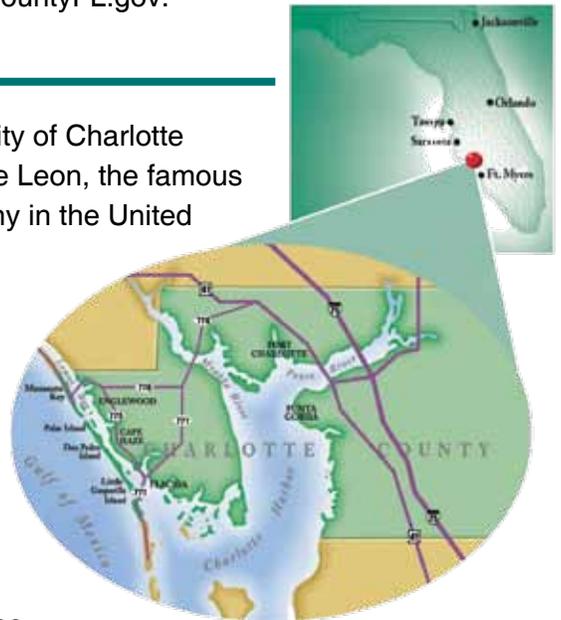
Calusa and Timucus Native American tribes occupied the majority of Charlotte County and surrounding areas until the 1700s. In 1513 Ponce de Leon, the famous Spanish explorer and soldier, attempted the first European colony in the United States at Pine Island, which was later abandoned.

By 1710, the Calusa and Timucus tribes were eradicated by war and slave raids. Creek Native Americans moved into the Charlotte County area and called themselves Seminoles, meaning "migrants." In 1819 the U.S. acquired Florida from Spain and over the next few decades the Charlotte County area was settled by ranchers. By 1856, fighting between the U.S. and the Seminoles culminated in the relocation of the majority of the Seminoles to Oklahoma. Settlement of Charlotte Harbor and the surrounding land continued through the turn of the century.

In 1916, Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor Town issued \$200,000 in bonds to build the first bridge across Charlotte Harbor which was finally completed and opened on July 4, 1921. The legislature then divided DeSoto County into five counties: Charlotte, Glades, Hardee and Highlands. The Florida Legislature established Charlotte County on April 23, 1921 with Punta Gorda as the county seat. The name Charlotte was chosen by a public vote.

County business was first conducted in an office building on Marion Avenue in Punta Gorda which served as the first government facility. The Board of County Commissioners voted to purchase property on the corner of Taylor Street and Olympia Avenue in 1927 and the following year the Charlotte County Courthouse was opened for business.

A contest to design the county seal was held by the Board of County Commissioners in 1969. Kathy Nichols, an art student at Charlotte High School, won the contest on December 2, 1969, and was awarded \$25. Her design illustrated the location of Charlotte County on a map of Florida, highlighting the area's great tarpon fishing.



Elected Officials

Charlotte County Government has a variety of elected officials: the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Property Appraiser, Sheriff, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector. Each of these elected officials act independently. In addition to the elected officials, the county also features a School Board and Airport Authority which act with independent authority.

Board of County Commissioners

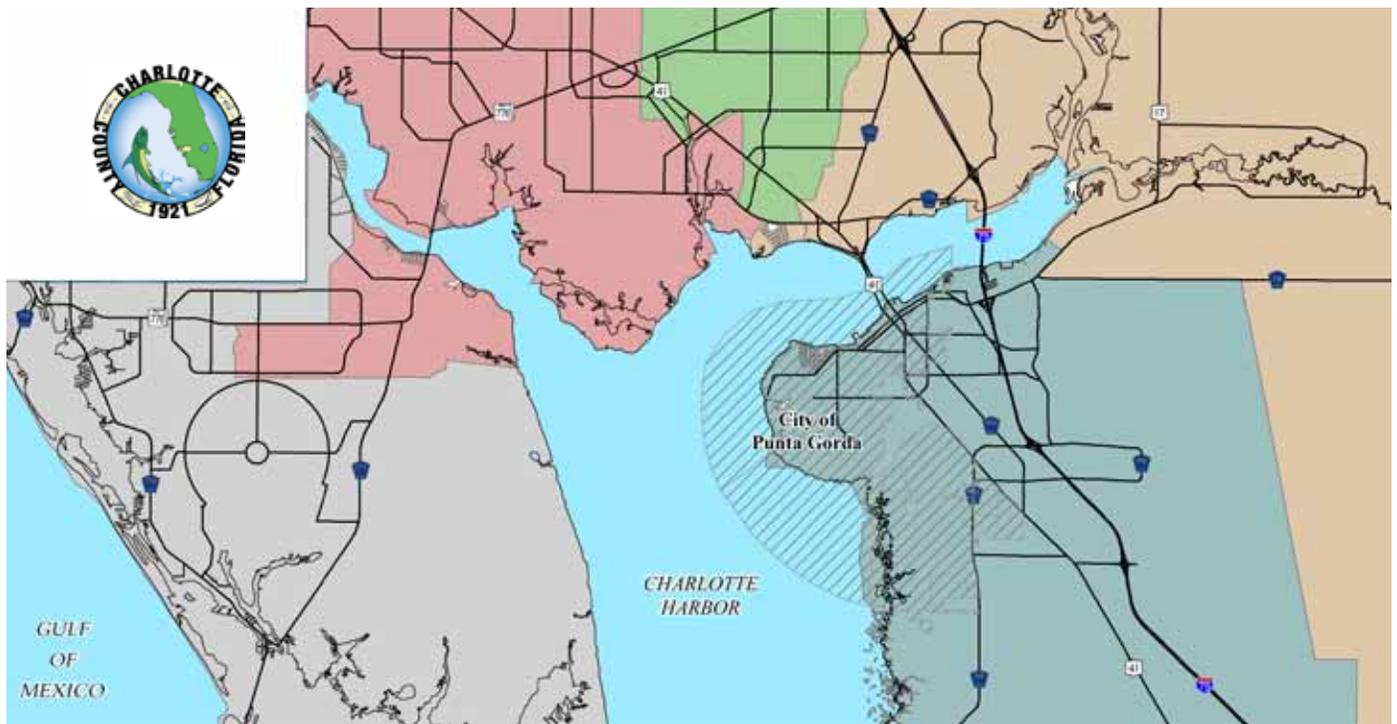
Charlotte County Administration Center
18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948
941.743.1300 ■ email: assistant@charlottefl.com
www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov



Charlotte County adopted a Home Rule Charter in 1985, giving the Board of County Commissioners the authorization to pass laws. The county operates under an elected County Commission, composed of five Commissioners and an appointed County Administrator who is chosen by and responsible to the Board of County Commissioners. The County Administrator is the chief administrative officer of the county and is accountable for all administrative matters and operations under the authority of the commissioners.

The five Commissioners are elected for a four-year term by a county-wide vote. Commissioners from Districts 1, 3 and 5 are elected in presidential election years; Commissioners from Districts 2 and 4 are elected in alternating even years. The Board of County Commissioners meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month for regular Board meetings at the Murdock Administration Center in Port Charlotte.

Charlotte County Commission Districts



- District 1
- District 2
- District 3
- District 4
- District 5

Elected Officials



Clerk of the Circuit Court

Charlotte County Justice Center
350 E. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda, FL 33950
941.637.2199 ■ www.co.charlotte.fl.us

The Clerk of the Circuit Court is an officer of the courts and belongs to the judicial branch of government with the responsibilities of auditor and custodian of all county funds. As an officer of the law, the Clerk of the Circuit Court is accountable for keeping court records, issuing processes, entering judgements and managing

court funds. In Charlotte County, the Clerk is the official recorder who prepares and records minutes of all meetings of the County Commission. The Clerk also serves as the ex-officio auditor to the Board of County Commissioners. Other duties include issuing papers for arrests, issuing summons for the appearance of jurors and witnesses, and compensating jurors. In addition, the Clerk also oversees Civil, Traffic and Misdemeanor courts where marriage licenses and passports are issued and traffic fines are collected. Visit the Clerk's website for more information.

Property Appraiser

18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948
941.743.1948 ■ www.ccappraiser.com

The Property Appraiser is required to determine the just value of all real property and tangible personal property within Charlotte County annually as of January 1. Just value is legally synonymous to 100 percent of fair market value. However, due to additional requirements of Florida law, the annual just value determined for real property is typically lower than the amount for which a property may sell.

Tangible personal property consists primarily of furniture, fixtures and equipment used in a business and the contents of rental properties. Filing of an annual return is required by April 1.

The Property Appraiser also administers property tax exemptions and agricultural classifications. The most recognized exemption is the homestead exemption, which decreases a property's taxable value by \$25,000 for qualifying homeowners, saving \$400 to \$500 in property taxes each year. An associated benefit is the annual "Save Our Homes" limitation on any increase in "assessed" value. The homestead exemption is available on property owned by legal residents of Florida who permanently reside thereon as of January 1. Qualified homeowners are required to apply for any exemption by March 1.

In addition to the Murdock office, you can contact the Property Appraiser at the following locations:

South County Annex
410 Taylor St.
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

West Charlotte Annex
6868 San Casa Drive
Englewood, FL 34224

Agriculture: 941.743.1483
Real Property: 941.743.1498
Records/Exemptions: 941.743.1593
Tangible Personal Property: 941.743.1476



Elected Officials

Charlotte County Sheriff's Office

7474 Utilities Road, Punta Gorda, FL 33982

941.639.2101 ■ www.ccsso.org

It is the mission of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office to provide quality law enforcement, detention, court security and homeland security services to the citizens and visitors of Charlotte County.

It is the vision of the Sheriff's Office to be a leader in public safety, community service and crime control. We strive to integrate the community policing philosophies of developing partnerships with our community and maintaining a high quality of life through collaborative problem solving in everything we do. It is our vision that Charlotte County remain one of the safest and most enjoyable places to live and visit in the State of Florida.

The men and women of the Charlotte County Sheriff's Office pledge to infuse our core values in every aspect of our service to our community. Integrity: We pledge to maintain a strong sense of honesty, morality, goodness, and ethical character. Honesty: We pledge to always be truthful, sincere, upright and decent. Character: We pledge to maintain the highest ethical standards and honorable personal qualities. We wish to serve as role models for our youth, our community and our profession.



District 1 Office

6868 San Casa Drive
Englewood
941.475.9005

District 2 Office

1441 Tamiami Trail
(Town Center Mall)
Port Charlotte
941.613.3245

District 3 Office

7474 Utilities Road
Punta Gorda
941.575.5370

District 4 Office

3280 Tamiami Trail
(Promenades Mall) Suite 505
Port Charlotte
941.278.3900

Supervisor of Elections

226 Taylor St., Punta Gorda, FL 33950

941.833.5400 ■ www.charlottevotes.com

The Supervisor of Elections Office serves the voters of Charlotte County by providing offices where voters may register, maintaining voter records, absentee balloting, candidate qualifying and signature verification.

In order to register to vote, you must be 18 years of age (may pre-register at 17), be a U.S. citizen and a legal resident of the Florida county where you intend to vote. A voter registration application must be completed and is available at the Supervisor of Elections Offices, libraries and other public locations.

You may also register when you obtain your drivers license or when you apply for public assistance. Applications are available online at the Supervisor of Elections website. If this option is chosen, the completed application must be printed and mailed to the Main Office in Punta Gorda.



Main Office

Charlotte County Courthouse
226 Taylor St.
Punta Gorda
941.833.5400

Murdock Office

Charlotte County Administration Building
18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte
941.743.1387

Englewood Annex

West Charlotte Annex
6868 San Casa Drive
Englewood
941.681.3717

Elected Officials

Tax Collector

941.743.1350 ■ www.cctaxcol.com

The Tax Collector is responsible for the collection of ad valorem taxes and other taxes set at the local level, including those by special levying districts, state agencies and county commissions. The Tax Collector also acts as an agent for several state departments, including the Department of Revenue, Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Local Business Tax Receipts are collected by the Tax Collector and are renewable online.

The Tax Collector has three convenient locations listed below. All locations are open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Murdock Office

18500 Murdock Circle
Port Charlotte, FL 33948
941.743.1350

Punta Gorda Branch

410 Taylor St.
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
941.743.1350

Englewood Branch

6868 San Casa Drive
Englewood, FL 34224
941.681.3710

Registration, tag and title services for cars, trucks, trailers, vessels and mobile homes can be obtained through any of the three offices. You can also access specialty tags and disability parking permits. Limited driver's license services are available in our Englewood, Punta Gorda and Murdock offices.

Tags and License Plates

Specialty license plates are available for purchase. You can view the index and images of specialty plates online at www.flhsmv.gov/dmv/specialtytags. Vehicle registration and license renewals are available online at: www.cctaxcol.com.

Charlotte County CC-TV



Charlotte County's premier government access television station, CC-TV, provides informative and entertaining programming and to bring the inner workings of county government out into the "Sunshine" for the benefit of county citizens.

CC-TV offers viewers coverage of County Commission, City Council and other government meetings as well as special documentaries and informative programs about the environment, culture and history of southwest Florida. CC-TV also produces shows that highlight county programs and services. Many of CC-TV's most popular programs are also available on demand over at the county website:
www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov.

Charlotte County Website



www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov

The county website provides residents and visitors with a convenient way to access information and services provided by the Commissioners, Administration, and departments that serve Charlotte County.

The county website is a valuable resource for county citizens, one that is useful informative, easy to navigate and encourages access to government information 24 hours a day.

Getting Around

Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles

www.flhsmv.gov

New Florida residents are required to register vehicles within 10 days and obtain a Florida driver license within 30 days. The Charlotte County Tax Collector (see page 8) handles the functions of the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

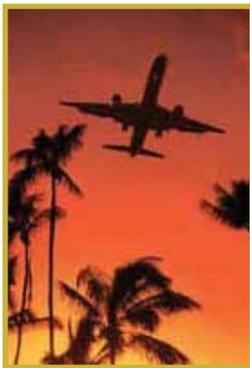
The Englewood Branch of the Tax Collector's Office, located at 6868 San Casa Drive and the Punta Gorda Branch located at 410 Taylor St. offer driver's license services including testing for Charlotte County residents. The Murdock office, located at 18500 Murdock Circle, offers limited driver's license service.

Airports

The Charlotte County area is served by local and international airports.

Punta Gorda Airport (PGD)

28000 A-1 Airport Road
Punta Gorda, FL 33982
941.639.1101
www.flypdg.com



Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW)

15924 Air Cargo Lane
Ft. Myers, FL 33913
239.590.4800
www.flylcpa.com

Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ)

6000 Airport Circle
Sarasota, FL 34234
941.359.2770
www.srq-airport.com

Tampa International Airport (TPA)

4100 George J. Bean Parkway
Tampa, FL 33607
813.870.8700
www.tampaairport.com

Dial-A-Ride Program

The Dial-A-Ride transit program is provided by Charlotte County's Human Services Department. This transit program is a point-to-point bus system that serves all residents in developed areas of Charlotte County.

Sunshine Rides for disabled, elderly and low income are also available.

Appointments are required for both Dial-A-Ride and Sunshine Ride.

Contact Information

Port Charlotte: 941.575.4000
Englewood: 697.4000 Ext. 4855
TDD Users: 941.637.2288

Go to www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov, click Human Services under Department Links, then click Transportation Services.

Charlotte County Transit has gone "Green". Five new Hybrid Diesel/Electric buses have been added to the fleet. These "green buses" were purchased by using Section 5307 ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) capital funds.



City of Punta Gorda



Punta Gorda boasts a small town atmosphere with all the pleasures of a larger city. The City of Punta Gorda is about 16 square miles and ranks 50th in city size out of Florida's 404 cities. The economy is booming and the cost of living is well below the national average.

The City of Punta Gorda which was incorporated on December 7, 1887, is the only incorporated city in Charlotte County and has an approximate population of 17,050. It was originally named "Trabue" in 1885 after developer, Colonel Isaac Trabue, who purchased the land from British investors.

Punta Gorda has traced its roots to a landing at Live Oak Point on the Peace River by Hernando DeSoto in 1539. Punta Gorda is Spanish for "Broad Point" and refers to its broad point of land jutting out into the harbor. Early Spanish attempts to colonize the outer islands in present-day Charlotte County were thwarted by Calusa Indian tribes and the area was slowly settled as the English migrated to Charlotte Harbor on the banks of the Peace River.

In 1884, surveyor Kelley B. Harvey worked to lay out streets and blocks according to instructions from Isaac Trabue, then a Kentucky resident. All waterfront property was designated to be parks and the streets were not to run in a north-south direction, but rather, to wind along the Peace River. The Town of Trabue, a subdivision, was recorded on February 24, 1885; however, by 1887 enough residents in Trabue objecting to Trabue's efforts to control the town's destiny were able to outvote him and revert the name to Punta Gorda during the incorporation process. These 34 men, including four black men and carpenters stranded here after building the old Hotel Punta Gorda, met at the Tom Hector Building in Hector's Pool Hall located upstairs from the town's drug store to draft the City's incorporation papers.

Elected Officials

326 W. Marion Ave.

941.575.3369 ■ citycouncil@ci.punta.gorda.fl.us

www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us

Punta Gorda has a five-member Council elected at large for two-year terms to represent each of the city's five districts. Elections are on a staggered basis each November, with three seats being elected one year and the other two elected the following year. All of the Council members are elected by district. The City Council then appoints its own Mayor and Vice Mayor from among the five Council members. City Council also appoints a City Attorney, City Clerk and City Manager. Punta Gorda practices a Council-Manager form of government, where the City Council is the legislative arm and the City Manager (as opposed to the Mayor) is the administrative arm of the government.

Punta Gorda's City Council meetings are held the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 9:00 a.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall. All Council members may be reached through the Office of the City Clerk by mail or by telephone listed above.



City of Punta Gorda

Website



www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us

The city's website provides the most detailed and up-to-date information on public meetings and city announcements. The website has links to reports and city communications that are distributed by staff on a weekly basis. Also on the website are links to view taped webcasts of council meetings, information on all city departments, lists of events, citizen alerts, job opportunities, maps to parks, building permits online and an employee directory.

Getting Involved

The city has several areas in which residents can become more involved with local government. One area is the Punta Gorda Police Department Volunteers in Policing (VIP) Program. In this program, eligible candidates may serve in a wide range of capacities. Positions are available during business hours Monday to Friday, with some opportunities available evening and weekend hours.

Another area residents can become involved is through service on one of the city's 15 advisory boards and committees. Appointments are made from applications submitted to the City Clerk's Office by interested residents.

City Services

Administration

City Hall
326 W. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda
941.575.3302 ■ www.ci.punta-gorda.fl.us

The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the City who acts as a liaison between each City Department and City Council. The City Manager develops the City's annual budget for each fiscal year, directs the day-to-day operations of the City and approves all hirings, firings and disciplinary actions. The City Manager is also responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the governing council, and for appointing the heads of the various departments

Fire

Headquarters
1410 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda
941.575.5529

The City Fire Department helps citizens to prevent and survive fires, renders emergency fire, rescue and medical assistance and provides assistance during other emergencies.

Police

Public Safety Building
1410 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda
941.639.4111

The City provides for the security and safety of citizens through the delivery of law enforcement services of the City Police.

Public Works & Sanitation/Solid Waste

3130 Cooper St., Punta Gorda
941.575.5050

Utilities

3132 Cooper St., Punta Gorda
Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Customer Service 941.575.3339
Billing questions 941.639.2528
After business & holidays 941.575.5070

Arts & Museums

Performing Arts



Charlotte Performing Arts Center

701 Carmalita St., Punta Gorda
941.637.0459

Created with community partnerships, CPAC brings the finest in performing arts and school events. CPAC is the home of the Charlotte Symphony and the Charlotte Chorale.

Charlotte Players

1182 Market Circle, Port Charlotte 33953
941.255.1022 ■ www.charlotteplayers.org

The Charlotte Players are the oldest performing arts organization in Charlotte County presenting five productions each season. Performances are at the Cultural Center of Charlotte County, Inc. and at various venues throughout the county.

Visual Arts

Visual Arts Center

210 Maud St., Punta Gorda
941.639.8810 ■ www.visualartcenter.org

Artists display their talents through numerous exhibitions. The Guild provides instructional classes, programs, workshops, lectures, open studio life drawing and portraits and demonstrations for artists of all ages.



Culture & Museums

Charlotte County Historical Center

941.629.PAST (7278)
More details on page 13.



Cultural Center of Charlotte County, Inc.

2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte
941.625.4175 ■ www.theculturalcenter.com

The Cultural Center hosts a full schedule of concerts, plays, lectures, educational, cultural and social activities.

Military Heritage and Aviation Museum

Fisherman's Village, 1200 West Retta Esplanade, Punta Gorda
941.575.9002 ■ www.mhaam.org

This museum contains more than 30,000 artifacts including uniforms, medals and equipment.

Community Services

Parks

941.625.PLAY (7529)

Charlotte County boasts two public beaches and many parks, trails, boat ramps, canoe/kayak launch sites, swimming pools, skate parks, environmental parks, and sports fields. The Community Services department offers programs, events, activities and opportunities for all ages. Visit our website www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov to download the Community Services Program Guide.

Recreation

941.625.PLAY (7529)

[Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center](#)

941.639.5833

[Charlotte Sports Park](#)

941.743.2425

Enjoy a multitude of recreational activities at our four recreation centers, three pool facilities, event center and sports park.

Recreation Center Locations:

[Harold Avenue Recreation Center](#)

23400 Harold Ave., Port Charlotte 941.627.1074

[South County Regional Park Recreation Center](#)

670 Cooper St., Punta Gorda 941.505.8686

[Port Charlotte Beach Recreation Center](#)

4500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte 941.627.1628

[Tringali Recreation Center](#)

3460 N. Access Road, Englewood 941.681.3742

Swimming Pool Locations:

[Oyster Creek Pool at Ann Dever Memorial Regional Park](#)

7001 San Casa Drive, Englewood 941.681.3743

[Port Charlotte Beach Park](#)

4500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte 941.629.0170

[South County Regional Park](#)

670 Cooper St., Punta Gorda 941.505.8686

Libraries

Our libraries offer large collections of books, movies, audio books, music CDs, and periodicals. Electronic databases, downloadable audio books and access to patron accounts are available via the website www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/library. Other services include public internet access, programs for all ages, inter-library loan and more. Library cards are free to residents and can be used to ride the Dial-A-Ride transit system to and from any library at no charge.

Library Locations:

[Mid-County Regional Library](#)

2050 Forrest Nelson Blvd., Port Charlotte
941.613.3200

[Englewood Charlotte Public Library](#)

3450 N. Access Road, Englewood
941.681.3736

[Port Charlotte Public Library](#)

2280 Aaron St., Port Charlotte
941.764.5562

[Punta Gorda Public Library](#)

424 W. Henry St., Punta Gorda
941.833.5460

Historical Center

941.629.PAST (7278)

22959 Bayshore Road, Port Charlotte

The Charlotte County Historical Center offers exhibits and programs for the enjoyment, protection and preservation of our community's rich historical resources. Membership in the CCHC Society, the Center's fund-raising arm, includes free admission to 280 museums and science centers worldwide.

Natural Resources

941.613.3220

The Natural Resources division manages county-owned environmental properties, the Conservation Charlotte Environmentally Sensitive Land Acquisition Program, and assists with environmental permitting issues, scrub jay locations, strategies, policies and procedures with state and federal departments and agencies.

Public Safety

Charlotte County Fire/EMS is a full service career department that operates out of 14 stations, employs over 200 personnel that respond to more than 20,000 incidents a year.

Fire/EMS provides fire protection and emergency medical services including a Special Operations Division, Training Division and Fire Prevention Division. Additionally, the Department provides innovative public education and injury prevention programs such as the Lil' Bits Child Passenger Safety Program, the Red Dot Medical Information Program, and the Risk Watch Program.

Emergency - Call 911

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Charlotte County Fire/EMS General Information | 941.833.5600 |
| Smoke Detector Information | 941.833.5600 |
| Car Seat Information | 941.833.5600 |
| Poison Control | 800.222.1222 |
| Animal Control | 941.833.5690 |

Charlotte County Emergency Management

Emergency Operations Center

26571 Airport Road, Punta Gorda ■ 941.833.4000

The county's Office of Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating all activities necessary to protect Charlotte County communities from natural and man-made disasters. The department provides planning, education and resources to protect residents' lives and property including developing disaster preparedness plans as well as providing training and exercise activities.

Hurricane Preparedness Information

National Hurricane Center ■ www.nhc.noaa.gov

The National Hurricane Center issues advisories for tropical depressions, storms and hurricanes every six hours.

Tropical Storms and Hurricanes

A Tropical Storm Watch is issued when sustained winds of 39-73 mph could pose a threat in a specified area within 48 hours. A Tropical Storm Warning is issued when tropical storm conditions are expected in the specified area within 36 hours.

A Hurricane Watch is issued up to 48 hours before landfall and indicates that everyone in the designated area should prepare to take protective measures if a Hurricane Warning is issued. A Hurricane Warning is issued when hurricane conditions are expected in the designated area within 36 hours. When a Hurricane Warning is issued, precautions should be taken immediately.

Pick up a copy of the Disaster Planning Guide at most county buildings or visit our website at www.CharlotteCountyFL.com/Emergency. Charlotte County's flood zone and storm surge area maps are online at: www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov. Click the Flood Information link on the left.

Know Your Zone Color

Areas vulnerable to flooding from heavy rains and storm surge are part of evacuation zones that are identified throughout the county by red, orange, yellow and green markers on street and stop signs. The markers were funded by a grant from FEMA, and the program received the Public Education Award at the 2012 Florida Governor's Hurricane Conference.

Hospitals

Charlotte Regional Medical Center

809 E. Marion Ave., Punta Gorda
941.629.3131 ■ www.charlotteregional.com

Charlotte Regional Medical Center is a 208-bed accredited and award-winning hospital. CRMC is home to The Rehab and Wellness Center, The Diabetes Center, the Center for Wound Care and the Sleep Disorder Center. Also located at CRMC is Riverside Behavioral Center, the county's only private psychiatric facility. Nurse Connect is CRMC's free 24-hour medical information and physician referral hotline, staffed by specially trained registered nurses. Call Nurse Connect at 941.637.2497 and visit the website to learn more about hospital services, to apply for a job, or to search the physician directory.



Fawcett Memorial Hospital

21298 Olean Blvd., Port Charlotte
941.629.1181 ■ www.fawcethospital.com

Fawcett Memorial Hospital is a 238-bed, full-service acute care hospital serving Charlotte County and the surrounding areas since 1975. Clinical specialties include 24-hour emergency care center, an accredited comprehensive cancer program, accredited Stroke Center of Excellence, accredited Chest Pain Center with Percutaneous Coronary Intervention, Spine and Orthopedic Center with accredited Pain Management program, Wound Management and Hyperbaric Medicine, Bariatric Services, inpatient and outpatient surgery, minimally invasive surgery, accredited inpatient rehabilitation, Fawcett Sports & Rehabilitation and many outpatient programs. Fawcett also provides a variety of community wellness programs as part of its ongoing commitment to community outreach and education. For more information, visit the website, find them on Facebook (search Fawcett Memorial Hospital) or follow them on Twitter (search FMHnews).

Peace River Regional Medical Center

2500 Harbor Blvd., Port Charlotte
941.766.4122 ■ www.peaceriverregional.com

Peace River Regional Medical Center is a 254-bed accredited full-service hospital that is committed to caring for people throughout their cycle of life. The PRRMC staff includes roughly 900 Associates, with over 300 physicians representing more than 40 specialties, along with over 200 volunteers supporting the health care staff.

PRRMC is the only hospital in Charlotte County to offer: licensed obstetric and pediatric units, as well as Level II Neonatal Intensive Care Unit; a fellowship-trained bariatric surgeon; a physician board-certified and fellowship-trained in emergency pediatric medicine; a center to diagnose and treat balance disorders using the Neurocom EquiTest®; and a full-service cardiac center.



Education

Charlotte County Public Schools

Administrative Offices, 1445 Education Way, Port Charlotte, FL
941.255.0808 ■ www.yourcharlotteschools.net

Contact administrative offices at the above address and phone for information about registration and placement. Your local school contact information is listed below:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Baker Pre-K Center | 941.575.5470 | Sallie Jones Elementary | 941.575.5440 |
| Deep Creek Elementary | 941.255.7535 | Vineland Elementary | 941.697.6600 |
| East Elementary | 941.575.5475 | L.A. Ainger Middle School | 941.697.5800 |
| Kingsway Elementary | 941.255.7590 | Murdock Middle School | 941.255.7525 |
| Liberty Elementary | 941.255.7515 | Port Charlotte Middle School | 941.255.7460 |
| Meadow Park Elementary | 941.255.7470 | Punta Gorda Middle School | 941.575.5485 |
| Myakka River Elementary | 941.697.7111 | Charlotte High School | 941.575.5450 |
| Neil Armstrong Elementary | 941.255.7450 | Lemon Bay High School | 941.629.4552 |
| Peace River Elementary | 941.255.7622 | Port Charlotte High School | 941.255.7485 |

Alternative Education, Local Colleges & Universities

Charlotte County offers residents a wide variety of choices for continuing and higher education. Whether you are a first-time or returning student, the county has education opportunities for your career goals.

Academy at Charlotte Tech ■ 941.255.7545 ■ acad.ccps.k12.fl.us

Charlotte Harbor Center ■ 941.255.7440 ■ chc.ccps.k12.fl.us

Adult and Community Education ■ 941.255.7430 ■ charlottetechcenter.com/adult-learning-center

Charlotte Technical Center ■ 941.255.7500 ■ charlottetechcenter.com

Edison State College, Charlotte Campus ■ 941.637.5629 ■ www.edison.edu

Florida Gulf Coast University - Charlotte ■ 941.505.0130 ■ www.fgcu.edu



Pet Adoption

Our local Suncoast Humane Society and the Animal Welfare League have many loving cats and dogs needing a good home. Access more information and view potential pets online or visit in person.



Suncoast Humane Society

6781 San Casa Drive, Englewood ■ 941.474.7884 ■ www.suncoasthumane.org

Animal Welfare League

3519 Drance St., Port Charlotte ■ 941.625.6720 ■ www.awlshelter.org

Human Services

Senior Services

941.833.6500

Offers case management for frail elders, aged 60 or older, including home delivered meals, special transportation or in-home supportive services.

Transit

941.575.4000

Provides Dial-A-Ride for all county residents in developed areas and Sunshine Rides for disabled, elderly, and low income residents. (See page 9 for more information.)

Veteran Services

941.764.5579

Offers information about eligibility for a wide variety of Veteran services and provides assistance in accessing Veteran benefits.

Family Services Center

941.235.0159

The Family Services Center is dedicated to supporting families and youth services through centered sponsored activities. Services provided at the center include: after school care, parenting classes, educational programs, housing programs, intergenerational programs, juvenile diversion and reentry programs for court-involved youth and counseling services.

Housing Services

941.833.6504

The Human Services Department is the administrative agent for the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) Program. The SHIP Program provides Charlotte County with over \$1.6 million of state funds annually that are used to expand or preserve housing that is affordable to low income households and other groups with special needs.

The SHIP Program funds the following homeowner programs: Down Payment Assistance, Housing Rehabilitation, Foreclosure Prevention, and Community Land Trust Assistance. The SHIP Program also provides funding for affordable rental communities.



Additional information about the SHIP Program and other housing assistance programs is available from Human Services, Housing Division at 941.833.6504.



Information and Referral Service

A comprehensive information and referral service, 2-1-1 is a quick way to connect to a wealth of community information, including health and human services information as well as community and government numbers. You can call 2-1-1 seven days a week, 24 hours a day. All calls are confidential. Get Connected. Get Answers. 2-1-1 is a free call.

Cell phone, TTY users and Charlotte County residents in Englewood, call 941.205.2161.

Charlotte County Utilities

Water/Sewer

Charlotte County Utilities (CCU)

941.764.4300

CCU supplies safe, potable water to more than 55,750 homes and businesses and sanitary sewer services to more than 33,000 homes and businesses. In its four water reclamation facilities, CCU reclaims wastewater to create reuse water, which is safely used for irrigation by golf courses and other facilities. CCU also maintains more than 1,300 miles of water mains, more than 800 miles of sewer lines and mains, 21 miles of reuse water transmission lines and more than 4,100 fire hydrants in CCU's Service Area.

Payment Locations

Online:

www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov

Click "Pay Water/Sewer Bill"

in the "I want to..." list.

East Port Campus 941.764.4300

25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte

Murdock Administration Center (Drop-box Only)

18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte



Garbage & Recycling

All single-family residences of unincorporated Charlotte County are provided one 65 or 95 gallon garbage cart and two 15 gallon recycling bins. Residents of the city of Punta Gorda should call 941.575.5050 for more information. Collections are Monday through Friday with the exception of Christmas, Thanksgiving and July 4. To look up the collection day for an address, visit www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov and click Garbage & Recycling in the Popular Links.

The garbage cart must be placed at the end of the driveway with the wheels of the cart facing the home and at least 5 feet away from mailboxes, parked cars and other obstacles. Wherever possible, the garbage cart should be placed on one of side of the driveway and recycling bins and yard trimmings on the other. If not possible to split by driveway, then separate by 5 feet.

All recyclable materials may be mixed together in the recycling bins—sorting is not necessary. Even though the materials are mixed in the truck, they will be separated and processed at a material recycling facility, then sold. Plastics with numbers 1 through 7 codes on the containers are acceptable. Cardboard should be cut into 3 foot by 3 foot pieces or less.



Hazardous Materials are not acceptable for recycling. Any product labeled toxic, poison, corrosive, flammable, or irritant should not be placed in recycling bins. If hazardous materials are found in the bins, they will be tagged with a warning notice and not serviced.

Mini-Transfer and Recycling Facilities

There are two facilities to serve residents. The Mid-County Facility is located at 19675 Kenilworth Blvd., Port Charlotte and the West Charlotte facility is at 7070 Environmental Way, Englewood.

For information on all automated garbage related issues including bulk pick-ups, carts, cart exchanges, garbage collection, recycling and yard trimmings collections call Waste Management at 941.629.1106 or 877.567.2974 from Englewood.

Community Development

The Community Development Department administers and enforces county Land Development regulations, the Florida Building Code, and are responsible for the preparation and implementation of the county's Comprehensive Plan and implementation of road, canal dredging and drainage Capital Improvements Program.

Building Construction Services

Building Construction Services is responsible for protecting the life safety and welfare of all county citizens and facilitates the construction process. Call 941.743.1201 for help with these services:

Contractor Licensing Division

Monitors contractors' licensing and ensures contractors have correct insurance, disciplines contractors in accordance with local and state laws, provides guidance for unsafe building abatement, including inspecting structures that may pose a threat to surroundings.

Inspections Section

Ensures that construction matches plans approved by the Plans Review section, inspect the building during the construction phase, and have the ability to stop construction should the work not meet all applicable life safety codes.

Plans Review Section

Ensures proposed buildings meet all applicable life safety and welfare codes prior to construction, and work closely with contractors, owners, engineers, and architects.

Contractor Licenses

Responsible for ensuring that all businesses have the correct licenses, administer the local contractor license program, maintain the licenses of State contractors working in the county, and issue licenses or permits for taxi drivers and fortune tellers.

Planning, Zoning, Code Compliance, Land Information and Engineering

These divisions implement the county Comprehensive Plan and other land development regulations, and oversee public and private land development:

Comprehensive Planning Division 941.764.4903

Responsible for creating, maintaining and implementing the county Comprehensive Plan and Community and Neighborhood Plans.

Zoning Division 941.743.1964

Reviews proposed residential, commercial and industrial land development plans for permitted land uses, building size, building setbacks, fence placement, coordinates lot splits, street and plat vacations, and other land development issues. Also determines impact fee amounts, and enforces the Zoning Code.

Code Compliance Division 941.743.1201

Enforces the Zoning Code, International Property

Maintenance Code, Florida Building Code and various other county codes.

Land Information Division 941.743.1500

Assigns addresses to recorded lots and parcels and sells maps such as aerials, zoning areas, and general development features.

Engineering Division 941.575.3632

Roadway, drainage and dredging Capital Improvement Projects, traffic signal maintenance, street lights, and roadway signing and marking.

Planning & Zoning Board Assistant 941.764.4903

Zoning Board of Appeals Assistant 941.743.1956



Charlotte County Administration Center

941.743.1200

www.CharlotteCountyFL.gov

