



# BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Business Resources	3
Licensing and Permitting	4-5
State Level Requirements	6
Federal Level Requirements	6
Sources to Fund New Businesses	6
Workforce Development Resources	7
State and Federal Programs	8
Resources and Support Organizations to Advance Your Business	8
Local Utilities	8
Keeping Your Business Safe	9
Telephone Directory	9-10
Internet Directory	11-12
Frequently Asked Questions	13-15

*Information contained within this guide was accurate at the time of publication – (January 2008).*



## PALMDALE IS A GREAT PLACE FOR BUSINESS

and is home to some of the world's largest aerospace companies, as well as a growing number of high-tech manufacturers. Embracing the entrepreneurial spirit, the City also recognizes the importance of the small business community and is proud of the thousands of companies located within the City.

Owning a business is the American dream for many people. When starting a new business, there are important decisions to make and many guidelines to follow. Knowing the basic steps to follow in starting your business is the first step toward success. It is equally important to be well informed about local, state and federal requirements and resources. This guide is designed as a reference to assist you in starting and growing your business in the City of Palmdale.

it's all

## Business Resources

### *City Liaison*

Palmdale business owners with questions and/or concerns about City policies and procedures may contact a Business Liaison in the Economic Development Department. The Liaison acts as a direct connection between local government and the business community and guides new and existing businesses through the permitting, licensing and development processes. For assistance, call 661/267-5125.

### *City Web Site*

Palmdale's Web site provides a quick electronic resource for business and community information. Various color maps are available for viewing in JPG and PDF format, including Land Use, Zoning, Traffic Volume, Antelope Valley Enterprise Zone, Foreign-Trade Zone and others. City Codes, Ordinances and Resolutions are also available for viewing. In addition, Palmdale's Web site also provides important links to other Web sites to further assist businesses.

### *Small Business Development Center*

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC), through a contract with the City of Palmdale, offers free business consulting to Palmdale businesses of any size. The SBDC is the top California intermediary for the Small Business Administration in assisting business owners with loan applications. Services include loan packaging, no cost one-on-one business consulting and no- and low-cost business training. The main focus of the SBDC is to provide expertise in a variety of areas to help businesses grow. These areas include access to capital, procurement, marketing, accounting and bookkeeping, management and human resources. For more information, call 661/294-9375.

### *Service Corps of Retired Executives*

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) provides free counseling services to the small business community, including assistance with business plan formulation. Volunteers from SCORE are retired business owners, executives and managers who have been trained as counselors. Counseling sessions give entrepreneurs valuable information on general business practices and industry-specific issues. For more information, call 661/947-7679.



### *Development Advisory Board*

The City's Development Advisory Board (DAB) assists businesses in the early stages of development to determine design and infrastructure requirements prior to submitting formal plans for projects. Palmdale's DAB is made up of various City department staff, as well as representatives from outside regulatory agencies, who are involved in the land entitlement process. By taking an early, proactive approach, obstacles may be avoided and the process may proceed more smoothly towards approval. For more information, call the City's Planning Department at 661/267-5200.

# here

# Licensing and Permitting

## LOCAL LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

### *Business License*

A business license is required to conduct any for profit business within the City of Palmdale, whether the business is based in the City limits or not. All nonprofit organizations operating in the City are recommended to contact the Business License Division to determine if a license or Occupancy Review is needed.

There are several items and/or documents that are required by the City Business License Division prior to issuance of a business license. They are:

- A Fictitious Business Name Statement or “Doing Business As” (DBA) must be filed with the County Clerk/Registrar-Recorder within the county the business is operating. If your legal last name is in the name of the business, filing for a DBA is not required. In addition to filing the Fictitious Business Name Statement or DBA, the registrant must publish a statement in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the principal place of business is located once a week for four successive weeks. Local newspapers are:

1. **Acton-Agua Dulce News – 661/269-1169**
2. **Antelope Valley Journal – 661/947-5009**
3. **Antelope Valley Press – 661/273-2700**

NOTE: The City of Palmdale is located within Los Angeles County. The County Clerk/Registrar-Recorder may be contacted at 661/945-6446.

- Retail sales require a seller’s permit also known as a retail sales tax number, which may be obtained from the State Board of Equalization. For more information, call 818/904-2300.



- If you have employees, you will need to contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at 800/829-1040 and the State of California Employment Development Department at 661/726-4128 to file the necessary forms for federal and state employer numbers.
- The Secretary of State handles Corporate and Nonprofit Organization filings. For more information, call 213/897-3062.
- If your business deals in food products or the use of radiology equipment, you are required to obtain a Los Angeles County Health permit. For food products call 661/723-4533, catering or mobile food call 626/430-5500 and for radiology equipment call 213/738-4059.
- If you plan to sell alcoholic beverages at your business, you must notify the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control at 818/901-5017 and the Planning Department for information on the City’s alcohol ordinance at 661/267-5200.

NOTE: If you sell alcoholic beverages and your building is over 5,000 square feet, a fire sprinkler system is required.

- To establish a business in your home, you need to obtain a Home Occupation Permit (HOP) from the Planning Department. This permit is valid as long as you comply with the HOP requirements and conditions. A one-time fee is due for the HOP application along with your business license application and fees. Please call the Business License Division at 661/267-5434 for fee amounts.
- To establish a business in an existing commercial or industrial building, an Occupancy Review is required. Occupancy Reviews are performed by the Planning and Building and Safety departments prior to submitting your business license application. Changing the use of a building from one kind to another (for example, from retail sales to restaurant) may require additional permits and/or modifications.



- Before establishing your business, you must check with the City's Planning Department to verify that your type of business is allowed at the location or site you have chosen, pursuant to the City's General Plan and Zoning designations. Planning will also verify that parking, access and signage meet the current City standards.
- The Building and Safety Department will review building permit files to confirm that there are no outstanding building permits for the building you have chosen for your business and that the building is safe with no known code violations. The Department may require additional paperwork/permits from various permitting agencies, such as the Fire Department, Health Department, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and the Sanitation District. Fees vary for inspections. For more information, call the City's Building and Safety Department at 661/267-5353.

### ***Zoning and Land Use Permits***

Zoning divides communities into areas that define building and land uses. Before applying for a business permit, make sure that the use of the property is consistent with the zoning designation. To check the zoning designation, provide the property address or assessor's parcel number to the Planning Department at 661/267-5200.

### ***Public Works Permits***

Public Works permits may be needed for projects with required roadway/infrastructure improvements. Examples of such projects are encroachment permits, flood plain development and projects that impact watercourses. For more information, call the Engineering Department at 661/267-5272.

### ***Air Quality Permits***

Industries and stationary emission sources require air quality permits to ensure that they comply with all regulations limiting air pollution emissions. Air quality permits are required for any equipment or process at a facility that may emit pollutants into the air. Examples of equipment or processes requiring permits are engines, dry-cleaning machines, gasoline storage tanks, boilers and surface-coating operations. For more information, call the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) at 661/723-8070.

### ***Environmental Health Permits***

Environmental health permits may be required for anything from food facilities to radiology businesses. For more information on food facilities, call the Los Angeles County Health Department at 661/723-4533. For catering or mobile food, call 626/430-5500. For radiology businesses, call 213/738-4059.

### ***Hazardous Waste Permits***

Any business activity that generates, stores or transports a hazardous waste is required to obtain a valid permit to operate. For more information, call the Los Angeles County Fire Department at 323/890-4000.

### ***Weights and Measures Certification***

If you are using commercial weighing or measuring equipment in your business, you are required to notify the Los Angeles County Office of Weights and Measures. For more information, call 626/575-5472.

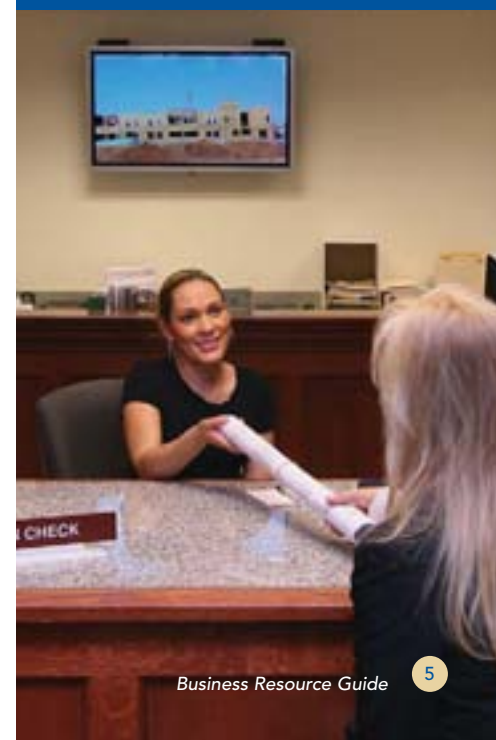
### ***Industrial Waste***

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works permits and inspects industrial waste discharges into public sewers, private disposal systems or offsite disposal. Depending on the type of business being planned, an approval from this agency may be required. For more information, call 661/222-2953.

### ***Los Angeles County Sanitation District***

The Los Angeles County Sanitation District may require additional connection fees for businesses with high use discharge to public sewer. For more information, call 562/699-7411.

The City's new ProjectDox Program now allows developers and contractors to electronically submit plans to the City via the Internet for review, comment and approval. For more information, call the Building and Safety Department at 661/267-5353.



## STATE LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

### *State Board of Equalization*

Businesses involved in retail sales or manufacturing must contact the California State Board of Equalization at 818/904-2300 to obtain a Seller's Permit (retail sales tax number). This number is required by the state in order to monitor the collection of State of California sales tax.

### *Employment*

#### *Development Department*

Businesses with employees must contact the State Employment Development Department (EDD) to obtain a state employer number. The EDD oversees unemployment and disability insurance. For more information, call 661/726-4128.

#### *California Department of Industrial Relations*

If your business has employees, California state legislation requires proof of a valid current Workers' Compensation Certificate of Insurance or self-insurance. This is not needed if you do not have employees. For more information, call the California Department of Industrial Relations at 415/703-5070.

### *Other State Licenses*

It is important to research if your occupation is required to have any state licenses. State licenses are customarily required for businesses such as contractors, engineers, doctors, auto repair, etc. For more information, call the California Department of Consumer Affairs at 800/952-5210.

## FEDERAL LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

### *Federal Tax ID Number*

Businesses with employees must contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to obtain a federal employer identification number. For more information, call the IRS at 800/829-1040.



## SOURCES TO FUND NEW BUSINESSES

### U.S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) promotes small business formation and growth through loan guarantee programs for qualifying businesses. There are several types of loan programs designed to fill special business needs. The SBA is primarily a guarantor of loans that are made by private and other institutions. For more information on SBA Loan Guarantee Programs, call the U.S. Small Business Administration at 800/827-5722.

You may also receive information and assistance through the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) by calling 661/294-9375.

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are given by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to local communities to create jobs and housing, primarily for low-and moderate-income residents. Cities may use CDBG funds to directly finance specific projects. Assistance is provided on a case-by-case basis in consideration of job generation. For more information, call the City of Palmdale Housing Division at 661/267-5126.

### REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREAS

The City of Palmdale has two redevelopment project areas. Businesses locating within either of the project areas may be eligible for tax increment financing assistance. Projects are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For more information, call 661/267-5125.



## Workforce Development Resources

### *South Valley WorkSource Center*

The South Valley WorkSource Center (SVWSC) is designed to help match worker skills with a company's needs. The SVWSC offers valuable pre-screening services, which are provided without charge. A staff of professional counselors at the SVWSC can augment a company's human resources staff and provide many useful services, including:

- No-cost job postings both locally and via the Internet utilizing the SVWSC online job bank
- Customized recruiting to help fill multiple jobs quickly
- Job matching through job skills assessment of potential candidates to assure they are qualified for your positions
- Interview facilities for conducting both one-on-one and group meetings
- Initial screening, testing and referral of qualified candidates to help optimize interview time and effort
- On-the-job and pre-employment training to help create training programs to develop workers with skills required for designated positions
- Technical assistance for employee support and reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities
- Business incentive information
- Business-to-business referrals to provide a smooth transition for the employer and worker



For more information, call the SVWSC at 661/265-7421.

### *Employment Development Department*

The Employment Development Department (EDD) maintains employment records for millions of California workers and collects all employment taxes, including Unemployment Insurance (UI), Disability Insurance (DI), Employment Training Tax, and personal income tax withholdings. EDD has programs available that can benefit small business such as local/regional/state labor markets, electronic database of job ready applicants, seminars on current labor conditions, labor law, personnel issues, and employment tax and payroll reporting requirements. For more information, call 661/726-4128.

### *Workforce Investment Act*

The Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) offers a wide variety of workforce development services through state and local organizations. The services in the Antelope Valley are offered through the South Valley WorkSource Center. The goal of WIA is to promote local employment opportunities, job retention, earnings and occupational skills for those participating in the program.

Services provided by WIA may benefit your business by providing a variety of employee training programs, which include skill upgrades, on-the-job training and customized training programs. For more information, contact the SVWSC at 661/265-7421.

### *Employment Training Panel*

The Employment Training Panel (ETP) is a California state agency that provides training funds to assist businesses with expertise in very specific fields. Skill upgrades and continuous training increase employee performance, motivation and morale. This benefits your company's productivity and competitiveness. You may be eligible to apply for ETP funding if your company is paying into the state's Employment Training Fund. For more information, contact the ETP at 818/755-1309.



## State and Federal Programs

### *STATE – Antelope Valley Enterprise Zone*

The state-designated Antelope Valley Enterprise Zone (AVEZ) encompasses 61 square miles within the cities of Palmdale and Lancaster and parts of unincorporated Los Angeles County. Businesses located within the AVEZ can participate in programs that offer significant tax advantages including State Hiring Credits, State Sales and Use Tax Credits and Business Expense Deductions. Together, these benefits can add up to significant savings on state taxes. For more information, call 661/267-5125.

### *FEDERAL – Palmdale Foreign-Trade Zone*

The City of Palmdale Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) consists of ten distinct sites encompassing 1,315 acres of FTZ-designated space and 50 buildings totaling nearly 1.5 million square feet of industrial space. The Palmdale FTZ allows qualifying companies to save money by deferring, reducing or eliminating duty taxes and by streamlining U.S. Customs clearances. For more information, call 661/267-5125.

## Local Utilities



### **Electricity**

Southern California  
Edison Company  
800/655-4555



### **Gas**

Southern California Gas Co.  
800/427-2200



### **Water**

Palmdale Water District  
661/947-4111

Los Angeles County  
Waterworks  
661/942-1157



### **Telephone**

Verizon 800/483-4000  
AT&T 800/288-2020



### **Cable**

Time Warner Cable  
888/892-2253



### **Refuse**

Waste Management  
of the Antelope Valley  
661/947-7197

Sanitation Districts  
of Los Angeles County  
562/699-7411

## Resources and Support Organizations to Advance Your Business

### *Chamber of Commerce*

The Palmdale Chamber of Commerce offers members a variety of forums to advance their businesses through active roles in the community and through partnerships with government and education. The chamber has many resources for business information, networking, seminars, workshops and other services. For information on the Palmdale Chamber of Commerce, call 661/273-3232.

### *Antelope Valley Board of Trade*

The Antelope Valley Board of Trade works to maintain and promote business and industry, quality infrastructure, and to provide a strong legislative voice for the benefit of its members and the greater Antelope Valley. For more information, call 661/942-9581.

### *Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance*

The Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance (GAVEA) serves as the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) for the Antelope Valley area, promoting the region to prospective businesses as well as working with the existing business community on business retention and attraction programs. For more information, call 661/945-2741.

### *Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation*

The mission of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) is to attract, retain and grow business and jobs in the regions of Los Angeles County and to identify trends and promote positive change for the local economy. The LAEDC offers free business assistance services such as site selection, cost containment (tax incentives, energy savings & efficiency and risk assessment), hiring and training resources, benefits analysis, permit assistance, zoning and local industry analysis, and international trade assistance for companies expanding or relocating in Los Angeles County. For more information, call 661/945-2741 or 661/210-8007.

# Keeping Your Business Safe

## Business Watch Program

The Palmdale Business Watch Program provides the tools needed to keep businesses safe for customers and employees. Business Watch is a crime prevention program that enlists the active participation of citizens in cooperation with law enforcement and local government to deter and prevent crime. The program strives to empower business owners to build a successful business and to teach them how to protect profits and customers. Free training programs include detecting counterfeit currency, bad check fraud, credit card fraud, shoplifting prevention, burglary/robbery prevention, workplace violence and building security. For more information, contact the City's Public Safety and Community Relations Department at 661/267-5181.

## Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is defined as the proper design and effective use of the built environment to reduce crime, disorder and fear associated with crime. Palmdale is one of a small number of cities that offer CPTED in the design stages of development, with Public Safety staff participating in the development review process. Staff is available for consultation at any stage of development and can also provide assessments on existing properties. For more information, contact the City's Public Safety and Community Relations Department at 661/267-5181.



# phone

## City of Palmdale Services

Administration	661/267-5100
Building and Safety	661/267-5353
Business License	661/267-5434
Business Watch Program	661/267-5181
City Clerk	661/267-5151
City Council	661/267-5100
City Hall	661/267-5100
Code Enforcement	661/267-5234
Communications	661/267-5115
Economic Development	661/267-5125
Finance	661/267-5440
Hearing Impaired Access – TDD	661/267-5167
Housing	661/267-5126
Palmdale City Library	661/267-5600
Palmdale Pride	661/94-PRIDE
Parking Enforcement	661/267-5436
Parks and Recreation	661/267-5611
Personnel	661/267-5400
Planning	661/267-5200
Public Safety	661/267-5181
Public Works	661/267-5300
Public Works – Engineering	661/267-5272
Public Works – Maintenance	661/267-5338
Public Works – Traffic Engineering	661/267-5300
Public Works – Traffic Signal Maintenance	661/267-5333
Public Works – Traffic/Transportation	661/267-5300

## Los Angeles County Services

Child Care Licensing	310/337-4333
Department of Public Works	661/222-2953
Economic Development Corporation	661/945-2741 or 661/210-8007

### Fire Department

Fire Prevention Bureau	661/949-6319
Hazardous Materials Section	323/890-4000

### Health Department

Catering or Mobile Food	626/430-5500
Food	661/723-4533
Plan Check for New Construction	661/723-4551
Radiology Equipment	213/738-4059

Registrar/Recorder ( <i>County Clerk</i> ) Lancaster District Office .....	661/945-6446
Road Department .....	661/947-7173
Sanitation District .....	562/699-7411
Sewer Maintenance Division .....	626/300-3388
Sheriff's Department .....	661/272-2400
Tax Assessor's Office .....	661/940-6700
Waterworks .....	661/942-1157
Weights and Measures .....	626/575-5472

### ***State of California Services***

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board	818/901-5017
Attorney General ( <i>Check Cashing Permit</i> )	916/227-3250
Board of Barbering and Cosmetology	800/952-5210 or 916/445-7061
Board of Equalization .....	818/904-2300
Bureau of Electronic Repair .....	916/574-2067
California Department of Industrial Relations .....	415/703-5070
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) .....	213/897-3656
CAL-OSHA .....	818/901-5403
Community Care Licensing Division	323/981-3350
Consumer Affairs .....	800/952-5210
Employment Development Department (EDD) .....	661/726-4128
Employment Training Panel (ETP) .....	818/755-1309
Contractors State License Board .....	800/321-2752
Franchise Tax Board .....	800/829-1040
Office of the State Architect Access Compliance .....	213/897-0744
Secretary of State Articles of Incorporation .....	213/897-3062
Secretary of State Nonprofit Organization .....	213/897-3062
Small Business Association .....	800/350-2722
State Compensation Fund .....	877/405-4545

### ***Federal Services***

Copyright Office .....	202/707-3000
Customs Service .....	562/366-5555
Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms .....	818/756-4350
Department of Commerce .....	213/894-4231

Department of Transportation .....	202/366-4000
Internal Revenue Service .....	800/829-1040
Social Security Administration .....	800/772-1213 or 661/940-8534
Small Business Administration .....	818/552-3210
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office .....	571/272-1000
U.S. Post Office .....	661/272-1492

### ***General Services Directory***

Acton/Agua Dulce News .....	661/269-1169
Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD) .....	661/723-8070
Antelope Valley Board of Trade .....	661/942-9581
Antelope Valley Journal .....	661/947-5009
Antelope Valley Press .....	661/273-2700
AT&T .....	800/288-2020
Better Business Bureau of the Southland .....	909/825-7280
Bureau of Electronic and Appliance Repair .....	916/574-2067
Center for Women's Business Research .....	202/638-3060
Greater Antelope Valley Association of Realtors .....	661/726-9175
Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance (GAVEA) .....	661/945-2741
Minority Business Development Agency .....	888-324-1551
National Business Association .....	800/456-0440 or 972/458-0900
National Minority Business Council	212/693-5050
Palmdale Chamber of Commerce	661/273-3232
Palmdale Water District .....	661/947-4111
Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) .....	661/947-7679
Small Business Development Center	661/294-9375
South Valley WorkSource Center .....	661/265-7421
Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) .....	213/236-1800
Southern California Edison Company	800/655-4555
Southern California Gas Company	800/427-2200
Time Warner Cable .....	888/892-2253
Verizon .....	800/483-4000
Waste Management of Antelope Valley .....	661/947-7197



## INTERNET DIRECTORY

# internet

Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD)	<a href="http://www.avaqmd.ca.gov">www.avaqmd.ca.gov</a>
Antelope Valley Board of Trade	<a href="http://www.avbot.org">www.avbot.org</a>
Antelope Valley Enterprise Zone (AVEZ)	<a href="http://www.avez.org">www.avez.org</a>
AT&T	<a href="http://www.att.com">www.att.com</a>
Better Business Bureau of the Southland	<a href="http://www.labbb.org">www.labbb.org</a>
California Department of Industrial Relations	<a href="http://www.dir.ca.gov">www.dir.ca.gov</a>
California Franchise Tax Board	<a href="http://www.ftb.ca.gov">www.ftb.ca.gov</a>
California Labor and Workforce Development Agency	<a href="http://www.labor.ca.gov">www.labor.ca.gov</a>
California Secretary of State Business Portal	<a href="http://www.ss.ca.gov">www.ss.ca.gov</a>
California Small Business Association	<a href="http://www.csba.com">www.csba.com</a>
Center for Women's Business Research	<a href="http://www.womensbusinessresearch.org">www.womensbusinessresearch.org</a>
City of Palmdale	<a href="http://www.cityofpalmdale.org">www.cityofpalmdale.org</a>
FCIC – Small Business	<a href="http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/smbuss.htm">www.pueblo.gsa.gov/smbuss.htm</a>
Federal Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship - U.S. Senate	<a href="http://www.senate.gov/sbc">www.senate.gov/sbc</a>
Federal Copyright Office	<a href="http://www.copyright.gov">www.copyright.gov</a>
Federal Department of Agriculture	<a href="http://www.usda.gov">www.usda.gov</a>
Federal Department of Commerce	<a href="http://www.commerce.gov">www.commerce.gov</a>
Federal Department of Transportation	<a href="http://www.dot.gov">www.dot.gov</a>
Federal Small Business Administration	<a href="http://www.sba.gov">www.sba.gov</a>
Federal U.S. Business Advisor	<a href="http://www.business.gov">www.business.gov</a>
Greater Antelope Valley Association of Realtors	<a href="http://www.gavar.org">www.gavar.org</a>
Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance (GAVEA)	<a href="http://www.aveconomy.org">www.aveconomy.org</a>
Internal Revenue Service	<a href="http://www.irs.gov">www.irs.gov</a>
Los Angeles County	<a href="http://www.lacounty.info">www.lacounty.info</a>
Los Angeles County Department of Public Works	<a href="http://www.dpw.lacounty.gov">www.dpw.lacounty.gov</a>
Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation	<a href="http://www.laedc.org">www.laedc.org</a>
Los Angeles County Fire Department	<a href="http://www.fire.lacounty.gov">www.fire.lacounty.gov</a>



## INTERNET DIRECTORY

# internet

Los Angeles County Health Department .....	<a href="http://www.ladhs.org">www.ladhs.org</a>
Los Angeles County Sanitation District .....	<a href="http://www.lacsd.org">www.lacsd.org</a>
Los Angeles County Tax Assessor .....	<a href="http://www.assessor.co.la.ca.us">www.assessor.co.la.ca.us</a>
Minority Business Development Agency .....	<a href="http://www.mbda.gov">www.mbda.gov</a>
National Business Association .....	<a href="http://www.nationalbusiness.org">www.nationalbusiness.org</a>
National Minority Business Council .....	<a href="http://www.nmbc.org">www.nmbc.org</a>
Palmdale Chamber of Commerce .....	<a href="http://www.palmdalechamber.org">www.palmdalechamber.org</a>
Palmdale Water District .....	<a href="http://www.palmdalewater.org">www.palmdalewater.org</a>
Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) .....	<a href="http://www.score.org">www.score.org</a>
Small Business Development Center (SBDC) .....	<a href="http://www.canyonsecondev.org">www.canyonsecondev.org</a>
Small Business and Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise Services (DBVE) .....	<a href="http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/smbus">www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/smbus</a>
Social Security Administration .....	<a href="http://www.ssa.gov">www.ssa.gov</a>
South Valley WorkSource Center .....	<a href="http://www.cityofpalmdale.org/svwc">www.cityofpalmdale.org/svwc</a>
Southern California Edison Company .....	<a href="http://www.sce.com">www.sce.com</a>
Southern California Gas Company .....	<a href="http://www.socalgas.com">www.socalgas.com</a>
State Attorney General .....	<a href="http://www.caag.state.ca.us">www.caag.state.ca.us</a>
State Board of Barbering and Cosmetology .....	<a href="http://www.barbercosmo.ca.gov">www.barbercosmo.ca.gov</a>
State Board of Equalization .....	<a href="http://www.boe.ca.gov">www.boe.ca.gov</a>
State Bureau of Automotive Repair .....	<a href="http://www.smogcheck.ca.gov">www.smogcheck.ca.gov</a>
State Community Care Licensing Division .....	<a href="http://www.cclid.ca.gov">www.cclid.ca.gov</a>
State Compensation Fund .....	<a href="http://www.scif.com">www.scif.com</a>
State Contractors Board .....	<a href="http://www.cslb.ca.gov">www.cslb.ca.gov</a>
State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control .....	<a href="http://www.abc.ca.gov">www.abc.ca.gov</a>
State Department of Consumer Affairs .....	<a href="http://www.dca.ca.gov">www.dca.ca.gov</a>
State Employment Development Department .....	<a href="http://www.edd.cahwnet.gov">www.edd.cahwnet.gov</a>
Time Warner Cable .....	<a href="http://www.timewarner.com">www.timewarner.com</a>
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office .....	<a href="http://www.uspto.gov">www.uspto.gov</a>
U.S. Post Office .....	<a href="http://www.usps.gov">www.usps.gov</a>
Underground Service Alert (USA) .....	<a href="http://www.digalert.org">www.digalert.org</a>
Verizon .....	<a href="http://www.verizon.com">www.verizon.com</a>
Waste Management of Antelope Valley .....	<a href="http://www.wm.com">www.wm.com</a>



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** *Do I need a business license to conduct business in Palmdale?*

**A.** Yes – See “Licensing and Permitting” section.

**Q.** *Is a Business License all I need to operate legally in the City?*

**A.** Depending on the type of business you are conducting, you may need to obtain permits from other departments within the City and/or from other governmental agencies. See “Licensing and Permitting” section.

**Q.** *I am going to be serving food products. Do I need special approvals?*

**A.** Yes, the Los Angeles County Health Department reviews all plans for compliance with the State of California health codes. They are interested in the type of restaurant equipment installed, categories of food you are handling and standards relating to employee hygiene. For more information, call 661/723-4533 or visit [www.ladhs.org](http://www.ladhs.org)

**Q.** *My business includes the use of radiology equipment. Do I need special approvals?*

**A.** Yes, if radiology equipment is used in your business, you are required to obtain a permit from the Los Angeles County Health Department. For more information, call 213/738-4059.

**Q.** *If I sell any alcoholic beverages, will I need any special approvals?*

**A.** Yes, the sale and serving of alcoholic beverages in conjunction with any business is governed by the State of California Alcoholic Beverage Control Board. For more information, call 818/901-5017 or visit [www.abc.ca.gov](http://www.abc.ca.gov)

NOTE: If you sell alcoholic beverages and your building is over 5,000 square feet, a fire sprinkler system is required.

**Q.** *My business requires the use of some forms of chemicals. Do I need special permits?*

**A.** Yes, if your business stores or uses certain types of chemicals, a special permit is required from the Los Angeles County Fire Department. You can reach them at 323/890-4000 or visit [www.fire.lacounty.gov](http://www.fire.lacounty.gov)

**Q.** *My business discharges industrial waste. Do I need special approvals or permits?*

**A.** Depending on the type of business being planned, you may need to obtain an approval from Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. For more information, call 661/222-2953 or visit [www.dpw.lacounty.gov](http://www.dpw.lacounty.gov)

**Q.** *My business may have high discharge into the public sewer. Will I be required to pay additional fees?*

**A.** The Los Angeles County Sanitation District may require additional connection fees for businesses with high use discharge into the public sewer. For more information, call 562/699-7411 or visit [www.lacsd.org](http://www.lacsd.org)

**Q.** *Do I need any clearances or permits from the Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District (AVAQMD)?*

**A.** Yes, all new buildings require clearances. In addition, if your business is discharging any gas, dust or smoke into the atmosphere, you must obtain clearances from the AVAQMD. For more information, call 661/723-8070 or visit [www.avaqmd.ca.gov](http://www.avaqmd.ca.gov)



or mechanical work to be done. Prior to opening for business, it is required that a Building and Safety and fire prevention inspection be performed.

**Q.** *Do I need to file a Fictitious Business Name Statement?*

**A.** See “Licensing and Permitting” section.

**Q.** *Do I need to obtain a Seller’s Permit?*

**A.** If your business is involved in retail sales or manufacturing, a seller’s permit (retail sales tax number) is required by the state in order to monitor the collection of State of California sales tax. It can be obtained from the California State Board of Equalization at 818/904-2300 or visit [www.boe.ca.gov](http://www.boe.ca.gov)

**Q.** *Where can I obtain a Federal Tax ID Number?*

**A.** Contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at 800/829-1040 or visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**Q.** *How do I become involved in the City’s Business Watch Program?*

**A.** Contact the City’s Public Safety Office at 661/267-5181.

**Q.** *How do I find out if my property is in a flood zone?*

**A.** Call the City’s Engineering Division at 661/267-5272.

**Q.** *How do I find out if my property is in an earthquake zone?*

**A.** Call the City’s Planning Department at 661/267-5200.

**Q.** *How do I find out about zoning requirements in the City of Palmdale?*

**A.** Call the City’s Planning Department at 661/267-5200.

**Q.** *Are there restrictions on signage in Palmdale?*

**A.** Yes, the City Zoning Ordinance regulates signage. For information on sign criteria, contact the City’s Planning Department at 661/267-5200.

**Q.** *Do I need a Certificate of Occupancy?*

**A.** A Certificate of Occupancy is required by the City of Palmdale for any business that opens for the first time or for a business that moves within the City limits.

**Q.** *Where do I apply for a Certificate of Occupancy?*

**A.** You can apply at the Building and Safety Department located at 38250 Sierra Highway. The application must be completed and fees paid at the time the application is submitted. For more information, call 661/267-5353.

**Q.** *Is a Certificate of Occupancy all I need to open for business?*

**A.** No. A business license is required. Also, if any alteration to the building is needed, a building permit must be obtained for any structural, electrical, plumbing

**Q.** *Will I need clearances from utility agencies?*

**A.** Depending on the nature of your business and its specialized needs, you may want to contact the various utility agencies listed in this guide.

**Q.** *What may I do if the property I lease for my business does not meet City code requirements?*

**A.** Contact the City’s Code Enforcement Division at 661/267-5234.

**Q.** *My company is in the import/export business. Are there any benefits available to me?*

**A.** If your company is located within Palmdale’s Foreign-Trade Zone, you may benefit from the deferral, reduction and/or elimination of duties owed to U.S. Customs. For more information and Zone boundaries, call 661/267-5125.

**Q.** *Can the City help me to obtain a Small Business Administration (SBA) loan?*

**A.** No; however, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) can assist businesses through the SBA application process. An SBDC representative is available by appointment to meet with local businesses at the South Valley WorkSource Center. Call 661/294-9375 for more information or visit [www.canyonsecondev.org](http://www.canyonsecondev.org)

**Q.** *Is there financial assistance available through the City of Palmdale or its Redevelopment Agency?*

**A.** The City of Palmdale has two redevelopment project areas. Businesses locating within either of the project areas may be eligible for tax increment financing assistance. Projects are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For more information, call 661/267-5125.

**Q.** *Is there a Utility User Tax in Palmdale?*

**A.** No, the City has no utility user tax, thereby reducing a company’s utility expenditures.

**Q. *What are the property taxes in Palmdale?***

**A.** All property (residential, commercial and industrial) is appraised and locally assessed at market value on January 1 each year, or at such time as the property is sold or developed. The basic tax rate is one percent of market value, subject to an annual two percent increase, plus any voted indebtedness such as special assessments. Assessed valuations and tax rates can be obtained by calling the Los Angeles County Tax Assessor at 661/940-6700 or visit [www.assessor.co.la.ca.us](http://www.assessor.co.la.ca.us)

**Q. *What is the retail sales tax in Palmdale?***

**A.** Palmdale is located in LA County, which has a retail sales tax of 8.25 percent.

**Q. *What is a business plan and do I need one?***

**A.** A business plan is an outline for your business. It describes what type of business it is, where it is, how it will operate and whom it will serve. It includes information about your customers, employees and you. It should explain the industry you are a part of and also explain the market for your product or services. Business plans are needed for one's own use and also for others such as partners, investors, bankers, relatives, employees, etc. Bankers usually require a business plan when considering loan requests. For more information or for help with business plan formulation, contact the SBDC or SCORE.

**Q. *Can I operate a business from my home?***

**A.** Yes, but you will need a Home Occupation Permit (HOP) – See “Licensing and Permitting” section.

**Q. *Can I get a grant to start my business?***

**A.** Most government grants designed to assist businesses go to agencies and organizations that perform some service for business or benefit business in some way. For more information, call the SBDC at 661/294-9375.

**Q. *What is the Business License Tax in Palmdale?***

**A.** The business license tax in the City of Palmdale is calculated based on a flat-rate fee between \$25 and \$45, plus a maximum per employee fee of \$3 to \$5. To obtain a calculation for your business, call the City's Business License Division at 661/267-5434.

**Q. *What is the Transient Occupancy Tax in Palmdale?***

**A.** The City of Palmdale transient occupancy tax or lodging tax rate is seven percent.

**Q. *Are there any agencies that assist minority business owners?***

**A.** Yes, the Minority Business Development Agency provides business management consulting services and assistance to minority business entrepreneurs through a network of Minority Business Development Centers. For more information, call 888/324-1551 or visit [www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)

**Q. *Are there any agencies that assist women-owned businesses?***

**A.** Contact the Center for Women's Business Research at 202/638-3060 or visit [www.womensbusinessresearch.org](http://www.womensbusinessresearch.org)

**Q. *How do I find out information about getting a patent?***

**A.** Contact the United States Patent and Trademark Office at 571/272-1000 or visit [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)





## BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE



A publication of the City of Palmdale  
Economic Development Department  
38250 Sierra Highway  
Palmdale, California 93550  
661/267-5125

Communication aids available upon  
72 hours' notice and request.  
TDD: 661/267-5167

[www.cityofpalmdale.org](http://www.cityofpalmdale.org)

