

FORT ST. JOHN, BRITISH COLUMBIA



Source: Picture BC

Location: Northeast B.C., along the Alaska Highway

Key industries: Oil and gas, forestry, mining, agriculture, tourism

High demand occupations: Trades, labourers, technicians, health care

Education: Pre-school through to college and university

Population: 18,609 (2011 Census) Growth of 16 per cent since 2001

I like the community very much. It's quiet, with no traffic jams. Medical services, schools for the kids and any other services are very close and handy. I drive five minutes to work. It's easy to find a first job and you can advance from there. Fort St. John is a nice place for young families to settle in.

David A, originally from Armenia



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Fort St. John offers a wealth of jobs and economic opportunity in the oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, forestry and agriculture sectors. Northeast B.C. consistently records B.C.'s lowest unemployment rate (3.9 per cent in May 2012). In 2011, the full-time, average weekly wage rate was \$1,090.61.

DOING BUSINESS IN FORT ST. JOHN

An economic centre of Northeast B.C., Fort St. John helps grow your business with favourable tax rates and growth incentives. Additionally, funds are set up for business development and innovation which are available for public application and use.

- North Peace Economic Development Commission
- Invest in Northeast B.C.
- Sci-Tech North
- Community Futures
- Fort St. John Chamber of Commerce
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Settlement and Business Centre

HIGH DEMAND OCCUPATIONS

With many major projects planned for Northeast B.C., jobs will be available now and in the years ahead. Occupations in demand include:

- **Construction** - Heavy duty equipment operators and mechanics, carpenters, electricians, millwrights
- **Oil and gas** - Drilling and servicing labourers, petroleum gas and chemical process operators
- **Mining** - Mineral and mineral process control operators
- **Health** - Registered nurses
- **Administration** - Finance and insurance administrators, clerical

The **Occupational Guides for Immigrants to B.C.** provide information on these occupations.





MAJOR REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

So many businesses are thriving and hiring, which makes finding a career in Northeast B.C. so much easier than in other places. Here are some of the region's largest employers:

Natural gas production and servicing

- Spectra Energy
- Encana
- Shell Canada
- McElhanney Land Surveys

Public sector

- Northern Lights College
- Northern Health

Retail

- Walmart
- Safeway Canada
- Sobeys

Wood sector

- Canfor
- Peace Valley OSB Plant

In 2011, almost 1,000 people in Fort St. John had a first language other than English.

JOB SEARCH

Fort St. John has a vigorous job climate with plenty of employment opportunities to choose from. These resources will help you on your journey to a new career.

- [Employment Connections](#)
- [FSJ Now!](#)
- [Maccena Staffing](#)
- [Peace Country Classified](#)

JOB RELATED TRAINING

Set your sights on the work you deserve without any of the hassle that comes with life in the city. Regional education in Fort St. John offers all sorts of opportunities to grow your career.

- [Northern Lights College](#), [Enform](#) and the [Piping Industry Apprenticeship Board Training Centre](#) offer oil and gas, mining, trades-related and other employment-related courses.
- The [University of Northern British Columbia](#) puts on courses in a variety of fields.
- Many employers provide on-the-job training.

English as a Second Language

- The [Fort St. John Literacy Society](#) offers free services
- [Northern Lights College](#) provides ESL classes in a range of levels.





Source: Picture BC

LIVING IN FORT ST. JOHN

People in Northeast B.C. are friendly, so becoming part of your new community should happen quickly. Through work, school, sports clubs and recreation, there are neighbours ready to welcome you.

IMMIGRANT RELATED SERVICES

Fort St. John has award winning organizations to help you and your family with settle into the town. The agencies below can help:

- Fort St. John Literacy Society
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S – Fort St. John Office
- School District #60 (Peace River North)
- Skills Connect for Immigrants Program



HOUSING

Fort St. John's affordable housing means you can have your dream home without missing out on life's little extras. In 2012, the average cost of a house was \$326,000; compare that to Vancouver's \$1 million. Not ready to buy? Renting a house averaged \$1,200 a month compared to over \$2,000 in Greater Vancouver.

Use the B.C. Government's [Cost of Living Calculator](#) to find out more about costs in Fort St. John.

CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION

Fort St. John offers a range of options for early childhood including child care centers as well as home providers. You can search for providers through the B..C Government's [Childcare Information](#) site. [StrongStart Centres](#) offer free, drop-in early learning programs for children 0-five and their parents.

British Columbia has excellent public schools and Fort St. John is no exception. The town has six public elementary schools, two middle schools and a high school. It also has a private Christian school. The [Settlement Workers in Schools Program \(SWIS\)](#) helps new students and their families become part of the school and the community.

Fort St. John has a [public library](#) with free Internet access and other educational resources.

TRANSPORTATION

Fort St. John is the transportation hub of the Northeast region. The [North Peace Regional Airport](#) offers direct flights to Vancouver. The town also has local and inter-city bus service and access to good roads, including the Alaska Highway.

HEALTH CARE

Getting proper health care is an important part of settling in British Columbia. Fort St. John serves as a regional health care hub and has excellent, accessible health care facilities and practitioners. They include a hospital, family doctors, walk-in clinics, dentists, orthodontists, optometrists and other providers.



Source: BC Stats

Fort St. John has cold winters and warm summers with long daylight hours.

FAITH AND WORSHIP

Followers and believers from many religions, faiths and cultures around the world have made Fort St. John their home. The town includes a mix of Catholic and Protestant churches, a Sikh temple and a Muslim association.

MEDIA

Local newspapers produce many ways to get news, share opinions, and discover what the town and region has to offer.

- [Alaska Highway News](#)
- [North East News](#)
- [The Northerner](#)
- [Energetic City](#)

ENJOYING THE OUTDOORS

The “Energetic City” is nestled among endless patchwork quilts of cropland and wide panoramic views. The Peace River offers excellent fishing, camping and canoeing. Fort St. John also has a golf course, soccer fields and parks.

Winter fun starts when the temperature drops and the snow flies. Cross-country skiing, dogsledding, snowshoeing are all available around Fort St. John. More than 200 km of snowmobile trails offer great family fun.

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Fort St. John has many recreational and cultural facilities. Centennial Park includes a museum, leisure pool, arena, curling rink, outdoor water park and speed skating oval. Fort St. John also has an active theatre society and vibrant cultural associations.

In August, you and your family can celebrate at the North Peace Fall Fair. In January, celebrate winter at the city’s High on Ice Festival.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Making the move into Fort St. John is easier than you think. Before you know it you and your family can be enjoying all this vibrant and growing city can offer.

- [Fort St. John website](#)
- [LoonLounge](#): Canada’s immigration and settlement online community
- [Meet Fort St. John](#): website full of information for newcomers to the city

