



# CLECO FACT BOOK

*Where Powerful Opportunities Await*

---



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Cleco Power	04
Cleco's Service Territory	05
Key Industries	06
Louisiana's Resources and Incentives	08
Clean and Green Energy	10
Energy Grid Infrastructure	12
Development-Ready Certified Sites	13
Talent Pipeline and Workforce Development Tools	14
Home to Louisiana	16
Cleco's Economic Development Team	18



# YOUR HUB FOR HIGH-IMPACT BUSINESS

## Statewide Utility Driving Reliability and Innovation

Cleco is a privately owned, single state electric utility company with a service territory spanning a large portion of Louisiana. With roots dating back to 1935, Cleco is investing in grid reliability and new generation infrastructure to make its service territory the most competitive and pro-business environment for growing companies.

Cleco owns eight regulated generating assets at five facilities with a total rated capacity of 2,676 megawatts, serving approximately 295,000 customers in Louisiana through its retail business and supplies wholesale power in Louisiana and Mississippi. Cleco also operates 946 megawatts on behalf of its generation partners, and is the only electric utility provider to meet Louisiana's reliability standards for the last 26 years.

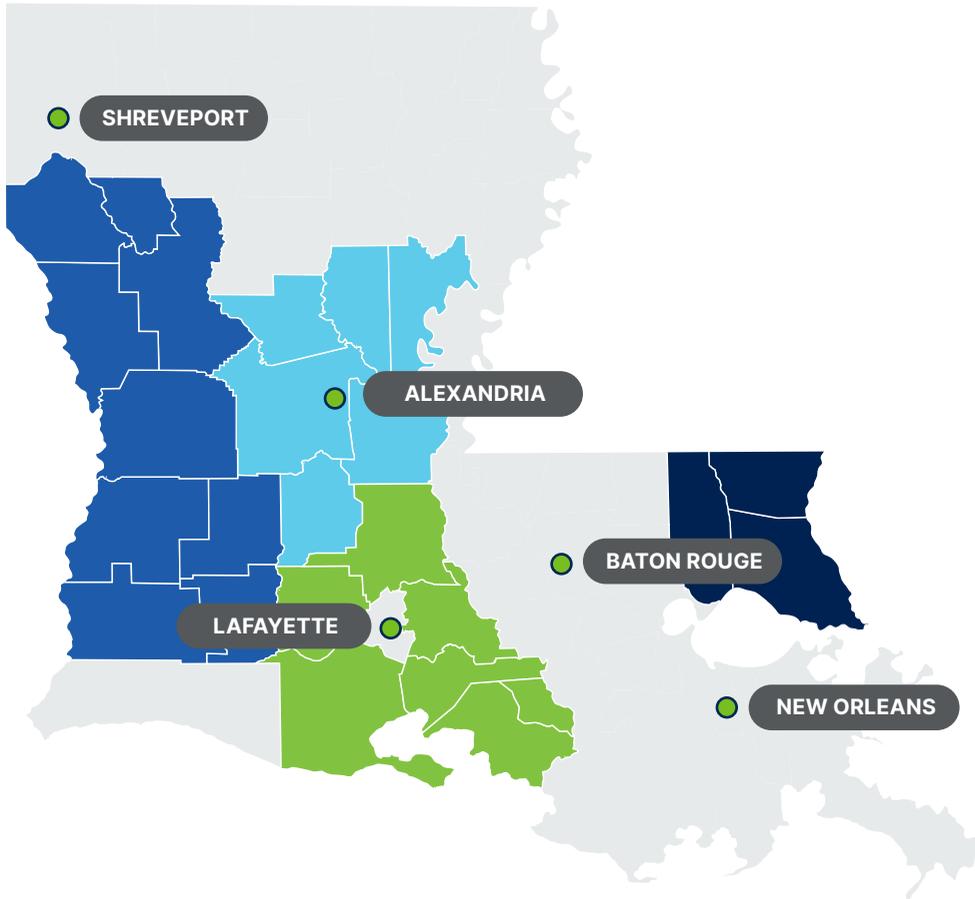
Operating at a scale that allows flexibility and creativity, Cleco is led by a dedicated economic development team of industry veterans with strong relationships among state and regional economic development partners and counts P&G and Nucor Steel among its corporate clients that trust in Cleco's reliability.

## State-Spanning Service Territory

Cleco's service territory spans 24 parishes in four regions of Louisiana: Alexandria Metro region, Lafayette Metro region, New Orleans Metro region and Western Louisiana region. Within those regions are a mix of urban and rural communities and 24 sites with access to 6 major interstates, including I-49, an emerging clean energy corridor that stretches from Lafayette in the south to the Arkansas border in the north. This access gives Cleco the ability to work efficiently and extensively and allows companies to reach critical markets and attract skilled talent.

We're putting  
our energy into a  
better **Louisiana**

## CLECO'S SERVICE TERRITORY



### ALEXANDRIA METRO REGION

Strong workforce hub with engaged, readily available local leadership

### LAFAYETTE METRO REGION

Well-connected and graduating thousands of students for in-demand occupations

### NEW ORLEANS METRO REGION

Cultural and commercial powerhouse with 60 shovel-ready sites

### WESTERN LOUISIANA REGION

Dotted by available sites and well-educated engineering and tech talent

Louisiana is one of only two states in the country where **all six of North America's class one railroads converge**



**6** major interstate highways



**30** inland and coastal port facilities



**5 Class I** railroads

**4** intermodal connectors



**12** commercial and regional airports

**1**

dedicated economic development partner

# KEY INDUSTRIES

## Advanced Manufacturing

Louisiana has high levels of manufacturing talent, from the 430,000+ industry employees to those training at one of the Cleco service territory's 24 universities. Advanced manufacturers are a part of the state's robust business environment. With support from resources like the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana's needs assessment and LED FastStart®'s free, customized training, this industry and stellar workforce are only getting stronger.

## Agricultural Processing and Food Manufacturing

Agribusinesses in Cleco's service regions benefit from strategic location, skilled workforce and a robust manufacturing support network. Notable food processing companies such as the fourth-generation, family-owned crawfish business Bieber Farms in the Alexandria metro region and Sterling Sugars in the Franklin area are experiencing high demand as a result of these advantages.

## Aviation

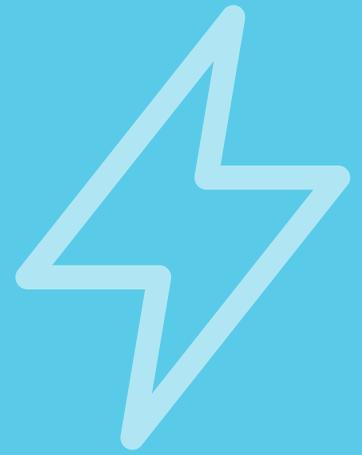
Sky-high opportunities span available sites and specialized aviation training programs at LSU of Alexandria and Central Louisiana Technical Community College, attracting industry leaders such as Boeing, Northrop Grumman and GE.

## Chemicals and Plastics

Ample natural gas feedstock, connected interstates and water freight capacity, and a state supply chain of 150+ petrochemical manufacturer help Amcor (formerly Berry GlobalBerry Global), Eastman, Gentek and more advance their business. of 150+ petrochemical manufacturer help Berry, Eastman, Gentek and more advance their business.

## Clean and Green Fuels

Louisiana's robust infrastructure and supportive regulatory framework offer a prime environment for clean and green energy ventures, proven by the Beaver Lake Renewable Energy green methanol production facility, set to begin operating in 2028.



## **Logistics and Distribution**

Cleco's service territory is built for logistics and distribution businesses to hit the ground running. One of the best rail networks in the country, six major interstates and seven ports with developable land only graze the list of important regional infrastructure supporting this industry.

## **Metal Products**

Hayes Manufacturing, Alcoa, O'Neal Steel and Ville Platte Iron Works have all expanded their metal product manufacturing operations in Louisiana through workforce training programs supported by communities accepting heavy industry. Fabricated metal product manufacturers also benefit from proximity to a supply chain of local primary metals, technical schools and specialized talent from LED FastStart®.

## **NextGen Technology**

Cleco invests in advanced generation and transmission infrastructure to power Louisiana's rapidly growing technology sector. With around 975MW of available capacity, Cleco's dependable and resilient grid offers consistent, low-cost energy that high-demand operations—such as Meta and other tech leaders—rely on. From data centers and cybersecurity to high-performance computing, Cleco provides the energy foundation for innovation and growth.

## **Primary Metals**

Nucor, Hyundai Steel and likeminded businesses are tapping into the Cleco regions' interstate availability, deep-water ports and key talent for smelting and refinement of nonferrous metals.

## **Pulp, Paper and Wood Products**

With 3.8 million acres of forestlands, Louisiana plays a significant role in meeting America's timber needs through its raw materials, multimodal transportation and an industry workforce of over 63,000 employees. Companies such as Abita Lumber, International Paper, LaSalle Lumber Company and RoyOMartin leverage these resources to contribute to the timber supply in the United States.

# STATE RESOURCES AND INCENTIVES

Louisiana's strategic advantages create a strong value proposition for business: low business taxes, low cost of living and competitive wages. Additionally, the State offers the following incentives to qualifying companies.

## Data Center Incentive

Passed in 2024, the Data Center Incentive is designed to create competitive advantages in the data center industry recruitment by providing state and local sales and use tax exemption on the purchase or lease of data center equipment and software.

- The initial term is 20 years, with the option to renew for an additional 10 years.
- The data center must be in Louisiana and certified by LED.
- The project must create 50 direct, permanent new in-state jobs and spend at least \$200 million in new capital investment in Louisiana by July 1, 2029.
- A state and local sales and use tax rebate on data center development and related services and equipment that are not paid with state or federal funds, unless structured as a loan.

With seven LED certified, power-ready sites covering over 3,370 acres, Cleco has the capacity and portfolio to support large load data centers across the state.

## New High Impact Job Program

The 2025 HB 507 bill sunsets the previous Quality Jobs Program and introduces the High Impact Jobs Program (HIP), revitalizing the state's commitment to incentivizing job creation. Administered by Louisiana Economic Development (LED), this new program provides grants based on annualized wages for qualifying jobs, with a maximum of \$200,000 per year per job. The incentive amount varies by parish average wage and project location, ranging from 8% to 22%.

Qualifying jobs must not have existed in the state prior to the effective date of the program contract and meet all of the following requirements:

- Full-time, at-will employees (does not include seasonal or temporary positions)
- Directly employed by the company or a named subsidiary
- Filled on-site or remotely by Louisiana residents
- Include a basic health benefits plan

Effective July 1, 2025, with grants issued beginning July 1, 2026, this program strengthens Louisiana's economic development competitiveness by encouraging the creation of high-paying, high-quality jobs.

## Louisiana Research & Development Tax Credit

The Research and Development Tax Credit encourages existing businesses with operating facilities in Louisiana to establish or continue research and development activities within the state.

- Provides up to a 30% tax credit on qualified research expenditures incurred in Louisiana — with no cap and no minimum requirement.

## LED FastStart® Workforce Program

LED FastStart® is Louisiana's nationally recognized workforce development program designed to accelerate hiring and enhance workforce performance for new and expanding companies. It provides customized employee recruitment, screening, training development and training delivery for eligible new or expanding companies—all at no cost.

Eligible industries include manufacturing, digital media, headquarters, R&D, warehousing and distribution. Companies must create at least 15 new, permanent jobs in manufacturing or distribution centers and 50 in digital media, headquarters, R&D, or inbound call centers.

How it works:

- **Analyze:** FastStart® evaluates the full scope of a company's operations to design tailored workforce solutions.
- **Attract:** It identifies and engages top talent based on behavioral and technical fit.
- **Evaluate:** Candidates undergo rigorous pre-hire assessments, including interviews, simulations and training.
- **Train:** Custom-designed programs deliver technical, team-based and soft-skills training to boost productivity from day one.

## Industrial Tax Exemption Program

The Louisiana Industrial Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program (ITEP) is an original state incentive program, which offers an attractive tax incentive for manufacturers who make a commitment to jobs and payroll in the state. With approval by the Board of Commerce and Industry, the program provides an 80% property tax abatement for an initial term of five years and the option to renew for five additional years at 80% property tax abatement on a manufacturer's qualifying capital investment related to the manufacturing process in the state.

In 2024, new additions or revisions were made to the program, which include:

- A new tier focused on any mega project exceeding 200% of the 10-year parish average can qualify for a 93-100% exemption.
- Job and payroll commitments are no longer required to qualify for ITEP.
- A new Annual Project Property Report will establish the exemption terms for a group of assets.
- All capital expenditures associated with a project, as defined on the ITEP application and located at the project site, are eligible for the exemption. This includes sustaining capital, maintenance capital, and proactive environmental upgrades.
- Multi-year projects now use separate Project Property Reports for each year, with a 5-year term and 5-year renewal option, replacing individual ITEP applications.

# THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION

Cleco is dedicated to ensuring power reliability while embracing sustainable energy practices that preserve the natural environment. By investing in and supporting a variety of initiatives, such as the Cleco Alternative Energy Center – a public-private research partnership at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette – and GO Cleco – a green power program providing customers with Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), we are actively shaping a resilient and reliable energy future. These efforts are complemented by cutting-edge research and innovation that inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers to expand the boundaries of clean energy production.

## Clean and Green Energy

Cleco's Dolet Hills Solar Project, located within the north Louisiana region in DeSoto Parish, is part of a Cleco and D.E. Shaw Renewable Investments partnership to evaluate renewable investment options throughout Louisiana. The company's solar energy project includes repurposing the Cleco Dolet Hills Power Station facility and portions of the property previously used to support the lignite mining operations in DeSoto Parish.

The long-term investment, available in 2026, offers an economic development boost to the region and across Cleco's service areas by:

- Providing a renewable energy source, given the strong demand from new and existing businesses
- Replacing a coal-powered power plant to use solar energy as a power source
- Providing optionality to existing or new Louisiana companies aiming to reach clean or renewable energy goals
- Bringing new investments into the state
- Adding economic diversification in a rural area
- Growing the tax base in a rural area
- Offering clean energy solutions that match the demands of today's business environment



## St. Mary Clean Energy Center

Within St. Mary Clean Energy Center, a power plant that can produce up to 50 MW of electricity and power 17,000 homes a year, Cleco can produce energy with zero associated emissions.

- The power plant launched in partnership with Cabot Corporation and began operations in August 2019.
- Power from the plant is generated via waste heat recovered from Cabot's carbon black manufacturing process.
- Waste heat is captured and utilized by Cleco to produce steam.
- The steam drives a turbine generator to produce electricity without increasing emissions, including carbon dioxide.

## Gas Compression

Cleco assists customers in achieving their clean or renewable energy goals by reducing Scope II CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 1.5-1.7 tonnes/MWh and by promoting local community development through the expansion of low-cost renewable assets. The Cleco team provides options for clean energy solutions to customers based on their current energy consumption, thereby streamlining and mitigating risks associated with investments in renewable energy procurement.

Commercial, industrial and residential clients within the Cleco service area will soon gain reliable access to renewable energy through GO Cleco – a subscription-based program offering up to 240 megawatts of renewable energy. Commencing in 2027, GO Cleco will enable customers to subscribe for up to 100% of their annual energy usage from this program. Renewable Energy Credits are sourced from the Dolet Hills Facility, one of the largest solar facilities in Louisiana.

# LAYING THE FOUNDATION WITH GRID RESILIENCY AND RELIABILITY

## Energy Infrastructure Designed for High-Performance Tech

Cleco is leading the transformation of Louisiana's energy infrastructure—building a resilient, reliable power grid designed to meet the demands of next-generation technology. With seven power-ready sites spanning over 3,000 acres, Cleco provides the critical energy foundation needed to support data centers, cybersecurity firms, innovation hubs, and high-performance computing operations.

Cleco's modern grid delivers consistent, low-cost power with the reliability required by today's most power-intensive industries. Strategically located near key infrastructure, these sites offer unmatched advantages for companies looking to scale in a secure, high-performance environment.

This energy transformation is accelerating growth across Louisiana's technology sector, which contributes nearly \$6 billion to the state's economy. With top-performing tech talent fueled by leading colleges and universities, and backed by industry-aligned training programs, Louisiana is primed to meet the workforce needs of tomorrow. Combined with targeted incentives and Cleco's dependable power delivery, the state offers a powerful proposition for technology-driven investment and innovation.

## Development-Ready Certified Sites

Louisiana offers a variety of development-ready sites that can be found in its Available Sites Database. Cleco Power provides sites designed to meet business needs effectively, offering scalable and reliable power solutions. These sites include LED-certified, power-ready options suitable for various industries. Cleco's portfolio features industrial parks and commercial land, allowing businesses to begin operations quickly and maintain their competitive edge.

Cleco has had extensive collaboration with Newmark Global Services in identifying, developing, and marketing new and existing industrial sites for economic development recruitment. This partnership enhances the strategic positioning of Cleco's sites within Louisiana's broader economic development framework. With the passage of HB 461, the state will invest \$150 million in the new Louisiana Site Investment and Infrastructure Improvement Fund, marking the largest site development investment in Louisiana's history. Closely aligned with LED's 2025 strategic plan, this initiative significantly boosts the state's competitiveness in attracting new business and industry.



Map numbers correspond to the table below.

LARGE LOAD AVAILABILITY POWER SITES	ACREAGE	MW CAPACITY
<b>1</b> Beauregard Airport Industrial Site	1,187 Acres	~84.26MW
<b>2</b> Gulf South Commerce Park	1000 Acres	~100MW
<b>3</b> Allen Parish Business & Industrial Park Site	86 Acres	~92.07MW
<b>4</b> Evangeline Ward One Site	96 Acres	~191.30MW
<b>5</b> Acadiana Regional Airport Industrial Sites	521 Acres	~300MW
<b>6</b> Bunkie Industrial Park	74 Acres	~124MW
<b>7</b> Natchitoches Parish Port Site	360 Acres	~83.32MW

# THE HUMAN CAPITAL AND WORKFORCE TRAINING TO FILL OPEN JOBS

## Talent Pipeline and Workforce Development Tools

Cleco's four regions boast a high workforce participation rate and range of colleges and universities producing skilled talent. Twenty-four colleges and universities across the regions include the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Tulane University, Northwestern State University, four Louisiana State University campuses and a host of community colleges — with the top five of these institutions alone producing 6,000 annual graduates directly trained for target industry occupations.

One of the nation's best workforce development programs is doubling down on companies' path to success in the state. LED FastStart® is a fully custom, comprehensive and free program that recruits and trains talent for Louisiana companies and has ranked top in the nation by Business Facilities for 14 consecutive years. Louisiana also ranks No. 1 in tech talent, proactively expanding the workforce in the technology and renewable energy industries.

# An Undeniable Source of Talent

## Top-Performing Tech Talent Pipeline

State population of  
**4,657,757**



Civilian labor force  
of **1,081,043** across  
Cleco's four regions

**24**  
colleges and  
universities in  
Cleco's territory

Median Age of  
**38.7**

**6,000 degrees awarded**  
annually by top five higher  
education institutions in relevant  
industry categories



Top-ranked **workforce development program** in the nation for 14 consecutive years.

*Newmark Report 2022  
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
U.S. Census Bureau  
FT Locations*

# ONLY IN LOUISIANA

## Hundreds of Ways to Enjoy Yourself Year Round

Be part of world-renowned Festival International in downtown Lafayette or New Orleans' Mardi Gras — two of the largest events on the planet. Immerse yourself in nature with close to two dozen state parks filled with fishing, boating and water sport adventures across countless lakes, bayous and lagoons. Or, level up your family's education from one of the top public schools in the state — Louisiana School for Math, Science and The Arts — to Tulane University, one of the 16 higher education institutions surrounding Cleco's service territory.

In Louisiana — home to America's Cajun cuisine and musical legends like Louis Armstrong — you'll find plenty of opportunities to live your best life. And did we mention the cost of living is well below the national average?

Live your best  
life in **Louisiana**



# PLUG IN TO POWERFUL SUPPORT

## Meet Cleco's Economic Development Team

Cleco's nationally recognized economic development program aims to promote growth across Louisiana with a focus on attracting investment and "moving the needle" for growth across the state. This initiative seeks to foster development by positioning the region as a top-performing area for business opportunities. Cleco has been honored with the prestigious Business Facilities Magazine Utility EDO Award for three consecutive years, a testament to its enduring excellence in economic development leadership. Cleco was also ranked a Top Utility by Site Selection Magazine, further solidifying its position as a national leader in utility-driven economic development.

As local and national economic development experts, our team focuses on business development and community advocacy by providing new and seasoned Louisiana employers with reliable, comprehensive site selection services customized for their needs.



**Richard Cornelison**

Director, Marketing and Economic Development  
405-823-4135 | [Richard.Cornelison@Cleco.com](mailto:Richard.Cornelison@Cleco.com)



**Amy Thibodeaux, CEcD**

Economic Development Project Manager  
337-277-4950 | [amy.thibodeaux@cleco.com](mailto:amy.thibodeaux@cleco.com)



**Connor Bradford**

Economic Development Project Manager  
661-713-2445 | [connor.bradford@cleco.com](mailto:connor.bradford@cleco.com)



[Clecodev.com](https://Clecodev.com)



