



For Immediate Release  
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## Port Houston Tops 1M TEUs in First Quarter Total tonnage at public terminals up 5%



*New RTGs docked at Port Houston's Bayport Container Terminal.*

**HOUSTON** — Port Houston surpassed 1 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in the first quarter of 2026, reaching 1,087,870 TEUs, up 2% over 2025's record-breaking year. Total tonnage across Port Houston's public facilities was up 5% in the first quarter, totaling 13,897,479 short tons.

Port Houston handled 391,037 TEUs in March, up 1% compared to the same month last year. Loaded imports increased 7% for the month and 4% year-to-date, driven in part by strong demand for refrigerated cargo and retail consumer goods such as furniture. Loaded exports declined 6% compared to March 2025 but are still up 1% year-to-date, with resin volumes expected to strengthen in the second quarter, supporting loaded export growth.

Houston hosted two conferences in March, S&P's annual World Petrochemical Conference (WPC) and the OPIS Chemical Market Analytics Forum, a Dow Jones company event, and Port Houston sponsored both. Port Houston's Chief Commercial Officer John Moseley, a featured speaker at the WPC event, noted that Houston's scale as the largest petrochemical complex in the nation, combined with Port Houston's approach of offering a low-cost, high-service, low-risk gateway, positions the region to capture surges in downstream petrochemical exports driven by shifting global supply and sourcing patterns. Combined with a large and fast-growing import market, Houston has successfully captured and held new market share during spike and surge cycles. Port Houston generally maintains the ability to handle surges of approximately 20% above projected growth rates at its Bayport and Barbours Cut Container Terminals.

Port Houston continues investment in terminal enhancements to remain a reliable gateway for customers. The final six units of 16 total rubber-tired gantry cranes (RTGs) ordered in 2025 were delivered in March, bringing the total fleet to 163 RTGs across both container terminals. Approximately half of the Port's RTG fleet now operates with hybrid-electric technology, reducing air emissions by about 90% and carbon dioxide emissions by 30% compared to traditional diesel-powered equipment.

At Port Houston's multipurpose facilities bulk cargos were strong, with dry bulk up 107% and liquid bulk up 23% in March compared to March 2025, reflecting higher volumes of grain and industrial commodities moving through the region. Steel import volumes declined 29% for both the month and year-to-date, a result of broader market conditions, including softer demand from the energy sector as drilling activity moderates, consistent with recent U.S. rig count trends.

"The Houston Ship Channel remains an essential artery for our nation," said Charlie Jenkins, CEO of Port Houston. "There were 2,089 vessel calls to the private and public facilities along the Channel in the first quarter of this year, which is 5% more than last year. Bulk carrier calls were up, as were LPG and chemical tankers, demonstrating continued demand across energy and industrial cargo segments," said Jenkins. "There's no doubt that the recent completion of dredging of the Port-led segments of the Houston Ship Channel Expansion, known as Project 11, is improving vessel efficiency and transit flexibility for all users of the Channel including tankers, bulk, breakbulk, and container carriers."

#### **About Port Houston**

For more than 100 years, Port Houston has owned and operated the eight public wharves and terminals along the Houston Ship Channel, including the area's largest breakbulk facility and two of the most efficient container terminals in the country. Port Houston is the advocate and a strategic leader for the Channel. The Houston Ship Channel complex and its more than 200 private and eight public terminals is the nation's largest port for waterborne tonnage and an essential economic engine for the Houston region, the state of Texas, and the U.S. The Port of Houston supports 1.54 million jobs in Texas and 3.37 million jobs nationwide, and economic activity totaling \$439 billion in Texas – nearly 20 percent of Texas' total gross domestic product (GDP) – and \$906 billion in economic impact across the nation. For more information, visit the website at [PortHouston.com](http://PortHouston.com).

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