

Form AHS-27(L) – Returning AHS National Housing Units Only

(8/7/08)

Dear Resident:

I am writing to ask for your help with an important survey that the U.S. Census Bureau is conducting, called the American Housing Survey. We are contacting your address again this year to get up-to-date information about the country's housing. A Census Bureau field representative will be calling or visiting you to help complete the survey. He or she will show you an official identification card or provide you with his/her name and interview code to confirm employment with the Census Bureau. The field representative will ask you questions about your home and your household. Some of the items covered include the number of rooms, heating and cooling equipment, and the cost of housing. We have enclosed a work sheet with this letter. Please fill it out in advance so that you can answer the questions more easily. The Census Bureau needs your help to collect accurate data so that policymakers can assess the quality of current government programs and better plan for the future.

The Census Bureau chose your address, not you personally, as part of a randomly selected sample. Because this is a sample survey, your answers represent not only your home but also thousands of other homes like yours. For this reason, your cooperation in this voluntary survey will be a distinct service to our country. You may decline to answer any or all questions, but each item not answered lessens the quality of our final results. We need to interview every home in our sample to get a complete picture of the housing situation across the country.

We are conducting this survey under the authority of Title 13, United States Code. Section 9 of this law requires us to keep all information about you and your household strictly confidential. We may use this information only for statistical purposes. Every Census Bureau employee, from the Director to the field representative who conducts the interview, has taken an oath to abide by this law and is subject to a jail term, a fine, or both, if she or he discloses any information that could identify you or your household.

I have included answers to the most frequently asked questions about this survey on the other side of this letter. If you would like further information, contact the Census Bureau by writing or calling the office below or visiting our Web site.

Regional Director
U.S. Census Bureau
1211 North 8th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101-2129
Telephone: 1-800-728-4748

www.census.gov/hhes/www/ahs.html

Thank you for your cooperation. I am grateful for your help.

Sincerely,

Steve H. Murdock
Director

Enclosure

**Si desea que la entrevista sea en español, favor de comunicarse a la Oficina Regional
indicada anteriormente.**

**(Translation (Not Displayed On Letter): Phone the office above to arrange a Spanish
language interview.)**

WHAT IS THIS SURVEY ALL ABOUT?

The American Housing Survey provides up-to-date information on the size and composition of the housing inventory. As the country grows, so does the demand for housing. There is a great need for information about the types of homes in which people are now living and the characteristics of these homes, as well as the costs of running and maintaining them.

Information from the survey helps to measure the changes in our housing supply resulting from losses and new construction. It measures the structural makeup of the housing and characteristics of the occupants. The information also helps to evaluate the effects of proposals on tax reform and assistance programs.

HOW WAS I SELECTED FOR THIS SURVEY?

We chose your address, not you personally. The U.S. Census Bureau scientifically selected a sample of addresses throughout the United States. If you move away, this address will stay in the survey and we will interview the household that moves here.

YOU WERE HERE TWO YEARS AGO. WHY ARE YOU COMING BACK?

We return to obtain a measure of the changes (or lack of changes) that have taken place in the number of houses available in the United States, the physical condition of the country's housing, and the characteristics of the occupants.

IS THIS SURVEY AUTHORIZED BY LAW? WHAT PROTECTION DO I HAVE?

Congress requires the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to collect this information under the Housing and Urban-Rural Recovery Act of 1983. The HUD has the authority to collect the survey data under Title 12 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) and has asked the Census Bureau to conduct the survey. The Census Bureau has the authority to collect and protect this information under Title 13 of the U.S.C. All information that individuals give to the Census Bureau is held in the strictest confidence by law (Title 13, U.S.C., Section 9).

Although there are no penalties for not answering, each missing answer makes the national figures on housing less accurate. Your answers may be combined with information that you give

to other agencies to enhance the statistical use of these data, but all data will be kept strictly confidential.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

We expect it will take about 30 minutes for you to provide this information, but it may be somewhat shorter or longer, depending on your circumstances. If you have any comments on this survey or have recommendations for reducing its length, please send them to the Director, Housing and Demographic Analysis Division, Office of Policy Development and Research, Office of Economic Affairs, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington,

DC 20410. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number is 2528-0017 for this survey. This number confirms that we have approval from OMB to conduct this survey.

Approval for this survey expires on March 31, 2010.

I THOUGHT THAT THE CENSUS BUREAU OPERATED ONLY EVERY TEN YEARS WHEN IT COUNTED PEOPLE. WHAT IS THE CENSUS BUREAU DOING NOW?

Besides the decennial census, which we conduct every ten years, we collect many different kinds of statistics through other censuses and surveys. We conduct other censuses regularly, including the censuses of business and manufacturers and the census of state and local governments. In addition, we collect data on a monthly basis to provide current information on such topics as unemployment rates, retail and wholesale trade, various manufacturing activities, and new housing construction, as well as yearly surveys on business, manufacturing, governments, family income, health, and education. Most cases in the American Housing Survey are visited once every two years. A small group in some large metropolitan areas are scheduled to be interviewed every 6 to 8 years.