

AHS-26/66(L)
(10-2014)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, DC 20233-0001
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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. This survey includes questions about housing quality and housing costs as well as questions about the household. A Census Bureau field representative will be contacting you to help complete the survey. He or she will show you an official identification card or provide you with his or her name and interviewer code to confirm employment with the Census Bureau. We have enclosed a worksheet with this letter. Please complete it in advance and keep it until the field representative contacts you. It will help you answer some of the survey questions more easily.

The Census Bureau needs your help to collect accurate data so that policymakers can better assess current government programs and plan for the future. We chose your address, not you personally, as part of a scientifically selected sample. Because this is a sample survey, your answers not only represent your home, but thousands of other homes like yours. For this reason, your cooperation in this voluntary survey will provide a distinct service to our country. We need to interview every home in our sample to get a complete picture of housing quality and housing costs across the country.

We are conducting this survey under the authority of Title 13, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 8 and Title 12, U.S.C., Sections 1701z-1, 1701z-2(g), and 1701z-10a. Title 13, U.S.C., Section 9, requires us to keep all information about you and your household strictly confidential. We will use this information for statistical purposes only. Each 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 he or she discloses any information that could identify you or your household.

We have included answers to the most frequently asked questions about this survey on the reverse side of this letter. If you would like further information, please contact the Census Bureau by writing or calling the office below. You may also visit our Web site at www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs/.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR
US CENSUS BUREAU
(INSERT ADDRESS)

Telephone: (INSERT)
Email: (INSERT)

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

John H. Thompson
Director

Enclosure

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

WHAT IS THIS SURVEY ALL ABOUT?

The purpose of the American Housing Survey (AHS) is to provide up-to-date information on housing quality and housing costs. To measure housing quality, the survey includes questions about equipment breakdowns, leaks, and other problems. There are also questions about amenities such as garages, balconies, and pools. To measure housing costs, the survey includes questions about mortgage and rental costs, utility costs, and repair and remodeling costs. The AHS also asks about your household, including basic demographic and income questions.

Combining household information with housing quality and housing cost information helps to measure the housing challenges faced by homeowners and renters. The information also helps to measure important changes in our housing stock as it ages, and when it is eventually remodeled or replaced.

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.

IS THIS SURVEY AUTHORIZED BY LAW? WHAT PROTECTIONS 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 (Title 12 of the U.S.C.). HUD has asked the Census Bureau to conduct the survey. Title 13, U.S.C., Section 8 provides the Census Bureau with the authority to collect this information. All information that individuals give to the Census Bureau is held in the strictest confidence by law (Title 13, U.S.C., Section 9). You may decline to answer any or all questions, but each item not answered lessens the quality of the final results. 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. If you wish to request that your information not be combined with information from other agencies, we ask that you notify the field representative at the time of the interview.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

We expect it will take about 40 minutes for you to provide this information, but it may be somewhat shorter or longer, depending on your circumstances. Completing the enclosed worksheet and having it available may help to shorten your interview. An agency cannot conduct, sponsor, or require a response to a collection of information unless the collection displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval number. The OMB approval number for this survey is 2528-0017 and the expiration date is May XX, 20XX. If you have any comments or suggestions about this survey, please send them to the Associate Director for Administration, Paperwork Reduction Project 2528-0017, Bureau of the Census, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233-1500 or Paperwork@census.gov.

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 conducted every ten years, we collect many different kinds of statistics through other censuses and surveys. We conduct other censuses at regular intervals, including the Economic Census and the Census of Governments. In addition, we conduct various surveys to collect data on a monthly basis in order to provide current information on unemployment rates, retail and wholesale trade, various manufacturing activities, new housing construction, and a number of other topics. Also, we conduct annual surveys on business, manufacturing, governments, family income, health, and education. You may also encounter the Census Bureau conducting collections on behalf of other agencies, like the AHS, which the Census Bureau conducts for HUD.



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Thank You

...for the help you gave the U.S. Census Bureau field representative regarding the American Housing Survey.

Your participation, and the participation of others, enables us to provide information that will aid in meeting the housing needs of people in the United States.

Your answers not only represent your household but thousands of others like yours. We will combine your answers with answers obtained from the other households to produce housing information. We will hold the information you provided in the strictest confidence as required by Title 13, Section 9 of the United States Code and will use your information for statistical purposes only.

One of our field representatives may contact this address again in a few years. If you should move away, we would interview the new occupants. We return to the same addresses to measure changes in the housing stock, the structural characteristics of the housing, and some demographic characteristics of the occupants.

If you have access to the internet and want to learn more about the American Housing Survey, please visit our Web site at www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs/.

Again, the Census Bureau appreciates your help.

Sincerely

John H. Thompson
Director



AMERICAN HOUSING SURVEY WORKSHEET

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

This worksheet will assist you when our field representative contacts you. It is not a questionnaire.
DO NOT MAIL THIS WORKSHEET BACK TO THE U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

Completing the survey will be easier if you look up the information in your records before the interview.
Record your answers in the spaces provided, skipping any questions that do not apply to you.

Please keep this **worksheet** and copies of **your utility bills, regular mortgage statement, and year-end mortgage statement (IRS Form 1098)**, so you can refer to them when our field representative contacts you.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this worksheet!

ABOUT YOUR HOME

Year your home or building was built?		Square footage of your home?	
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HOUSING COSTS

Average monthly electric bill?	\$	Average monthly gas bill?	\$
Total cost of fuel oil for the past year?	\$	Total cost of other fuels for the past year?	\$
Total garbage and trash collection costs for the past year?			\$
Total water and sewer costs for the past year?			\$
Amount spent in a typical year for routine repairs and maintenance (painting, plumbing, etc.)?			\$
Cost for land/site rent?	\$		per
Manufactured/Mobile home (MH) park fee?	\$		per
Other MH fees (utility hookups, association, etc.)?	\$		per
Condo/Coop/Homeowner's association fee ?	\$		per

OTHER COSTS FOR HOME OWNERS

Total real estate tax for the past year?	\$		
Total amount of the down payment for this house? (<i>Dollars or percent</i>)	\$	%	
	1 st Mortgage/ Home Loan	2 nd Mortgage/ Home Loan	3 rd Mortgage/ Home Loan
When did you get this loan? (Month/Year)	/	/	/
How much was borrowed?	\$	\$	\$
...the amount you still owe?	\$	\$	\$
...the current payment?	\$	\$	\$
...the current interest rate?	%	%	%

We expect it will take about 15 minutes for you to provide the information for this worksheet, but it may be somewhat shorter or longer, depending on your circumstances. The OMB approval number for this survey is 2528-0017 and the expiration date is MMM XX, 20XX. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to the Associate Director for Administration, Paperwork Reduction Project 2528-0017, Bureau of the Census, 4600 Silver Hill Road, Washington, DC 20233-1500 or Paperwork@census.gov.