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Equal opportunity practices in accordance with USDA's policies will be followed in all appointments to the Board. To ensure that the recommendations of the Board have taken in account the needs of the diverse groups served by USDA, membership shall include to the extent possible, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women and persons with disabilities. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Dated: December 12, 2023.

**Cikena Reid,**

*USDA Committee Management Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Census Bureau

#### **Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders Survey**

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on July 18, 2023, during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

*Agency:* U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce.

*Title:* Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders Survey.

*OMB Control Number:* 0607-0008.

*Form Number(s):* M-3(SD).

*Type of Request:* Regular submission, Request for an Extension, without Change, of a Currently Approved Collection.

*Number of Respondents:* 5,000.

*Average Hours per Response:* 20 minutes.

*Burden Hours:* 20,000.

*Needs and Uses:* The U.S. Census Bureau is requesting an extension of the currently approved collection for the Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories, and Orders (M3) survey. This survey collects monthly data from domestic manufacturers on Form M-3 (SD), which is mailed at the end of each month. Data requested are shipments, new orders, unfilled orders, and inventories by stage of fabrication. It is currently the only survey that provides broad-based monthly statistical data on the economic conditions in the domestic manufacturing sector. The survey is designed to measure current industrial activity and to provide an indication of future production commitments. The value of shipments measures the value of goods delivered during the month by domestic manufacturers. Estimates of new orders serve as an indicator of future production commitments and represent the current sales value of new orders received during the month, net of cancellations. Substantial accumulation or depletion of backlogs of unfilled orders measures excess (or deficient) demand for manufactured products. The level of inventories, especially in relation to shipments, is frequently used to monitor the business cycle.

The M3 survey has been conducted monthly by the U.S. Census Bureau since 1957. The Advance Report on Durable Goods, Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories and Orders is an advance snapshot of the current value of manufacturing in the U.S. It is available about 18 working days after each month. The M3 survey also produces the Full Report on Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories and Orders. This report details information on the durable goods industries and includes the non-durable goods industries. In addition, the Full Report captures late receipts, and is available about 23 working days after each month.

In October 2021, we accelerated total manufacturing and the nondurable manufacturing aggregate estimates to the same time as the Advance Report on Durable Goods Manufacturers' Shipments, Inventories and Orders by creating an advance high-level report of total manufacturing. This exception to the normal procedure was initially approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in September 2021

and has been subsequently extended annually through means of a separately submitted memo. This exception has permitted the public release of preliminary monthly data on shipments and inventories of total manufacturing under the provisions of the OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 3 on the Compilation, Release and Evaluation of Principal Federal Economic Indicators. The Census Bureau requests that provisions for the early release of total manufacturing shipments and inventories be included in this clearance, thereby eliminating the need for a separate memo requesting annual re-approval from OMB for the early release. Accelerating the nondurable release provides data users with early access to total manufacturing estimates ahead of the Full Report, giving them an early snapshot of the direction of this critical indicator.

Additionally, in September 2024, we plan to include additional nondurable goods industry level data, to provide more detailed estimates at the advance time.

The M3 survey provides an essential component of the current economic indicators needed for assessing the evolving status of the economy and formulating economic policy. The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has designated this survey as a principal federal economic indicator. The shipments and inventories data are essential inputs to the gross domestic product (GDP). The orders data are direct inputs to The Conference Board Leading Economic Index (LEI), which is a composite index of ten key elements designed to monitor the business cycle (<https://www.conference-board.org/data/bcicountry.cfm?cid=1>). The GDP and the LEI would be incomplete without these data. Businesses and consumers generally place orders for durable goods when they are confident the economy is improving. A durable goods report showing an increase in orders is a sign that the economy is trending upwards. Durable goods orders tell investors what to expect from the manufacturing sector, a major component of the economy. The M3 survey also provides valuable and timely domestic manufacturing data for economic planning and analysis to business firms, trade associations, research and consulting agencies, and academia.

The data are used for analyzing short- and long-term trends, both in the manufacturing sector and as related to other sectors of the economy. The data on the value of shipments, especially when adjusted for change in

inventories, measure current levels of production. New orders figures serve as an indicator of future production commitments. Changes in the level of unfilled orders, because of excess or shortfall of new orders compared with shipments, are used to measure the excess (or deficiency) in the demand for manufactured products. Changes in the level of inventories and the relation of these to shipments are used to project future movements in manufacturing activity. These statistics are valuable for analysts of business cycle conditions, including members of the Council of Economic Advisers (CEA), the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), the Federal Reserve Board (FRB), the Department of the Treasury, The Conference Board, business firms, trade associations, private research and consulting agencies, and the academic community.

*Frequency:* Monthly.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131, 182, and 193.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or by using the search function and entering either the title of the collection or the OMB Control Number 0607–0008.

**Sheleen Dumas,**

*Department PRA Clearance Officer, Office of the Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, Commerce Department.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**Census Bureau**

**Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions**

The Department of Commerce will submit the following information collection request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and clearance in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of

1995, on or after the date of publication of this notice. We invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on proposed, and continuing information collections, which helps us assess the impact of our information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. Public comments were previously requested via the **Federal Register** on August 3, 2023, during a 60-day comment period. This notice allows for an additional 30 days for public comments.

*Agency:* U.S. Census Bureau, Department of Commerce.

*Title:* Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions.

*OMB Control Number:* 0607–0110  
*Form Number(s):* SOC–QI/SF.1 and SOC–QI/MF.1.

*Type of Request:* Regular submission, request for an extension, without change, of a currently approved collection.

*Number of Respondents:* We collect data for approximately 21,363 new buildings a year. A builder or owner may be contacted several times based on how long the construction project takes. We estimate the average number of times we need to contact the builder or owner is between 7 and 8 times. The total number of responses annually is 161,412.

*Average Hours per Response:* 5 minutes.

*Burden Hours:* 13,451.

*Needs and Uses:* The U. S. Census Bureau is requesting an extension of the currently approved collection for the Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions, otherwise known as the Survey of Construction (SOC). The SOC is co-sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Government agencies and private companies use statistics from SOC to monitor and evaluate the large and dynamic housing construction industry. Data for two principal economic indicators are produced from the SOC: New Residential Construction (housing starts and housing completions) and New Residential Sales. In addition, a number of other statistical series are produced, including extensive information on the physical characteristics of new residential buildings, and indexes measuring rates of inflation in the price of new buildings. These statistics are based on a sample of residential buildings in permit-issuing places and a road canvass in a sample of land areas not covered by building permit systems.

Census Bureau field representatives (FRs) mail forms to new respondents to

complete. A few days later, the FRs either call or visit the respondents to enter their survey responses into a laptop computer using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) software. The respondents are home builders, real estate agents, rental agents, or new homeowners of sampled residential buildings. FRs contact respondents multiple times based on the number of projects in the sample and the number of months required to complete the project.

The Census Bureau uses the information collected in the SOC to publish estimates of the number of new residential housing units started, under construction, completed, and the number of new houses sold and for sale. The Census Bureau also publishes many financial and physical characteristics of new housing units. Government agencies use these statistics to evaluate economic policy, measure progress towards the national housing goal, make policy decisions, and formulate legislation. For example, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System uses data from this survey to evaluate the effect of interest rates. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses the data in developing the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The private sector uses the information for estimating the demand for building materials and the many products used in new housing and to schedule production, distribution, and sales efforts. The financial community uses the data to estimate the demand for short-term (construction loans) and long-term (mortgages) borrowing.

*Frequency:* Monthly.

*Respondent's Obligation:* Voluntary.

*Legal Authority:* The Census Bureau is authorized under title 13, United States Code, sections 131 and 182 to collect information, and under title 13 section 8(b) to perform survey work for other agencies, including HUD. HUD is authorized under title 12 U.S.C., sections 1701z–1 and 1701z–2g to collect or obtain information on new residential buildings.

This information collection request may be viewed at [www.reginfo.gov](http://www.reginfo.gov). Follow the instructions to view the Department of Commerce collections currently under review by OMB.

Written comments and recommendations for the proposed information collection should be submitted within 30 days of the publication of this notice on the following website [www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain](http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain). Find this particular information collection by selecting "Currently under 30-day Review—Open for Public Comments" or