

Building Permits Survey

Data Frequently Asked Questions

1. How are the building permits data summarized?

Building permit statistics are summarized for the U.S., and by Census Regions, Census Divisions, Metropolitan areas and counties. Data are also available for individual permit offices. The survey collects the number of housing units and the valuation of construction for new single family and multifamily structures.

2. When and where are building permits data published?

Preliminary data are released on the 12th workday of each month in the New Residential Construction Press Release. The geographic level data available at preliminary are at the United States and the four Census regions level. The scheduled release dates for preliminary data are available.

Revised data are released on the 18th workday of each month. The geographic data available at revised are at the United States, Census Regions, States, Metropolitan Areas, Counties and individual permit offices levels. Data are available for a statistical sample of Counties and permit-issuing places which are requested to report monthly. The scheduled release dates for revised estimates are available.

Annual data are released on the 1st workday of May for the previous year. The geographic data available at the time of the annual are at the United States, Census Regions, States, Metropolitan Areas, Counties and individual permit offices levels. Data are available for all Counties and places, where permits are required.

State and Metropolitan Area data are available on the Internet as text files. Data for individual permit offices and County level data are also available on the Internet. ASCII, comma delimited files for all geographic areas are available by calling the Residential Construction Branch on 1-800-845-8244 or emailing your request to MCD.RCB.BPS@census.gov.

Building Permit sample files and documentation are available on the Internet.

3. How can I get copies of my C-404 reported data?

If you submitted a C-404 form, copies of previously reported data can be obtained upon request by calling our office on 1-800-845-8244 or emailing your request to MCD.RCB.BPS@census.gov. Please retain a copy of the C-404 form for your records before you fax or mail your form.

If you submitted your survey data electronically via Internet, you can print a PDF form of reporting periods submitted from the Building Permits Survey's Main Menu.

4. How can I get County level data?

County data can be obtained by visiting our website. The monthly files show county totals for all counties in which every permit office is requested to report monthly (about 900), and the annual file shows all counties that contain permit-issuing places.

Monthly data are available from January 2000 forward and annual data from 1990 forward ASCII, comma delimited files for all geographic areas are available by calling the Residential Construction Branch on 1-800-845-8244 or emailing your request to MCD.RCB.BPS@census.gov.

5. Why is the requested place level data not shown on the website?

Data are not shown on the website because:

1. at the time the data were published, we had not received the data for the place, or
2. of our sample selection procedures, data for some places that report monthly are not included on our website.

If data for the requested jurisdiction are submitted on time, and place level data are not shown on the website, please call 1-800-845-8244 for assistance.