

# It's Time for Local Governments to Update List of Housing Units

The nation is three years away from the next decennial census and Census 2010 is probably not even on most people's radar screens. However, the Local Update of Census Addresses (more commonly known as LUCA) begins in July and will be the primary focus of Indiana's Census 2010 efforts for the remainder of 2007.

Census forms are sent to housing units, not to people; thus, Census 2010 won't be accurate if the Census Bureau doesn't know about all the housing units in an area. The LUCA program allows local officials to review the addresses used by the Census Bureau and submit additions to the list where residences have been missed.

## Why Should You Care?

Because LUCA underlies the distribution of the Census forms and fieldworker follow-up, it matters for all of the same reasons the Census itself matters.

- **Money:** Census data directly affect how more than \$200 billion per year in federal and state funding is allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation and much more. That's more than \$2 trillion over a 10-year period.
- **Power:** The decennial census is used to apportion seats in the U.S. House of Representatives among the states (which also impacts the number of presidential electoral votes). Census data are used to define legislature districts, school district assignment areas and other important functional areas of government.

- **Intelligence:** Data indicating changes in a community are crucial to planning decisions, such as where to provide services for the elderly, where to build new roads and schools, or where to locate job training centers.

In addition, many Indiana cities and towns have grown through annexation within the past decade. A fair number of those have updated their boundaries through the annual Boundary and Annexation Survey, but some have not. LUCA will be the best opportunity to make sure the Census Bureau has accurate geographic boundaries for Indiana municipalities prior to the Census. If not, the Bureau will be unable to compile accurate data for our communities once results from Census 2010 start pouring in.

## LUCA Highlights

Local governments can participate in one of three ways. Options 1 and 2 require adherence to certain confidentiality requirements.

- Option 1 lets local governments look at and modify the Census Bureau's list of city-style addresses and challenge their count of noncity-style addresses (rural route addresses, for example) by census block.
- Option 2 lets local governments look at the Census Bureau's list of addresses and then submit their own separate address list (city-style addresses only).
- Option 3 does not let local governments look at the Census

Bureau list. They just submit their own list to the Census Bureau (city-style addresses only).

Formal invitations for the program will be sent to local officials in July 2007. One may sign up to participate in the program anytime between July 2007 and December 31, 2007.

Upon receiving files from the Census Bureau, the local government has 120 days to review the materials and submit their changes back to

the bureau (a jurisdiction must sign-up by November 19 to get the full 120 days).

The Census Bureau has made several changes to the program since the last census, including developing software that would make participation easier for jurisdictions without a GIS system. Find more detailed information, as well as several resources to assist communities with LUCA at [www.census.indiana.edu/luca/](http://www.census.indiana.edu/luca/).

## Don't Miss Out

Because an accurate population count starts with an accurate list of housing unit addresses, LUCA is a critical endeavor. We want to see all of Indiana's counties, cities, towns and townships participate in LUCA when they get their invitations in July.

Why? The bottom line is that if an address is not on the list, there is a very high probability that those residents will be missed in the upcoming census.

—Rachel Justis, Managing Editor, Indiana Business Research Center, Kelley School of Business, Indiana University

*Learn more about how Indiana is preparing for Census 2010 at [www.census.indiana.edu](http://www.census.indiana.edu).*