



Research Brief

The Commonwealth's Official Source for Population and Economic Statistics

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Growth of Pennsylvania Housing Units in 2008

PENN STATE HARRISBURG – New estimates released recently by the Census Bureau show that the state continues to add new houses, apartments and mobile homes. According to the new estimates, the total number of Pennsylvania's housing units grew to 5,496,336 in 2008, ranking the Commonwealth 5th among all states in number of housing units. Since 2000, the number of housing units in Pennsylvania has increased by 246,583, a 4.7 percent increase. The Commonwealth ranks 45th among the states in percent increase between 2000 and 2008. In terms of percent, Pennsylvania housing has grown more slowly than the nation over the last seven years (11.4 percent nationwide).

Pennsylvania Counties

None of Pennsylvania's counties ranked among the top 100 nationally in percent growth of housing units between 2007-2008 or 2000-2008. Chester County (+21,572) led all Pennsylvania counties in the number of housing units gained since 2000, followed by York (+18,915) and Montgomery (+17,888) Counties. Philadelphia (-1,211 units) and Cameron (-15 units) Counties were the only Pennsylvania counties to show a net loss of housing units since 2000. Thirteen counties, however, showed housing unit losses between 2007 and 2008, more than in recent years.

**Table 1. Pennsylvania Housing Units,
Top 5 Counties, 2000-2008**

	April 1, 2000 (Estimate Base)	July 1, 2008	Numeric Change, Estimate Base to July 1, 2008	Percent Change, Estimate Base to July 1, 2008
Pennsylvania	5,249,753	246,583	18,465	4.7
Monroe	67,580	79,294	11,714	17.3
Pike	34,682	40,680	5,998	17.3
Chester	163,773	185,345	21,572	13.2
Franklin	53,802	60,553	6,751	12.5
York	156,722	175,637	18,915	12.1

Monroe and Pike Counties showed the largest percent change from 2000 to 2008, with each increasing by 17.3 percent (See Table 1). Between 2007 and 2008, however, Franklin and Pike grew the fastest, each increasing by 1.5 percent (see Table 2).

The counties that saw the largest increase in housing units were largely concentrated in the eastern and south-central portions of the state, while most of the counties that saw housing unit decline were in the western portion. The exception to this trend was Butler County, located in the western portion of the state, which had the largest percent increase in housing in Western Pennsylvania last year.

**Table 2. Pennsylvania Housing Units,
Top 5 Counties, 2007-2008**

	April 1, 2000 Estimate Base	July 1, 2008	Numeric Change, July 1, 2007 to July 1, 2008	Percent Change, July 1, 2007 to July 1, 2008
Pennsylvania	5,249,753	5,496,336	18,465	0.3
Franklin	53,802	60,553	899	1.5
Pike	34,682	40,680	597	1.5
Cumberland	86,950	95,538	1,188	1.3
Carbon	30,492	33,296	372	1.1
Monroe	67,580	79,294	824	1.1

More about Housing Unit Estimates

According to the Census Bureau, a housing unit is defined as any structure meant to be used as separate living quarters, including houses, apartments, mobile homes and trailers, or groups of rooms. Both occupied and unoccupied housing units are included in housing unit counts, except that vacant mobile homes or trailers are only included if they are intended for occupancy on the site where they are located.

Housing unit estimates use building permits, mobile home shipments, and estimates of housing unit loss to update housing unit change since the last census. Census counts of housing units are geographically updated each year to reflect legal changes reported in the Boundary and Annexation Survey (BAS), Census corrections, and other administrative revisions. The reference date for estimates is July 1.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Division
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The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the Commonwealth's official source for population and economic statistics. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's National State Data Center Program.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Pennsylvania State Data Center's State Capital Office at 717.772.2710 or for faculty comment on this topic, contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office at 717.948.6029.