

Census 2010 Update The Next Decennial—Two Years and Counting

Now that our calendars have reached April, we are officially two years away from the 2010 Census.

What's Happening Now?

For the past several months, many local governments around the state have been checking to make sure the Census Bureau has updated address information for housing units, through participation in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program. This program is vital because census forms are sent to housing units, so Census 2010 won't be accurate if the Census Bureau doesn't know about all the housing units in an area. In Indiana, 55 counties, 203 incorporated places and 18 townships are participating (see **Figure 1**). In its role as governor's liaison to the Census Bureau, the Indiana Business Research Center has undertaken the state-level LUCA review—helping fill in the gaps for some high-growth areas in the state where locals are not participating.

What Comes Next?

The Census Bureau will spend the summer processing LUCA submissions and will then send out field canvassers beginning in November to verify the data. For the first time, each field canvasser will be equipped with a handheld computer, which was anticipated to increase efficiency, cut down on human error and save millions of dollars in the process. However, the Census Bureau has come under congressional scrutiny due to cost overruns and delays with the equipment.¹ Though address canvassers will still use handhelds in the field to verify housing units, the Census Bureau is returning to pen and paper for the

field workers collecting information from the millions of people who don't return their forms in 2010.²

Once the field canvassers have finished walking our neighborhoods, the Census Bureau will send feedback to the LUCA participants in the fall of 2009. Local governments should pay special attention to these results because they have an opportunity to appeal if some legitimate housing units were rejected by the bureau.

Stay up-to-date on happenings related to the next census by visiting www.census.indiana.edu.

Notes

1. Associated Press, "Fancy Computers Spell Trouble for 2010 Census," *CNN.com*, Mar. 26, 2008. Available online at www.cnn.com/2008/TECH/03/26/census.problems.ap/index.html.
2. Associated Press, "Census Stumbles Over High-Tech Counters," *The New York Times*, Apr. 4, 2008. Available online at www.nytimes.com/aponline/us/AP-Census-Problems.html.

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FIGURE 1: LUCA PARTICIPANTS AS OF JANUARY 4, 2008

