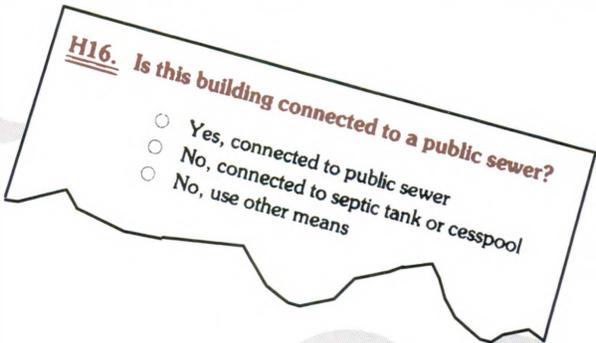


Sewage Disposal

In question **H16**, we asked people to tell us if their homes were connected to a public sewer, to a septic tank or cesspool, or if they disposed of sewage by some other means.

From what you told us, we learned that:

- Three-fourths of the Nation's total housing units in 1990 were connected to a public sewer operated by a government body or by a private organization. Most of the remaining homes used a septic tank or cesspool (an underground tank or pit) for sewage disposal.
- In urban areas, 92 percent of homes were connected to a public sewer, while fewer than a fourth of homes in rural areas had access to a public sewer. Instead, almost three of every four rural homes relied on a septic tank or cesspool for waste disposal.

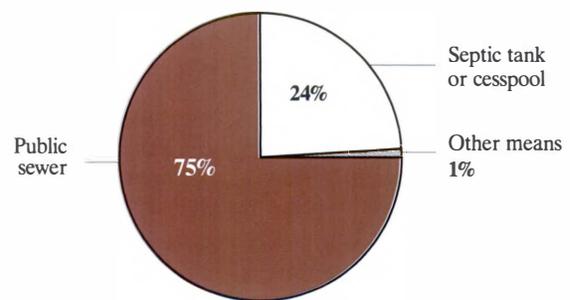


Coast to Coast

- In the Nation's capital—Washington, DC—99 percent of the households were connected to a public sewer.
- Utah led the States in public sewer reliance. There, more than 90 percent of the homes were connected to a public sewer.
- More than 50 percent of the households in Vermont used a septic tank or cesspool for sewage disposal, the highest percentage of any State.
- In Alaska, 7 out of every 100 households relied on something other than a public sewer, septic tank, or cesspool for sewage disposal. This was the highest State percentage for "other means."

Public Sewer Most Common Type of Sewage Disposal

Percent of Households, by Type of Sewage Disposal: 1990



Who Uses This Information?

Just a few examples:

- Federal, State, and local governments to identify areas eligible for housing assistance programs and rehabilitation loans
- Public health officials and others concerned about the need for water purification, treatment, or sewage facilities
- City and community officials to pinpoint areas that need special water supply and sewage disposal programs
- Governments and relief agencies to determine shelter and recovery needs for the population affected by natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, or earthquakes

Trivia Answer: Maine had the highest percentage of homes relying on individual wells for water in 1990 (39 percent). Hawaii had the lowest percentage, with only .2 percent, or 2 in every 1,000 homes using a well.

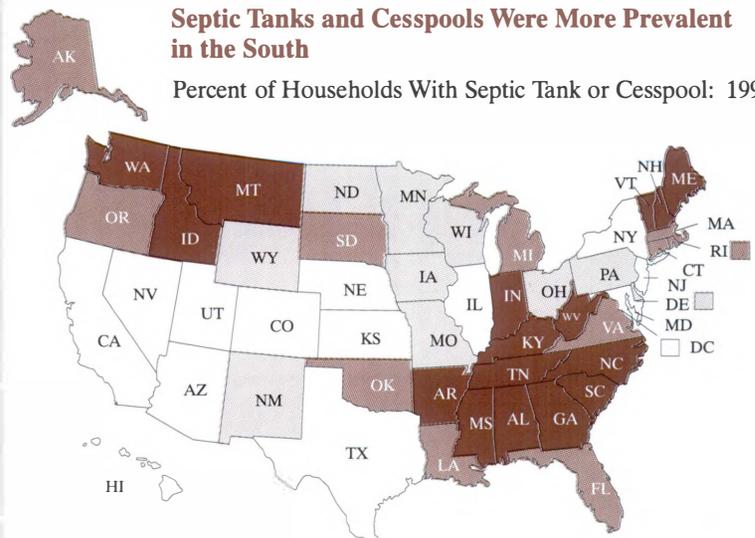
Want to Know More?

Consult the series of 1990 census reports, CH-2, *Detailed Housing Characteristics*, at a large public or university library. Also for sale by Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Call:

- Customer Services at the Census Bureau, **301-457-4100**, for ordering information about the GPO reports listed above or to order copies of CQC bulletins or other Census Bureau products
- Karen Mills or Kim Giesbrecht, **301-457-4008**, for general information on CQC bulletins
- Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, **301-763-8553**, for more information on housing data

Septic Tanks and Cesspools Were More Prevalent in the South

Percent of Households With Septic Tank or Cesspool: 1990



Issued February 1995

U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS