

SUBJECT CHARACTERISTICS

Living Quarters

Living quarters are classified as either housing units or group quarters. Usually, living quarters are in structures intended for residential use (e.g., a one-unit structure, apartment house, hotel or motel, boarding house, or mobile home or trailer). Living quarters may also be in structures intended for nonresidential use (e.g., the rooms in a warehouse where a watchman lives), as well as in places such as tents, caves, and old railroad cars. We count these as living quarters if they are occupied.

Housing units. A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants do not live and eat with any other persons in the structure and that have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall that is used or intended for use by the occupants of another unit or by the general public. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements (except as described in the section on group quarters). For vacant units, the criteria of separateness and direct access are applied to the intended occupants whenever possible. If the information cannot be obtained, the criteria are applied to the previous occupants. Both occupied and vacant housing units are included in the housing inventory, except that tents, caves, boats, railroad cars, and the like, are included only if they are occupied.

Group quarters. Group quarters are any living quarters which are not classified as housing units. Institutional group quarters are living quarters occupied by one or more persons under care or custody, such as children in an orphanage, persons in a nursing home, and prisoners in a penitentiary. Noninstitutional group quarters include living quarters such as college-owned and/or operated dormitories, fraternity and sorority houses, nurses' dormitories, and boarding house. In addition, noninstitutional group quarters include any living quarters which are occupied by 9 or more persons unrelated to the householder, or by 10 or more unrelated persons.

Hotels, motels, rooming houses, etc. Occupied rooms or suites of rooms in hotels, motels, and similar places are classified as housing units only when occupied by permanent residents; i.e., persons who consider the hotel as their usual place of residence or have no usual place of residence elsewhere. Vacant rooms or suites of rooms are classified as housing units only in those hotels, motels, and similar places in which 75 percent or more of the accommodations are occupied by permanent residents.

If any of the occupants in a rooming or boarding house live and eat separately from everyone else in the building and have direct access, their quarters are classified as separate housing units. The remaining quarters are combined. If the combined quarters contain eight or fewer roomers unrelated to the householder, they are classified as one housing unit; if the combined quarters contain nine or more roomers unrelated to the householder, or person in charge, they are classified as group quarters. In a dormitory, residence hall, or similar place, living quarters of the supervisory staff and other employees are separate housing units if they satisfy the housing unit criteria; other living quarters are considered group quarters.

Staff living quarters. Living quarters of staff personnel are separate housing units if they satisfy the housing unit criteria. Other living quarters are considered group quarters.

Year-round housing units. Year-round housing units include all units occupied by one or more persons for whom it is their usual residence and all vacant units that are intended by the owner for occupancy at any time of the year. If a unit in a resort area is intended for occupancy on a year-round basis, it is a year-round housing unit, even if vacant.

Seasonal units. Seasonal units are units that are intended by the owner to be occupied during only certain seasons of the year. They are not anyone's usual residence and include units occupied entirely by persons with a usual residence elsewhere and vacant units. A seasonal unit may be used in more than one season; for example, both in the summer for summer sports and in the winter for winter sports. Counts of seasonal units in this report also include housing units held for occupancy by migratory farm workers.

Occupied housing units. A housing unit is classified as occupied if a person or group of persons is living in it at the time of the interview or if the occupants are only temporarily absent, for example, on vacation. However, if the unit is occupied entirely by persons with a usual place of residence elsewhere, the unit is classified as vacant. By definition, the count of occupied housing units is the same as the count of households.

Race. The classification of "race" refers to the race of the householder occupying the housing unit. The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau does not denote a clear-cut scientific definition of biological stock. Race was determined on the basis of a question that asked for self-identification of a person's race. Figures on tenure are given separately for White and Black householders in table 1-1. Detailed characteristics of units with Black householders are presented in chapter 4.

Hispanic. The classification "Hispanic" refers to the origin of the householder occupying the housing unit. Detailed characteristics of housing units with Hispanic householders are presented in chapter 5. Hispanic origin was determined on the basis of a question that asked for self-identification of persons living in the unit who were Hispanic or Spanish American. Hispanic persons may be of any race.

Data on Hispanic households shown in American Housing Survey National reports are collected in the 50 States and the District of Columbia, and therefore, do not include households in Puerto Rico.

Tenure. A housing unit is owner occupied if the owner or co-owner lives in the unit, even if it is mortgaged or not fully paid for. Also, a cooperative or condominium unit is owner occupied only if the owner or co-owner lives in it. All other occupied housing units are classified as renter occupied, including housing units rented for cash rent and those occupied without payment of cash rent.

Vacant housing units. A housing unit is vacant if no one is living in it at the time of the interview, unless its occupants are only temporarily absent. In addition, a vacant housing unit may be one that is occupied entirely by persons who have a usual residence elsewhere (URE).

New housing units not yet occupied are classified as vacant housing units if construction has reached a point where all exterior windows and doors are installed and final usable floors are in place. Vacant units are excluded if unfit for human habitation; that is, if the roof, walls, windows, or doors no longer protect the interior from the elements, or if there is positive evidence (such as a sign on the house or block) that the unit is to be demolished or is condemned. Also excluded are quarters being used entirely for nonresidential purposes, such as a store, or an office; or quarters used for storing business supplies or inventory, machinery, or agricultural products.

Vacancy status. Vacant housing units are classified as either "seasonal" or "year-round." See definitions of seasonal and year-round on page A-4. Year-round vacant housing units are subdivided as follows:

For sale only. Vacant year-round units "for sale only" also include vacant units in a cooperative or condominium building if the individual units are offered for sale only.

For rent. Vacant year-round units "for rent" also include vacant units offered either for rent or for sale.

Rented or sold, not occupied. If any money rent has been paid or agreed upon, but the new renter has not moved in as of the date of the interview, or if the unit has recently been sold, but the new owner has not yet moved in, the year-round vacant unit is classified as "rented or sold, not occupied."

Held for occasional use. This category consists of vacant year-round units that are held for weekend or other occasional use throughout the year. The intent of this question is to identify homes reserved by their owners as second homes. Because of the difficulty of distinguishing between this category and seasonal vacancies, it is possible that some second homes are classified as seasonal and vice versa.

Temporarily occupied by persons with usual residence elsewhere (URE). If all the persons in a housing unit usually live elsewhere, that unit is classified as vacant, provided the usual place of residence is held for the household and is not offered for rent or for sale. For example, a beach cottage occupied at the time of the interview by a family that has a usual place of residence in the city is included in the count of vacant units. If the house in the city was in the survey sample, the house would be reported occupied and would be included in the count of occupied units since the occupants are only temporarily absent.

Held for other reasons. If a vacant year-round unit does not fall into any of the classifications specified, it is classified as "held for other reasons." For example, this category includes units held for settlement of an estate, units held for occupancy by a caretaker or janitor, and units held for personal reasons of the owner. The "other vacant" category includes all housing units held for other reasons.

Changes in the Housing Inventory

Housing units added by new construction. Housing units built in the 4 years prior to the date of the interview are classified as new construction.

Housing units removed from the inventory. In chapter 6, characteristics are presented for all year-round housing units that existed at the time of the last survey (1988 or 1989) but were removed from the inventory by 1993.

Removals can be permanent or retrievable. An example of a permanent removal would be a house that was completely destroyed in a fire or flood. An example of a retrievable removal would be a house occupied in the last survey, condemned as of 1993, but with the potential to be remodeled and occupied at a later date.

To be counted as a unit removed from the inventory, the housing unit had to be a regular occupancy, a year-round URE, or a year-round vacant in last survey; and be classified in one of the following categories in 1993:

1. Units removed through demolition or disaster. A year-round housing unit that existed in the last survey and was torn down on the initiative of a public agency or as a result of action on the part of the owner by 1993 is

classified as a unit removed through demolition. Units destroyed by fire, flood, or other natural causes are classified as units removed through disaster.

2. Housing units removed by a change to group quarters. For example, a housing unit that was occupied by a family in the last survey and occupied by nine or more persons not related to the person in charge at the time of the 1993 survey.
3. Housing units removed from the inventory because they are vacant and either the roof, walls, doors, or windows no longer protect the interior from the elements or the unit is severely damaged by fire.
4. Vacant units removed from the inventory because there is positive evidence (sign notice, mark on the house or block) that the units are scheduled for demolition or rehabilitation or that they are condemned for reasons of health or safety so that further occupancy is prohibited.
5. Housing units removed by changes to entirely nonresidential use.
6. Housing units removed either by conversion of the 1988 or 1989 unit into two or more 1993 units or by merger of the 1988 or 1989 unit with one or more other 1988 or 1989 units to form a new 1993 unit. Conversions do not result in net removals to the inventory because two or more units are created out of the original 1988 or 1989 unit. Likewise, the total net removals from mergers do not equal the total number of mergers, as 1993 units that did not exist in 1988 or 1989 are created as a result of the merger.
7. Housing units removed from the site since the 1988 or 1989 survey. Such moves do not necessarily result in a net removal to the total inventory since in many cases the units are added in the place to which they were moved.

Moved in the Past Year

Recent movers. Data are shown for householders who moved into the present unit during the 12 months prior to the interview.

Utilization Characteristics

Persons. All persons occupying the housing unit are counted. These persons include not only occupants related to the householder but also any lodgers, roomers, boarders, partners, wards, foster children, and resident employees who share the living quarters of the householder. The data on persons show categories of the number of one person through seven-or-more-person households. The median for persons is rounded to the nearest tenth.

A person is counted at the usual place of residence for that person. This refers to the place where the person lives and sleeps most of the time. This place is not necessarily the same as a legal residence, voting residence, or domicile.

Rooms. The statistics on rooms are for the number of housing units with a specified number of rooms. Rooms counted include whole rooms used for living purposes, such as bedrooms, living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, recreation rooms, permanently enclosed porches that are suitable for year-round use, lodgers' rooms, and other finished and unfinished rooms. Also included are rooms used for offices by a person living in the unit. The median for rooms is rounded to the nearest tenth.

A dining room, to be counted, must be a separate room. It must be separated from adjoining rooms by built-in floor-to-ceiling walls extending at least a few inches from the intersecting walls. Movable or collapsible partitions or partitions consisting solely of shelves or cabinets are not considered built-in-walls. Bathrooms are not counted as rooms.

Persons per room. Persons per room is computed for each occupied housing unit by dividing the number of persons in the unit by the number of rooms in the unit. The figures shown refer, therefore, to the number of housing units having the specified ratio of persons per room.

Bedrooms. The number of bedrooms in the housing unit is the count of rooms used mainly for sleeping, even if also used for other purposes. Rooms reserved for sleeping, such as guest rooms, even though used infrequently, are counted as bedrooms. On the other hand, rooms used mainly for other purposes, even though used also for sleeping, such as a living room with a hideaway bed, are not considered bedrooms. A housing unit consisting of only one room, such as a one-room efficiency apartment, is classified by definition as having no bedroom.

Structural Characteristics

New construction. Housing units built in the 4 years prior to the date of the interview are classified as new construction.

Year structure built. Year structure built refers to when the building was first constructed, not when it was remodeled, added to, or converted. The figures refer to the number of housing units in structures built during the specified periods and in existence at the time of the interview. For mobile homes and trailers, the manufacturer's model year was assumed to be the year built. Median year built is rounded to the nearest year.

Units in structure. In determining the number of housing units in a structure, all units, both occupied and vacant, were counted. The statistics are presented for the number of housing units in structures of specified type and size, not for the number of residential structures.

A structure is a separate building if it has either open space on all sides or is separated from other structures by dividing walls that extend from ground to roof. Structures containing only one housing unit are further classified as detached or attached.

A one-unit structure is detached if it has open space on all four sides even though it has an adjoining shed or garage. A one-unit structure is attached if it has one or more walls extending from ground to roof that divide it from other adjoining structures and does not share a furnace or boiler with adjoining structures such as in rowhouses, townhouses, etc.

Mobile homes and trailers are shown as a separate category. When one or more rooms have been added to a mobile home or trailer, it is classified as a mobile home. Prior to the 1984 AHS reports, these units were classified as a house, apartment, or flat.

External building conditions. The statistics presented are restricted to units in structures containing two or more units in the National sample but are not restricted in the metropolitan sample. The external condition of the building that contains the sample unit was determined by interviewer observation, as visible from the front of the building or the roadway. The categories were grouped into the following: roof, walls, windows, and foundation.

Roof. A "sagging roof" is a critical defect indicating continuous neglect, or deep or serious damage to the structure. Only roofs with substantial sagging were included. "Missing roofing material" includes rotted, broken, loose, or missing shingles, tiles, slate, shake, tin, etc., caused by extensive damage from fire, storm, or serious neglect. "Hole in roof" occurs when the missing roof materials expose the interior of the unit directly to the elements. Holes caused by construction activity were not counted unless the construction had been abandoned. "Could not see roof" occurs when possible situations like a high tree, evening interviews, or a flat roof prevent the roof from being visible.

Walls. "Missing bricks, siding, other outside wall material" applies to the exterior walls (including chimney) of the structure. Those defects may have been caused by storm, fire, flood, extensive neglect, vandalism, and so forth. Materials may include clapboard siding, shingles, boards, brick, concrete stucco, etc. The missing materials do not necessarily expose the interior of the unit openly to the elements. Missing materials resulting from construction activity were not counted unless construction had been abandoned. "Sloping outside walls" are a critical defect indicating continuous neglect or serious damage to the structure. Only walls with substantial sagging were included.

Windows. "Boarded-up windows" have been sealed off to protect against weather or entry and include windows and/or doors covered by board, brick, metal, or some other

material. "Broken windows" indicate several broken or missing window panes. "Bars on windows" are to protect against unlawful entry. The condition of the windows has no bearing on this item. The bars can be vertical, horizontal, a metal grating, etc. Windows completely covered with metal sheeting are not included in this category.

Foundation crumbling or has open crack or hole. This category includes large cracks, holes, and rotted, loose, or missing foundation material.

Could not see foundation. This occurs when landscaping, night interviewing, or some other reason prevents visibility for observation.

Plumbing Characteristics

Complete bathrooms. A housing unit is classified as having a complete bathroom if it has a room with a flush toilet, bathtub or shower, a sink, and hot and cold piped water. All facilities must be in the same room to be a complete bathroom. A half bathroom has either a flush toilet or a bathtub or shower but does not have all the facilities for a complete bathroom.

Water supply stoppage. Water supply stoppage means that the housing unit was completely without running water from its regular source. Completely without running water means that the water system servicing the unit supplied no water at all, that is, no equipment or facility using running water (in kitchen and bathroom sinks, shower, in bathtub, flush toilet, dishwasher, and other similar items) had water supplied to it, or all were inoperable. The reason could vary from a stoppage because of a flood or storm, to a broken pipe, to a shutdown of the water system, to a failure to pay the bill, or other reasons.

Data on water supply stoppage are shown if the stoppage occurred in the 3 months prior to the interview or while the household was living in the unit if less than 3 months, and if the breakdown or failure lasted 6 consecutive hours or more. Housing units with water supply stoppage are also classified according to the number of times the stoppages occurred.

Sewage disposal and sewage disposal breakdowns. A public sewer is connected to a city, county, sanitary district, neighborhood, or subdivision sewer system. Included are only systems operated by a government body or private organization sewage treatment system serving six or more units. Small sewage treatment plants, which in some localities are called neighborhood septic tanks, are classified as public sewers. A septic tank or cesspool is an underground tank or pit used for disposal of sewage (serving five or fewer units). A chemical toilet, which may be inside or outside the unit, uses chemicals to break down or dissolve sewage. Housing units for which sewage is disposed of in some other way are included in the "other" category.

The data on breakdowns in the means of sewage disposal are limited to housing units in which the means of sewage disposal was a public sewer, septic tank, or cesspool. Breakdowns refer to situations in which the system was completely unusable. Examples include septic tank being pumped because it no longer perked, tank collapsed, tank exploded, sewer main broken, sewer treatment plant not operating as a result of electrical failure or water service interruption, etc.

Data on breakdowns are shown if they occurred in the 3 months prior to the interview or while the household was living in the unit if less than 3 months, and if the breakdown lasted 6 consecutive hours or more. Housing units with a breakdown in sewage disposal are also classified according to the number of breakdowns.

Flush toilet and flush toilet breakdowns. A privy or chemical toilet is not considered a flush toilet. Flush toilets outside the unit were not counted. The statistics on breakdowns of flush toilet are shown for housing units with at least one flush toilet for the household's use only. The flush toilet may be completely unusable because of a faulty flushing mechanism, broken pipes, stopped up soil pipe, lack of water supplied to the flush toilet, or some other reason.

Data on breakdowns are classified by whether any of the flush toilets were working in the 3 months prior to the interview, or while the household was living in the unit if less than 3 months, and the number of times the breakdown lasted 6 hours or more.

Equipment and Fuels

Heating equipment and heating equipment breakdowns.

Data are shown for the main heating equipment and other heating equipment used in addition to the main heating equipment. More than one category of "other heating equipment" could be reported for the same household.

Only one type of equipment was reported as the "main heating equipment." Warm-air furnace refers to a central system that provides warm air through ducts leading to various rooms. Steam or hot-water system refers to a central heating system in which heat from steam or hot water is delivered through radiators or other outlets. It also includes solar-heated hot water that is circulated throughout the home. An electric heat pump refers to a heating-cooling system that utilizes indoor and outdoor coils, a compressor, and a refrigerant to pump in heat during the winter and pump out heat during the summer. Only heat pumps that are centrally installed with ducts to the rooms are included in this category. Built-in electric units refers to units permanently installed in floors, walls, ceilings, or baseboards. A floor, wall, or other built-in hot-air unit without ducts delivers warm air to the room right above the furnace or to the room(s) on one or both sides of the wall in which the furnace is installed. Room heaters with flue

include nonportable room heaters in the wall or free-standing heaters that burn liquid fuel and that are connected to a flue, vent, or chimney to remove smoke and fumes. Room heaters without flue include any room heater that burns gas, oil, or kerosene, which does not connect to a flue, vent, or chimney. Portable electric heaters include heaters that receive current from an electrical wall outlet. Stoves refer to ranges, stoves, or Franklin stoves that burn wood, coal, or other solid fuel. Fireplaces with inserts have a fan-forced air circulation system to force the heat into the room. A fireplace without inserts or with only glass doors, fire screens, or firebacks inserted in the back of the fireplace to passively reflect heat is included in the category "fireplace without inserts."

For breakdowns of heating equipment, statistics are shown for housing units occupied by the householder during the winter prior to the interview. The data are classified by whether the housing unit was uncomfortably cold for 24 hours or more, the number of times equipment breakdowns occurred lasting 6 hours or more, and causes for the breakdowns.

The heating equipment is broken down if it is not providing heat at its normal heating capacity through some fault in the equipment. Utility interruptions occur when there is a cut off in the gas, electricity, other fuel supplying the heat. Inadequate heating capacity refers to heating equipment that is providing heat at its normal capacity but the housing unit is still too cold for the occupants. Inadequate insulation refers to air drafts through window frames, electrical outlets, or walls that are cold.

Air conditioning. Air conditioning is defined as the cooling of air by a refrigeration unit; excluded are evaporative coolers, fans, or blowers that are not connected to a refrigeration unit. A room air-conditioning unit is an individual air conditioner that is installed in a window or an outside wall and generally intended to cool one room, although it may sometimes be used to cool several rooms. A central system is a central installation that air conditions the entire housing unit. In an apartment building, a central system may cool all apartments in the building; each apartment may have its own central system; or there may be several systems, each providing central air conditioning for a group of apartments. A central installation with individual room controls is a central air-conditioning system.

Fuels. Electricity is generally supplied by means of above or underground electric power lines. Piped gas is gas piped through underground pipes from a central system to serve the neighborhood. Bottled gas is pressurized gas stored in tanks or bottles that are filled or exchanged when empty. Fuel oil is heating oil normally supplied by truck to a storage tank for use by the heating system. Kerosene or other liquid fuel includes kerosene, gasoline, alcohol, and other similar combustible liquids. Coal or coke refers to coal or any coal derivative usually delivered by means of truck. Wood refers to the use of wood or wood charcoal,

etc., as a fuel. Solar energy refers to the use of energy available from sunlight as a heating fuel source. Other includes briquettes made of pitch and sawdust, coal dust, waste material like corncobs, purchased steam, or any other fuel not listed.

Housing and Neighborhood Quality

Selected amenities:

Porch, deck, balcony, or patio. The porch, deck, balcony, or patio must be attached to the sample unit, not just to the building or free standing. Porches may be enclosed or open.

Telephone available. A housing unit is classified as having a telephone if there is a telephone for receiving calls available to the occupants of the unit. The telephone may be located outside or inside the housing unit, and one telephone may serve the occupants of several units. The number of housing units with a telephone available, therefore, does not indicate the number of telephones installed in homes.

Usable fireplace. Excludes the following: fireplaces that have been blocked off or whose chimney or flue have been filled, decorative or artificial fireplaces, and Franklin stoves. Free-standing fireplaces are included in this item.

Separate dining room. A separate dining room is an area separated from adjoining rooms by a built-in floor-to-ceiling wall extending at least a few inches from its intersecting wall. Built-in walls do not include movable or collapsible partitions or partitions consisting solely of shelves and cabinets.

Living rooms, recreation rooms, etc. Includes family rooms, dens, recreation rooms and/or libraries.

Garage or carport. The garage or carport must be on the same property but does not have to be attached to the house. Off street parking is considered driveway or parking lot privileges that is paid for as part of the rent.

Selected deficiencies:

Signs of rats. The statistics on signs of rats refer to respondents who reported seeing rats or signs of rats inside the house or building during the last 3 months or while the household was living in the unit if less than 3 months. Signs of rats include droppings, holes in the wall, or ripped or torn food containers.

Holes in floors. Data are shown on whether there are holes in the interior floors of a housing unit. The holes do not have to go all the way through to a lower floor or to the exterior of the unit. The holes must be large enough to cause someone to trip.

Open cracks or holes (interior). Statistics are presented on whether or not there are open cracks or holes in the interior walls or ceilings of the housing unit. Included are cracks or holes that do not go all the way through to the next room or to the exterior of the housing unit. Hairline cracks or cracks that appear in the walls or ceilings but are not large enough to insert the edge of a dime and very small holes caused by nails or other similar objects are not considered to be open cracks or holes.

Broken plaster or peeling paint (interior). The area of peeling paint or broken plaster must be on the inside walls or ceilings and at least one area of broken plaster or peeling paint must be larger than 8 inches by 11 inches.

Electric wiring. A housing unit is classified as having exposed electric wiring if the unit has any wiring that is not enclosed, either in the walls or in metal coverings, or if the unit has any wiring outside the walls enclosed in some material other than metal. Excluded from the tabulation are appliance cords, extension cords, chandelier cords, and telephone, antenna, or cable TV wires.

Electric wall outlets. A housing unit is classified as having rooms without electric wall outlets if there is not at least one working electric wall outlet in each room of the unit. A working electric wall outlet is one that is in operating condition; i.e., can be used when needed. If a room does not have an electric wall outlet, an extension cord used in place of a wall outlet is not considered to be an electric wall outlet.

Severe physical problems. A unit has severe physical problems if it has any of the following five problems:

Plumbing. Lacking hot or cold piped water or a flush toilet, or lacking both bathtub and shower, all inside the structure for the exclusive use of the unit.

Heating. Having been uncomfortably cold last winter for 24 hours or more because the heating equipment broke down, and it broke down at least three times last winter for at least 6 hours each time.

Electric. Having no electricity, or all of the following three electric problems: exposed wiring; a room with no working wall outlet; and three blown fuses or tripped circuit breakers in the last 90 days.

Upkeep. Having any five of the following six maintenance problems: water leaks from the outside, such as from the roof, basement, windows, or doors; leaks from inside structure such as pipes or plumbing fixtures; holes in the floors; holes or open cracks in the walls or ceilings; more than 8 inches by 11 inches of peeling paint or broken plaster; or signs of rats or mice in the last 90 days.

Hallways. Having all of the following four problems in public areas: no working light fixtures; loose or missing steps; loose or missing railings; and no elevator.

Moderate physical problems. A unit has moderate physical problems if it has any of the following five problems, but none of the severe problems.

Plumbing. On at least three occasions during the last 3 months or while the household was living in the unit if less than 3 months, all the flush toilets were broken down at the same time for 6 hours or more.

Heating. Having unvented gas, oil, or kerosene heaters as the primary heating equipment.

Upkeep. Having any three or four of the overall list of six upkeep problems mentioned above under severe physical problems.

Hallways. Having any three of the four hallway problems mentioned above under severe physical problems.

Kitchen. Lacking a kitchen sink, refrigerator, or burners inside the structure for the exclusive use of the unit.

Overall opinion of structure. The data presented are based on the respondent's overall opinion of the house or apartment as a place to live. The respondent was asked to rate the structure based on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is the best and 1 is the worst.

Overall opinion of neighborhood. The data presented are based on the respondent's overall opinion of the neighborhood. The respondent defines neighborhood. The respondent was asked to rate the neighborhood based on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 is the best and 1 is the worst.

Neighborhood conditions. The statistics presented in table 3 are based on the respondent's opinion and attitude toward the neighborhood. The respondent defines neighborhood. The respondent was asked a two-part question: (1) If anything about the neighborhood bothered the respondent and (2) if so, what? The interviewer coded the responses into the following categories: crime; noise; traffic; litter or housing deterioration; poor city/county services; undesirable commercial, institutional, or industrial property; people; and other. Multiple responses were allowed. The respondent may not have the same opinion as a neighbor about neighborhood conditions. The respondent's opinion may or may not reflect the actual neighborhood situation.

Neighborhood conditions and neighborhood services. The statistics presented in table 4, as a percent of the total occupied units, are based on the respondent's opinion and attitude toward the neighborhood in which he/she lives. Thus, the respondent's answer may or may not reflect the

actual description of the neighborhood. Furthermore, the respondent may not have the same opinion as a neighbor about the neighborhood services; for example, the respondent may feel that the street lighting or neighborhood shopping facilities are inadequate while a neighbor may not.

Neighborhood conditions and wish to move. Data on neighborhood conditions and wish to move in table 4 are based on the respondent's answers to a three-part question concerning specific neighborhood conditions. The respondent was asked (1) if the condition was present, (2) if the condition was bothersome, and (3) if the condition was so objectionable that the respondent would like to move from the neighborhood.

1. Street noise or traffic—Street noise refers to noise made by children playing outdoors, noise from a factory or business, or any other sounds that the respondent considers street noise. Traffic refers to the amount of vehicular traffic that respondents consider "heavy."
2. Neighborhood crime—This category refers to all forms of street and neighborhood crime such as petty theft, assaults against the person, burglary, etc., or any related activities that the respondent judges to be a crime.

Neighborhood services. Data on neighborhood services are based on the respondent's answer to a series of questions concerning neighborhood services.

The respondent was also asked a three-part question on public transportation: (1) if service is available, (2) if service is satisfactory, and (3) if any member of the household used the service at least once a week.

Data were also collected on satisfaction with neighborhood shopping such as grocery stores and drug stores, and whether or not these stores are located within 1 mile of the neighborhood.

Respondents were asked a three-part question on public elementary schools: (1) if children within the household attended public elementary school or private elementary school, (2) if the public elementary school is satisfactory, and (3) if the public elementary school is within 1 mile of the neighborhood.

Age of other residential buildings within 300 feet. The statistics presented are restricted to multiunits in the National sample but are not restricted in the metropolitan sample. The statistics presented are based on the interviewer's personal observation. "About the same" indicates all homes within 300 feet appear to have been built at about the same time as the sample unit. If the sample unit was built after 1940, residences built more than 10 years before or after the sample unit are considered as not being built at about the same time. "Older than sample unit" and "newer than sample unit" indicate that the sample unit appears to be

decidedly newer or older than the homes within 300 feet. "Very mixed" indicates the predominant ages appear to be very mixed, and if there are no other residential buildings within 300 feet, "no other residential buildings" is marked.

Other buildings vandalized or with interior exposed.

The statistics presented are restricted to multiunits in the National sample but are not restricted in the metropolitan sample. The statistics presented are based on the interviewer's personal observation. A unit is considered to be vandalized if it has most of the visible windows broken, doors pulled off, been badly burned, words or symbols printed on it, portions of the roof missing or gone, or in some other way has the interior exposed to the elements.

Bars on windows of buildings. The statistics presented are restricted to multiunits in the National sample but are not restricted in the metropolitan sample. The statistics presented are based on the interviewer's personal observation. The condition of the windows has no bearing on this item. The windows might be in perfect condition but the bars might be there to protect against vandalism. Windows that are boarded up or covered with tin are not included.

Condition of streets. The statistics presented are restricted to multiunits in the National sample but are not restricted in the metropolitan sample. The statistics presented are based on the interviewer's personal observation. Major repairs include large potholes, badly crumbling or deteriorating shoulders and roadsides, deep ruts, etc. Minor repairs include small cracks, shallow holes, or missing minor surfacing.

Trash, litter, or junk on streets or any properties. The statistics presented are restricted to multiunits in the National sample but are not restricted in the metropolitan sample. The statistics presented are based on the interviewer's personal observations. Major accumulation includes tires, appliances or large amounts of trash accumulated over a period of time. Minor accumulation includes small amounts of paper, cans, or bottles but that do not give the impression of long neglect. The building in which the sample unit is located is included.

Financial Characteristics

All of the financial characteristics shown in this report are shown for all renters and/or all owners. In 1983 and earlier, the Annual Housing Survey reported characteristics such as value and rent for specified owners and specified renters only. Specified owners are single-family owner-occupied units on less than 10 acres with no business or medical office. Specified renters exclude single-family units on 10 acres or more. This report does not present financial characteristics for specified owners and specified renters. For data on specified owners and renters see the individual metropolitan AHS reports (series H170).

Value. Value is the respondent's estimate of how much the property (house and lot) would sell for if it were for sale. Any nonresidential portions of the property are excluded from the cost. Medians for value are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Income. The statistics on income in the American Housing Survey are based on the respondent's reply to questions on income for the 12 months prior to the interview and are the sum of the amounts reported for wage and salary income, self-employment income, interest or dividends, Social Security or railroad retirement income, public assistance or welfare payments, alimony or child support, and all other money income. The figure represents the amount of income received before deductions for personal income taxes, Social Security, union dues, bond purchases, health insurance premiums, Medicare deductions, etc. Medians for income are rounded to the nearest hundred dollars.

Receipts from the following sources were not included as income: Value of income "in kind," such as free living quarters, housing subsidies, food stamps, or food produced and consumed in the home; money received from the sale of property (unless the recipient was engaged in the business of selling such property); money borrowed; tax refund; withdrawal of bank deposits; accrued interest on uncashed savings bonds; exchange of money between relatives living in the same household; gifts of money; and lump-sum payments from inheritances, insurance policies, estates, trusts, gifts, etc.

The income statistics and the characteristics of the household refer to different periods in time. The income data refer to the 12 months prior to the interview, whereas, the household characteristics refer to the date of interview. Thus, family or household income does not include amounts received by persons who were members of the family during all or part of the income period if these persons no longer resided with the family at the time of the interview. On the other hand, family or household income includes income reported by persons who did not reside with the household during the income period but who were members at the time of the interview. For most households, however, the income reported was received by persons who were members of the household throughout the income period.

There may be significant differences in the income data between the American Housing Survey and other Census Bureau surveys and censuses. For example, the time period for the income data in the American Housing Survey refers to the 12 months prior to the interview while other income data generally refer to the calendar year prior to the date of the interview. Additional differences in the income data may be attributed to factors such as the various ways income questions are asked, the sampling variability and nonsampling errors between the American Housing Survey and other Bureau surveys and censuses, survey procedures and techniques, and processing procedures.

Current income. Two new questions were added to the American Housing Survey in 1990. Upon completion of the detailed income questions, respondents were asked, "Is your total family income THIS MONTH about the same as it was a year ago?" "About the same" was defined within 10 percent or just cost of living adjustments. If the respondent answered "no," a second question was asked, "What do you expect your total family income to be in the NEXT 12 MONTHS?" Current income for households whose most recent month's income was NOT about the same as a year ago is the "total expected family income in the NEXT 12 MONTHS." Current income for households whose most recent month's income WAS about the same as a year ago is "family and primary individual income." For the majority of households, current income equals income of families and primary individuals. Data on current income is not published separately. It is used in the calculation of "Monthly housing costs as percent of current income." It is felt that respondents who have only recently entered the job market and those who changed jobs during the past year often report a previous year's income, which is too low to accurately reflect their current financial situation as it relates to the value of their home and their housing costs.

Poverty status. The poverty data in this report differs from official poverty estimates in two important respects. The first important difference is the use of a poverty definition that is based on household income in place of the official method that is based on the income of the family or the unrelated individual. Under the official approach, the poverty status of two unrelated individuals living together would be determined by comparing the income of each individual to the poverty threshold for an unrelated individual. The result might be that both were in poverty, both were out of poverty, or one was in poverty and one was not. Under the approach used in this report, the two unrelated individuals were treated as members of a two-person family and their poverty status was determined by comparing their combined income to the poverty threshold for a two-person family. The effect of using a poverty concept that is based on household income is to undercount the number of persons in poverty relative to the official estimate. A study based on the March 1975 Current Population Survey found that poverty estimates based on a household income concept were about 6 percent lower than official estimates. For more information, see Technical Paper X, *Effect of Using a Poverty Definition Based on Household Income*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1976. A second important difference between the poverty estimates in this report and the official poverty estimates has to do with the method used to measure income. The official annual poverty estimates are based on data collected in the March supplement to the Current Population Survey. The income questions asked in that survey are very detailed and measure the amount of income received during the previous calendar year. The income questions asked in the AHS are much less detailed

and measure the amount received during the previous 12 months. Because interviews were conducted throughout the year, the income measures do not pertain to a fixed period. Many of the income questions in the AHS were asked on a household rather than an individual income basis. The lack of data for individuals made it necessary to adopt a poverty definition based on household income.

Officially, families and unrelated individuals are classified as being above or below the poverty level using the poverty index originated at the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised by the Federal Interagency Committees in 1969 and 1980. The poverty index is based solely on money income and does not reflect the fact that many low-income persons receive noncash benefits such as food stamps, Medicaid, and public housing. The index is based on the Department of Agriculture's 1961 Economy Food Plan and reflects the different consumption requirements of families based on their size and composition. The poverty thresholds are updated every year to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). For further details, see Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 185, *Poverty in the United States: 1992*.

Monthly housing costs. The data are presented for owner- and renter-occupied housing units. Monthly housing costs for owner-occupied units is the sum of monthly payments for all mortgages or installment loans or contracts, real estate taxes (including taxes on mobile homes or trailer sites if the site is owned), property insurance, homeowners association fee, cooperative or condominium fee, mobile home park fee, land rent, utilities (electricity, gas, water, and sewage disposal), fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.), and garbage and trash collection. As of 1989, data on the costs of electricity and gas are collected differently (see "Monthly costs of electricity and gas" definition). Because of this, "Monthly housing costs" in 1989 and beyond may not be entirely comparable with data published in previous years. Monthly housing costs are not computed for households with a mortgage or similar debt that failed to report the amount of their loan or contract payment.

For renter-occupied housing units, monthly housing costs include the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, water, and sewage disposal), and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.); property insurance, mobile home land rent, and garbage and trash collection if these items are paid for by the renter (or paid for by someone else, such as a relative, welfare agency, or friend) in addition to rent. Renter housing units occupied without payment of cash rent are shown separately as no cash rent. Monthly housing costs for vacant-for-rent housing units include rent asked. For rental units subsidized by a public housing authority, the Federal government, or State or local governments, the monthly rental costs reflect only the portion paid by the household and not the portion subsidized. Before 1991, the monthly rental costs may have included the amount subsidized for many subsidized units.

Monthly housing costs are shown for all renters and all owners. In 1983 and earlier, the Annual Housing Survey published selected monthly housing costs and gross rent for specified owners and specified renters only. This report does not present data for specified owners or renters. Medians for monthly housing costs are rounded to the nearest dollar.

Median monthly housing costs for owners. Two additional medians are shown separately for owner-occupied units. The first median includes maintenance costs in addition to those items included in "Monthly housing costs" (see above item). The second excludes second and subsequent mortgages, installment loans or contracts, and maintenance costs, but includes all remaining items listed in "Monthly housing costs."

Monthly housing costs as percent of current income. The yearly housing costs (monthly housing costs multiplied by 12) are expressed as a percentage of total current income (see definition of current income). This percentage is calculated for the same owner- and renter-occupied housing units for which "Monthly housing costs" were computed (for exclusions, see "Monthly housing costs"). The percentage was computed separately for each unit and rounded to the nearest percent. The measure was not computed for units where occupants reported no income or a net loss. Before 1990, the item "Monthly housing costs as percent of income," was computed by using the income of family and primary individuals only. It was felt that respondents who only recently entered the job market or who changed jobs during the past year often reported a previous year's income, which was too low to accurately reflect their current situation. In addition to a change in the source of income used in calculations, the 1990 item uses new procedures to estimate the costs of electricity and gas (see "Monthly costs of electricity and gas" definition). As a result of these two changes, data for "Monthly housing costs as a percent of current income" published as of 1990 are not comparable to "Monthly housing costs as a percent of income" published in previous surveys.

Monthly costs for electricity and gas. Beginning in 1993, the procedures introduced in 1989 were improved and expanded from two to three procedures. All respondents were asked if they had records available showing their costs for electricity (or gas) separate from other utilities. If they responded "yes," they were asked the amount of their electricity (or gas) bill for the most recent months of January, April, August, and December. These months were the best predictors of annual costs. Depending on the number of months for which data were provided, one of two procedures was used. If the respondents answered "no" to the original question (that is, they did not have separate records for the electricity or gas), a third procedure was used. On average, more than one-third of the respondents provided answers for at least 1 of the 4 months.

If the respondent provided data for only 1 month, the first procedure was used. The data for the month were adjusted using regression formulas to estimate yearly costs which were then divided by 12. These formulas were modeled after the results of the Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS) sponsored by the United States Department of Energy. These formulas took into account the following characteristics of the unit: electric home heating, natural gas home heating, electric water heating, natural gas water heating, year built, type of unit, number of rooms, number of bathrooms, number of appliances, and number of household members.

The second procedure was applied if the respondent provided data for 2, 3, or 4 months. As with the first procedure, the monthly data were adjusted using regression formulas, modeled after the results of RECS, to estimate yearly costs which were then divided by 12. Because more than 1 month's worth of real costs were available, it was not necessary to take into account detail characteristics of the unit as was done in the first procedure.

If the respondent answered "no" that he or she did not have separate records for the electricity (or gas), the third procedure was used. The respondent was asked to provide an estimate of the average monthly costs. A factor was then applied that, in effect, lowered these costs to make them consistent with electricity and gas costs in RECS.

Before 1989, respondents were only asked to provide an estimate of average monthly costs. Research done using the 1993 AHS National Survey has shown that this approach produces 0 to 10 percent overestimates of electricity costs and 15 to 25 percent overestimates of gas costs. New procedures introduced in 1989 produced lower and more accurate estimates. In 1993, these new procedures were improved and expanded from two to three procedures.

Rent reductions. Rent control means that an increase in rent is regulated by law. The jurisdiction, State or local, mandates that percentage rent increases are set and must be approved by a board, agency, department, division, office, etc.

A housing unit is classified as being in a public housing project if the structure in which the unit is located is owned by any local or State government agency, such as a housing and redevelopment authority or a housing development agency, and operated as public housing. These organizations may receive subsidies from the Federal or State government, but the local agency owns the property.

A housing unit is classified as being subsidized if under certain programs the respondent pays a lower rent because a Federal, State, or local government program pays part of the cost of construction, building mortgage, or operating expenses. These programs include (1) the rental assistance program where part of the rent for low-income families occupying the rental housing units is paid by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), (2) the FHA interest subsidy programs for rental, and

cooperative housing for low-income families, (3) the rent supplement program where part of the rent for low-income families occupying certain types of HUD-assisted rental housing projects is paid by the FHA, and (4) the direct loan program of HUD for housing the elderly. Units requiring income verification are subsidized units.

Household Characteristics

Household. A household consists of all the persons who occupy a housing unit. By definition, the count of households is the same as the count of occupied housing units.

Householder. The householder is the first household member 18 years old and over who is the owner or renter of the sample unit. If no household member occupying the sample unit owns or rents the unit, the householder is the first household member listed who is 18 years old or older. In cases where no household member listed owns or rents the unit or is 18 years or older, the first household member listed is the householder.

Family Type

Family. Family refers to the householder and all (one or more) other persons living in the same household who may be related to the householder by blood, marriage, or adoption. Married couples related to the householder of a family are included in the family and are not considered as separate families unless they reside in separate living quarters.

Married couple. Each household in this group consists of the householder and spouse, and one or more other persons if any.

Male householder, no wife present. This category includes families with male householders who are married, but with wife absent because of separation or other reason where husband and wife maintain separate residences; and male householders who are widowed, divorced, or single.

Female householder, no husband present. This category includes families with female householders who are married, but with husband absent because of separation or other reason where husband and wife maintain separate residences; and female householders who are widowed, divorced, or single.

Nonfamily households. Housing units where the householder lives alone or with nonrelatives only. A lodger, servant, or other person unrelated to the householder is considered a member of the household but not of the family.

Age of householder. The age classification refers to the age reported for the householder as of that person's last birthday.

Elderly. Data for elderly include all households with a householder of 65 years of age or over.

Own never-married children under 18 years old. Statistics on presence of own children of householders are shown in this report. A child under 18 years old is defined as an own child if he or she is a single (never married) son, daughter, stepchild, or adopted child of a householder. Own children of subfamilies are excluded from the total count of own children.