

2012 Commodity Flow Survey

INSTRUCTION GUIDE

Instructions for Completing the Commodity Flow Survey
Please read all instructions.

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To complete the Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) online, visit **econhelp.census.gov/cfs**. See the front page of the questionnaire for log-in information. Instructions, as well as other useful tools, can be found on the website. If you need to contact us by telephone, a representative will be glad to assist you. Call us at **1-800-772-7851**, option "3," between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern time.

NOTICE: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 2 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: Paperwork Project 0607-0932, U.S. Census Bureau, 4600 Silver Hill Road, AMSD – 3K138, Washington, DC 20233-1500. You may e-mail comments to Paperwork@census.gov; use "Paperwork Project 0607-0932" as the subject. Respondents are not required to respond to any information collection unless it displays a valid approval number in the top right corner on the front of the questionnaire.

Part I — Instructions for Completing Your Questionnaire

When entering numerical digits, illustrate as follows:



- Use blue or black ballpoint pen.
- Do not use pencil or felt-tip pen.
- Do not put slashes through 0 or 7.

Item A – Verification of Shipping Address

Verify that the address listed at the top of the form is the correct address from where your shipments originate. If the shipping address is correct mark the “Yes” box. If the shipping address is incorrect mark the “No” box, and make the corrections directly to the pre-printed name and address at the top of the form. Shipping address is defined as the location from where shipments originate.

Item B – Verification of Mailing Address

Mark an (X) in the box that correctly identifies the mailing address. If the shipping location can receive mail and has access to the information asked, then mark the appropriate box and skip to Item C.

Otherwise, if you prefer the future CFS questionnaires to be sent elsewhere, as in a headquarters or office building that reports for the physical shipping location, mark the appropriate box and use the space provided in B(2) to enter the preferred mailing address.

Item C – Operating Status

Mark an (X) in the box that best describes this establishment’s operating status during the designated reporting week.

If this establishment was inactive and made no outbound shipments during the designated reporting week then mark an (X) in the appropriate box, skip to the end of the questionnaire, complete the Contact information, and then return the form to the Census Bureau in the envelope provided.

Item D(1) – Total Number of Outbound Shipments

In the space provided enter the total number of outbound shipments **for the one week reporting period** printed in Item D(1).

What we mean by a "shipment"

An outbound shipment is a movement of commodities from your establishment to another single location, in one trip. Single shipments may have multiple pieces, and go by multiple vehicles, such as unit trains or truck convoys, but only one destination. A full, or partial, truckload should be counted as a single shipment only if all the commodities on the truck are destined for one location. On the other hand, commodities sent from your establishment on a vehicle with multiple destinations constitute multiple shipments. Each location on the route to which your commodities are delivered is considered one shipment.

"Commodities" refer to items that the establishment at this location produces, sells, or distributes. Waste-products (without value) of your location’s operation are not considered commodities and should not be reported.

Part I — Instructions for Completing Your Questionnaire – Continued

Item D(1) – Total Number of Outbound Shipments – Continued

Shipments to include

- in this count any materials picked up by the customer ("customer pick-up")
- only those shipments that were sent from the location specified in Item A
- shipments of commodities of all sizes, by any mode of transportation (e.g., parcels)
- any shipment of products from this establishment to another location of the company that are intended for sale (e.g., products moved from this establishment to a company warehouse)

Do not include

- drop-shipments where the origin was not the shipping address in Item A
- shipments such as internal administrative items, inter-office memos, payroll checks, business correspondence, promotional items, etc.
- shipments such as refuse, scrap paper, waste, and recyclable materials unless this establishment is in the business of selling these materials
- shipments of items moved from this location to another location of the company if not intended for commercial activity (e.g., the transfer of office furniture to be used at another location of this company)

Item D(2) – Total Number of Outbound Shipments

Mark an (X) in the appropriate box in Item D(2) to indicate whether you have reported 40 or fewer shipments in Item D(1). If "Yes" is marked, skip to Item F beginning on page 4 and report the information requested for all shipments made during the assigned week.

If "No" is marked, continue with Item E on page 3 to determine the sample of shipments that your establishment should report in Item F.

Item E – Sampling Instructions

If you have more than 40 outbound shipments for the one-week reporting period you are asked to report only a sample of them in Item F. Using the table in Item E, locate the row that includes the number of outbound shipments you reported in Item D(1) and the corresponding "report every" number. Mark an (X) in the space provided.

When sampling your shipments, please use the files, or combination of files that reflect the full range of your location's shipping activities in terms of modes of transportation used, commodities or products shipped, and destinations.

Note: The sample selected should not exceed 40 outbound shipment records.

An instructional video on how to sample your shipments can be found at econhelp.census.gov/cfs/surveytools. If you still have questions about the sampling process (or any part of the questionnaire) call us at 1-800-772-7851, option "3," from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern time.

Part I — Instructions for Completing Your Questionnaire – Continued

Item F – Shipment Characteristics

- **Shipment ID Number, Column (B)** – Enter the invoice number, shipment number, or some other unique identification number that your establishment could use to find this particular shipping document if questions arise regarding your report.
- **Shipment Date, Column (C)** – Enter the month and day of the shipment. If shipment date is not available, use the invoice/shipping document date. Use numbers only.
- **Shipment Value, Column (D)** – Enter the dollar value, in whole dollars, of the entire shipment. The value should not include freight charges or excise taxes (i.e., report the net selling value, freight on board plant). If the value is not readily available from your records, please estimate.
- **Net Shipment Weight, Column (E)** – Enter the net weight of the total shipment in whole pounds. If net weight is not readily available from your records, please estimate. Convert all other types of measurements to whole pounds (e.g., gallons, tons, cubic yards).
- **SCTG Commodity Code, Column (F)** – Use the list of commodity codes provided in the accompanying 2012 Standard Classification of Transported Goods (SCTG) Commodity Codes booklet to select the proper 5-digit code. For shipments with more than one commodity, enter only the code for the commodity with the greatest weight. Mixed freight categories are also available for some standard groupings of commodities. For assistance in locating the appropriate commodity code, refer to the alphabetized quick reference at the beginning of the 2012 SCTG Commodity Codes booklet. Additional assistance is available at econhelp.census.gov/cfs.
- **Commodity Description, Column (G)** – Enter a brief description of the commodity shipped. For shipments with more than one commodity, describe only the commodity with the greatest weight. Do not use trade names, catalog numbers, or other codes not familiar to persons outside your business.
- **Temperature Controlled, Column (H)** – A temperature controlled shipment is defined as a shipment that is transported in a vehicle or container that regulates the temperature while en route (such as heating and refrigeration) or maintaining the temperature of the commodity at the time of loading (such as insulation). This excludes shipments of commodities that have temperature sensitivity without a means of controlling the temperature in the vehicle or container while in transport.
- **Hazardous Materials, Column (I)** – If the shipment is a hazardous material, enter the 4-digit United Nations (UN) or North American (NA) number.

Item F SHIPMENT CHARACTERISTICS										
Line No. (A)	Your Shipment ID Number (B)	Shipment Date (C)		Shipment value (excluding shipping costs) in whole dollars Estimates acceptable. (D)	Net Shipment weight in pounds (E)	SCTG commodity code from accompanying booklet (F)	Commodity Description (G)	Temperature Controlled (Y/N)? (H)	If a hazardous material, Enter the "UN" or "NA" number (I)	Continue with column (J) on page 5
		Month	Day							
0	123-5	4	26	244,235	4,840	34520	Mechanical machinery	Y		→
00	402H	4	26	1,375	50,125	20222	Sulfuric acid	N	1830	→
1										→
2										→

Part I — Instructions for Completing Your Questionnaire – Continued

Item F – Shipment Characteristics – Continued

- **U.S. Destination or U.S. Exit Port, Column (J)** – For domestic shipments, enter the city, state, and 5-digit ZIP Code of the buyer/receiver's "**ship to**" address as it appears on the shipping document. For the state portion, use the two-letter state postal abbreviation shown in Part III.

Important – For export shipments, report the U.S. **port of exit** as the destination city. The port of exit is the port or airport from which the shipment left the country. In case of land shipments into Mexico or Canada, the **port of exit** is the border crossing.

- **Mode(s) of Transport to U.S. Destination, Column (K)** – Enter the code(s) for **all** modes of transport used for the shipment to its U.S. destination (i.e., the destination reported in **Column (J)**). Codes are located on the bottom of pages 5 and 7 of the questionnaire. Enter all that apply in the sequence in which the mode is used. Do not include the export mode of transport in this column, report in **Column (N)**. See Part II for definitions of each mode. Do not use commas (,) to separate each mode.

For Customer Pick-up – Report the mode(s) of transportation used, if known. Otherwise, report mode as "0" (unknown).

- **Export, Column (L)** – Indicate whether or not the shipment is intended for export outside of the United States, by entering a "Y" for yes and "N" for no. For the purposes of this survey, shipments to Puerto Rico and U.S. territories and possessions **are** considered exports.
- **Foreign Destination, Column (M)** – Only respond if answer in **Column (L)** is "Y". Enter the foreign city and country of destination. Make sure **Column (J)** and **Column (K)** only contain the domestic portion of the shipment (see above).
- **Export Mode, Column (N)** – Only respond if answer in **Column (L)** is "Y". Enter the code for the mode of transport by which the shipment left the country. Codes are located at the bottom of pages 5 and 7 of the questionnaire.

U.S. Destination or U.S. Exit Port (Complete for all shipments.) (J)			Mode(s) of transport to U.S. destination Enter all that apply in order used. Use codes at bottom. (K)	Export? (Y/N) (L)	Foreign Destination (for export shipments only) Note: In column (J) enter the U.S. port, airport, or border crossing of exit (M)		Export Mode (N)
City	State	ZIP Code			City	Country	
Los Angeles	CA	90040	24	Y	Beijing	China	6
Newark	NJ	07105	4	N			

Part I — Instructions for Completing Your Questionnaire – Continued

Item G(1) – Rush Deliveries

Mark an (X) in the “Yes” box if any of the shipments reported in Item F required purchase of a faster level of service (e.g., same day/overnight, 2–3 business days, or faster service arrangement provided by hired carriers). If not, mark an (X) in the “No” box and proceed to Item H.

Item G(2) – Rush Deliveries

If “Yes” in Item G(1) list the number of shipments reported in Item F that required the specific type of rush delivery services listed. Enter a number for each type of service.

Item H – Monthly Value of Outbound Shipments

Mark an (X) in the box that corresponds to the total value of all outbound shipments from this location for the most recently completed calendar month.

Contact

Enter the name, title, signature, telephone number, and fax number for the person to contact in the event that we have a question about your report.

Remarks

Use this space to clarify your responses, if needed or to note any critical business changes that have recently occurred or are forthcoming (e.g., closures, plant renovations, merges, etc.).

Part II — Mode of Transportation Definitions

Parcel delivery/Courier/U.S. Parcel Post – Includes ground shipments of packages and parcels that each weigh less than or equal to 150 pounds, and are transported by a for-hire carrier.

Private truck – Trucks operated by employees of this establishment or the buyer/receiver of the shipment. Includes trucks providing dedicated services to this establishment.

For-hire truck – Shipments by common or contract carriers made under a negotiated rate.

Railroad – Any common carrier or private railroad.

Inland water – Barges, ships, or ferries operating primarily in navigable waters, both within and along the borders of the United States, such as:

- Rivers – *Examples: the Mississippi River and Saint Lawrence Seaway*
- Lakes – *Examples: the Great Lakes*
- Along the shoreline but actually in the ocean – *Examples: Intracoastal Waterway along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and the Inside Passage of Alaska*
- Canals, harbors, major bays, and inlets

Deep sea – Barges, ships, or ferries operating primarily in the open waters of the ocean, outside the borders of the United States.

Pipeline – Movements of oil, petroleum, gas, slurry, etc. through pipelines that extend to other establishments or locations beyond the shipper's establishment. (Aqueducts for the movement of water are not included.)

Air – Any shipment sent via air mode.

Other mode – Any mode not listed above.

Unknown – A shipment where you are unable to determine the mode of transportation.

Note: Transportation equipment that is "shipped" under its own power, such as boats, barges, ferries, ships, aircraft, trucks, and trains **should be classified with the appropriate mode above.** Transportation equipment shipped under its own power for which an appropriate mode is not listed (e.g., buses, recreational vehicles) should be listed as **"other mode."**

Part III — State Postal Abbreviation List

State	Abbreviation	State	Abbreviation
Alabama	AL	Montana	MT
Alaska	AK	Nebraska	NE
Arizona	AZ	Nevada	NV
Arkansas	AR	New Hampshire	NH
California	CA	New Jersey	NJ
Colorado	CO	New Mexico	NM
Connecticut	CT	New York	NY
Delaware	DE	North Carolina	NC
Dist. of Col.	DC	North Dakota	ND
Florida	FL	Ohio	OH
Georgia	GA	Oklahoma	OK
Hawaii	HI	Oregon	OR
Idaho	ID	Pennsylvania	PA
Illinois	IL	Rhode Island	RI
Indiana	IN	South Carolina	SC
Iowa	IA	South Dakota	SD
Kansas	KS	Tennessee	TN
Kentucky	KY	Texas	TX
Louisiana	LA	Utah	UT
Maine	ME	Vermont	VT
Maryland	MD	Virginia	VA
Massachusetts	MA	Washington	WA
Michigan	MI	West Virginia	WV
Minnesota	MN	Wisconsin	WI
Mississippi	MS	Wyoming	WY
Missouri	MO		