

Housing Goldmine Gets 2 New Years of Data

By: Jann Swanson | Thu, Sep 6 2018, 1:01 PM

Housing trivia probably isn't a major hobby, but if you are into it, it is your birthday and the U.S. Census Bureau brought a present. The Bureau has just released the results of its **2017 American Housing Survey**. Not to make light of it, the biennial AHS is a **huge** aid to researchers or anyone who needs information on the size, composition, condition, and amenities that exist in the nation's housing stock. But it is also kind of fun.

The release includes national level data and more granular information on seven states (California, Colorado, Florida, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas) and **41 metropolitan areas**, a number which includes most major American cities.

Among the types of data that are available (and can be manipulated by the user to create custom tables) are breakdowns of housing types (8.4 million of the nation's 121.2 million housing structures contain two to four units), the age of units (4.8 million were built in the roaring 20s), and detailed characteristics of construction such as foundation type and number of stories. There are square footage estimates, a count of homes with no indoor plumbing or with solar power; the householders' age, ethnicity, education and tenancy. There is information on the adequacy of housing, right down to details on how many homes have recently been **infested with mice or cockroaches**.

There is also a **staggering** amount of information about mortgage characteristics - age, outstanding balance, credit limit of HELOCS, interest rates, cash out amounts. That doesn't cover even a third of the variables.

The new survey contains statistics on disaster preparedness, last collected in the 2013 survey, and the Bureau says it will release information later this year on evictions, delinquent payments, and commuting costs. There will also be details for **nine more states** and ten additional metro areas.

The best link for accessing the summary tables is [here](#). There are also microdata files containing individual responses to survey questions that can be used to create custom tabulations from some of the piles of detail collected in the AHS.

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