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NEW DATA SHOW RENTERS STRUGGLING TO AFFORD HOUSING, EVEN IN GREATER MINNESOTA

—A majority of renters aged 65+ face unaffordable rents in 39 counties—

St. Paul, MN (December 14, 2010) – New [2005-2009 5-year estimates from the American Community Survey \(ACS\)](#) released today shows that in communities across Minnesota, many renters do not have affordable rental housing, and that some of the most difficult places for residents to rent are in Greater Minnesota.

These new census figures give the most complete picture of Minnesota data available for small communities since the 2000 Census. (Note that this is not the 2010 Census data.)

In 84 of Minnesota's 87 counties, at least a quarter of renters paid 30% or more of their income for housing from 2005 to 2009—a cost burden, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Of the top 10 counties with the most extreme problem, 8 were outside the 7-county metro, the new estimates find.*

The problem in Greater Minnesota was even more pronounced among renters paying over HALF their income for housing, a level of cost-burden considered severe. There were 12 counties where at least a quarter of renters paid over half of their income for housing. Of these, only one (Ramsey) was in the 7-county metro. The other counties were Clay, Winona, Chisago, Sherburne, Mower, Faribault, Grant, St. Louis, Stearns, Blue Earth, and Douglas Counties. When families pay this level of income for housing, they often face choices between housing, food, and medicines, but will not be able to afford all.

Senior renters aged 65 and over are at special risk. A majority of renter households headed by seniors 65 years old or older faced a housing cost burden in 39 counties. No area of the state was immune from a shortage of affordable rental for seniors.

With more than 100,000 foreclosures in Minnesota since 2005 and an aging Baby Boomer generation, many Minnesotans are returning to the rental market. This shift is likely to increase rental demand.

“Aging seniors, young people starting out, and families picking up the pieces after a foreclosure need good places to rent. Vital communities require a choice of healthy rental options,” said Chip Halbach, executive director for the [Minnesota Housing Partnership](#).

The Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP – 2446 University Ave W. - Ste 140 | St. Paul, MN 55114), a statewide nonprofit, advances the preservation and creation of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income people as a means of strengthening communities and families. MHP provides local governments and nonprofit housing organizations access to loans, grants, and technical expertise to plan and construct housing; it also advocates for and educates people on sound housing policies. MHS is an affirmative actions provider and employer.

In addition to county-level data, each city, school district, legislative district, census tract, and block group has access to new demographic and housing data for the first time since the 2000 census. Contact [Minnesota Housing Partnership](#) at www.mhponline.org for more information about housing data of interest to small areas.

* Percent of renters paying 30% or more of their income for housing, 2005-2009:

Top 10 Minnesota Counties

Winona County:	55.3%
Clay County:	54.0%
Sherburne County:	50.8%
Wabasha County:	50.4%
St. Louis County:	50.3%
Chisago County:	50.2%
Blue Earth County:	50.1%
Ramsey County:	49.1%
Koochiching County:	48.1%
Washington County:	47.2%

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