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2011 County Profiles for Housing: Renting not just for the Twin Cities

St. Paul, MN (July 21, 2011) – Whether by choice or necessity, more and more people are renting across Minnesota, finds the [2011 County Profiles](#) report, a new set of county-by-county housing profiles. By 2010, 27% of the state's households rented their homes, up significantly from mid-decade, according to data in the Minnesota Housing Partnership report.

While renting is often seen as important only in the Twin Cities metro, only two of the top ten counties with the highest rental rates in Minnesota are located in the metro. Ramsey (39% renter households) and Hennepin (36%) top the list, followed closely by the Greater Minnesota counties of Blue Earth (35%), Lyon (34%) and Benton (31%). (See the full “top ten” list below.)

Over the course of the decade from 2000 to 2010, all ten of the counties with the largest increase in the percentage of renter households were outside of the metro area. Mahnomon, Big Stone, Mower, and Beltrami counties head up this list.

Affordability is a critical concern for the state's expanding rental population. Nearly half of the state's renters paid more than they should for housing in 2009, according to HUD's affordability standards.

Rising rents and falling incomes leave Minnesota renters in limbo, especially in a fragile economy. From 2000 to 2011, 80 of 87 Minnesota counties saw increases in rental costs, after adjusting for inflation. Based on the best available data, renter incomes decreased 17% between 1999 and 2009 statewide.

“The foreclosure crisis and a struggling economy have made renting the best, or only, housing option for thousands of families and individuals,” said Chip Halbach, executive director of MHP. “Yet rents are increasingly unaffordable for many workers, families, and seniors.” added Halbach.

MHP's County Profiles pull together housing data for each of Minnesota's 87 counties—including cost and affordability for owners and renters, changes in home prices, foreclosures, homelessness, and unemployment.*

Other major findings include:

- In 25 counties, renting a modest two-bedroom apartment requires a higher income than buying a median priced home, assuming a 10% down payment and a 30-year fixed mortgage.
- The median home sale price ranged from a low of \$40,500 in Traverse County in western Minnesota to a high of \$247,500 in Carver County in the metro area in 2009-10.
- From 2006 to 2010, 74 counties (85% of counties) experienced decreases in the median home sales price, after adjusting for inflation. However, over the entire decade through 2010, 60 counties (69%) actually experienced increases in the median price.

The “Top Ten” list of counties for highest rental rates, largest increase in percent of renters, and largest changes in median home sales prices may be found on the following pages.

MHP's County Profiles and additional analysis are available at:
<http://mhponline.org/publications/reports-and-research/county-profiles>.

*Note: Use caution in comparing some data across counties. See <http://mhponline.org/publications/reports-and-research/county-profiles> for more information about county comparisons for 2011.

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 to help strengthen communities and families. MHP is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



2011 County Profiles – Top 10 Lists

**Table 1: Top 10 counties for highest percentage of renter households
2010**

1	Ramsey	39%	Metro
2	Hennepin	36%	Metro
3	Blue Earth	35%	S Central (Mankato)
4	Lyon	34%	SW (includes Marshall)
5	Benton	31%	St. Cloud area
6	Winona	30%	SE
7	Clay	30%	NW (Fargo/Moorhead)
8	Stevens	30%	W Central (UW Morris)
9	Beltrami	30%	NW (Bemidji area)
10	St. Louis	29%	NE (Duluth area)
	Minnesota	27%	

Table 1 source: 2010 Decennial Census.

**Table 2: Top 10 counties for largest change in percentage of renter households
2000-2010**

		Percent renter households, 2000	Percent renter households, 2010	Change	
1	Mahnomen	22.8%	28.0%	+5.2%	NW
2	Big Stone	14.9%	19.4%	+4.5%	W Central
3	Mower	21.8%	26.0%	+4.2%	SE
4	Beltrami	25.5%	29.6%	+4.1%	NW (Bemidji area)
5	Chippewa	23.4%	27.5%	+4.1%	W Central
6	Mille Lacs	19.9%	23.9%	+3.9%	Central
7	Crow Wing	20.3%	23.8%	+3.5%	Central
8	St. Louis	25.3%	28.7%	+3.4%	NE (Duluth area)
9	Cook	21.7%	25.1%	+3.4%	NE
10	Lake	16.0%	19.3%	+3.3%	NE
	Minnesota	25.4%	27.0%	+1.5%	

Table 2 sources: 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census.



Table 3: Top 10 Minnesota counties for change in home sale price 2000-01 to 2009-10 (inflation adjusted)

1	Lake of the Woods	71% increase	N
2	Pipestone	55% increase	SW
3	Polk	50% increase	NW
4	Clearwater	41% increase	NW
5	Swift	38% increase	W Central
6	Becker	37% increase	NW
7	Nobles	35% increase	SW
8	Pennington	31% increase	NW
9	Traverse	31% increase	W Central
10	Lincoln	31% increase	SW
	Minnesota	7% decrease	

Table 4: Top 10 counties for change in home sale price 2005-6 to 2009-10 (inflation adjusted)

1	Polk	38% increase	NW
2	Mille Lacs	36% decrease	Central
3	Isanti	35% decrease	Central/Collar
4	Mahnomen	32% decrease	NW
5	Rice	31% decrease	SE/Collar
6	Kanabec	30% decrease	W Central
7	Sibley	29% decrease	S/Collar
8	Clearwater	28% decrease	NW
9	Wright	26% decrease	Metro
10	Anoka	25% decrease	Metro
	Minnesota	23% decrease	

Tables 3 & 4 source: MN Department of Revenue, Sales Ratio Study. Arms length sales; excludes foreclosures and short sales.

Visit MHP's County Profiles at: <http://mhponline.org/publications/reports-and-research/county-profiles>.
 Contact Leigh Rosenberg at rosenberg@mhponline.org for more information.