

# Building Permits Survey

## Internet Reporting Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Will I receive a C-404 form if I report electronically via Internet?**

It depends on your jurisdiction's reporting status. If you are a monthly reporter: No. We will not send the survey questionnaire unless we have not received your survey data electronically for three consecutive months.

If you are an annual reporter: Yes. We will continue to mail you a C-404 form each year due to Census Bureau's password guidelines

### **2. Why should I report electronically via Internet?**

There are many benefits to reporting your building permits data via Internet: reduction of our use of paper and costs for printing, postage and keying of data from paper forms. The data submitted via Internet will also be captured more expediently.

### **3. Can I change my Password and what should I do if I forgot my Password?**

If you would like to change your password, the Census Bureau's current security guidelines require 8 digit Passwords to better safeguard the security of your data. Your new Password must contain a minimum of the following:

- 8 characters in length
- 1 uppercase character
- 1 lowercase character
- 1 number
- 1 special character from the following: ! # \$ \* & ? ~

The Password assigned to your jurisdiction will not change unless you decide to change it. If you forgot your Password, call the Residential Construction Branch on 1-800-845-8244. We will provide the original Password assigned to your jurisdiction and entered on the last C-404 form received. If you have not logged in to your jurisdiction's Building Permits Survey account for 120 days, your account is probably locked. Call us to have your account unlocked.

### **4. I forgot my Username. What do I do?**

The Username is shown on the last C-404 form that you received. Nevertheless, if you did not retain the questionnaire, the Username is the combination of the two-digit State FIPS code followed by the six-digit Place code for your jurisdiction. If you need assistance locating these codes from a C-404 form, please call the Residential Construction Branch on 1-800-845-8244.

### **5. Why can't I access my jurisdiction's Building Permits Survey account?**

You should be able to access electronic reporting via Internet at any time as long as your account is active. You might have trouble accessing your jurisdiction's Building Permits Survey account if:

- The Username and/or Password were entered incorrectly - Common typing errors might give you the idea the Password does not work, for example: keying the letter "O" instead of a "zero"; keying the capital letter "I" instead of the number "1", etc.
- You have not accessed your account for 120 days - Your account will be locked.

Call the Residential Construction Branch on 1-800-845-8244 and request that your account be unlocked. We will notify you when your account has been unlocked. You will be assigned the same Password originally displayed on your C-404 form.

**6. Can I print a Portable Document Format (PDF) of the C-404 form, and use it to sum data prior to accessing electronic reporting?**

Yes; you can use the Sample C-404 form as your personal draft to organize, pre-post or sum data entries prior to accessing electronic reporting via Internet. If so, this copy becomes your personal draft and you decide if it is worth keeping for your records. Please do NOT mail or fax this copy to the Census Bureau.

**7. I submitted my data online but the C-404 form's PDF is blank. Why won't my data show up?**

You need to have JavaScript enabled on Adobe Acrobat for your data to be entered into the form's PDF. To change the setting, go to your Adobe Acrobat program, click on Edit and then Preferences. Select the JavaScript category and check the box titled Enable Acrobat JavaScript.

**8. I entered information on more than two individual residential permits valued at \$1,000,000 or more. What happened to the rest of the information on the C-404 form's PDF?**

The form's PDF is only able to show the first two permits, so any permits that you enter beyond those will not show up. However, we will receive all of the information that you submit for any additional permits. If you need to review those permits you can access them on the Individual Residential Permits Valued at \$1,000,000 or more page.

**9. I tried electronic reporting for the Building Permits Survey and did not like this reporting method.**

**Can I start getting a C-404 form again?**

Yes; if you want to resume receipt of the C-404 form, after you tried electronic reporting via Internet, call the Residential Construction Branch on 1-800-845-8244 to request the mailing of the C-404 form.

**10. Can other respondents access the data that I report to the Building Permits Survey via Internet?**

No; the Census Bureau's current security guidelines safeguard the security of your data.

**11. Why can't I locate survey periods reported on the Main Menu for my jurisdiction?**

We display on the Main Menu data for only the survey periods submitted electronically. This reporting method excludes data received via a C-404 form that was mailed or faxed. The Status

for the "Reporting Period" for survey periods where a C-404 form was mailed or faxed is displayed as "Form Received".

For data that was reported electronically last year, those data are moved to the Historical Data tab after the release of the previous year's Final Annual data.

**12. How many survey periods are kept in Historical Data?**

If you are a monthly reporter, you will locate the twelve monthly survey periods submitted during the prior year. If we were missing five or more monthly periods, we also requested an Annual report. In this case, any monthly periods reported throughout the previous year were removed from the Main Menu and only the prior Annual report is maintained in Historical Data.

If you are an Annual reporter, we will maintain only the previous Annual report in Historical Data.

**13. I report monthly, but all I see is a request for annual data. What happened to the monthly reports already submitted? Why do you also request an annual report?**

If your jurisdiction is a monthly reporter and we are missing five or more monthly reports by year's end, we request you to complete an annual report instead of filling out all the individual monthly reports missing. The annual data reported replace the monthly reports received.

**14. Can I correct data that I previously submitted electronically?**

Yes; Please make corrections and re-submit the data electronically regardless of whether it is on the Main Menu or listed in Historical Data.

**15. What happens if I cannot resolve all "issues" listed on the Review Your Responses page?**

Submit your survey. Unresolved issues will be addressed by the U.S. Census Bureau's staff with a follow-up call to the contact person listed for your jurisdiction.

**16. I reported data for several survey periods using C-404 forms. Can I submit corrections to those survey periods using electronic reporting?**

You will not be able to access electronic reporting to only submit corrections to survey periods submitted via C-404 forms. Nevertheless, if you are reporting electronically for a different survey period, you can enter the corrected data on the Comments page. Please enter all pertinent information to successfully submit corrections, that is, the survey period, section to be corrected, and correct number of buildings, housing units and valuation of construction. Staff reviewing data will submit the correction(s) to the applicable survey period(s). If the information entered requires clarification, you will receive a follow-up call from the U.S. Census Bureau's staff.