Small Area Estimate Program (SAEP) data for 2014 are currently available. The SAEP estimates include both intercensal (2000-2009) and postcensal (2011-2014) estimates.

The intercensal estimates for 2000-2009 are consistent with the Office of Financial Management’s (OFM’s) official April 1 intercensal estimates of total population and housing at the county level. The intercensal estimates are developed using a straight line method of interpolation at the census block level controlled to county totals. The group quarters and household population estimates should be used with caution because of discrepancies in the location and/or classification of certain facilities between federal censuses.

Census 2010 population and housing values serve as the baseline for the 2011 through 2014 postcensal estimates. Postcensal estimates of total population, household population, group quarter population, total housing units, and occupied housing units are updated using a variety of data controlled to the state’s official April 1 population estimates.

OFM recommends that end users limit their analysis to a specific SAEP data release (e.g., Fall 2014) because: 1) estimates for prior years are updated if new or more accurate information becomes available and 2) estimates may change if there are changes to underlying spatial geometries. Please see the SAEP User Guide for additional information about the data and the methods behind the estimates as well as limitations in their use.

The SAEP Fall 2014 data release includes some important changes from prior releases. These changes affect the postcensal estimates from 2011-2014.

The method used to allocate college and university group quarter (GQ) population has changed. Previously, the college and university GQ population was distributed according to 2010 census characteristics. In 2014, the distribution of campus GQ population is based on more geographically precise building locations. This change affects the distribution of the 2011-2014 group quarter population for any college/university with housing located in more than one census block.

When classifying new college and university housing, the SAEP is now following a strict interpretation of the Census Bureau’s GQ definition. Any population living in a new building that is solely available to college or university students is counted as part of the GQ population. This rule applies to leased buildings and buildings that are located off campus. The application of this definition is important. Some buildings, most notably at the University of Washington in Seattle, that were estimated as household population in the 2011-2013 SAEP data releases are now being estimated as GQ population.

The primary data source used to distribute new housing in Clark County has changed from assessor data to building permit data. This change is important because it changes the distribution of housing and household population throughout Clark County for the 2011-2014 estimate period. Building permit data is an important input for OFM’s April 1 estimate series. Switching from assessor data to permit data in Clark County makes the SAEP series more consistent with OFM’s official April 1 population estimate series.
Lastly, OFM would like to thank all of the people who graciously provide support and data for the SAEP.

Sincerely,

Mike Mohrman
SAEP Project Lead