

What Does the State Data Center Do?

by Peter Haxton, State Data Center Coordinator

The State Library has a new State Data Center (SDC) Coordinator, but what does that mean and what do I do?

I have been working as the State Data Center Coordinator for about two months now, and I still get the question, “Okay, so what, exactly, do you do?” The glib-sounding, but accurate, answer is that I in fact coordinate the State Data Center. Let me explain.

The State Data Center (SDC) program is a cooperative program between the U.S. Census Bureau and the states. The goal is to help disseminate Census data to the public; educate patrons on the use of Census products and tools; and provide feedback to the Census Bureau on data usability and patrons’ needs.



The State Data Center Program has a clickable map available at <http://www.census.gov/sdc/>.

The State Library of Kansas has been the lead agency in Kansas since 1982; however, the State Library cannot handle the task statewide without assistance. The State Library works closely with four coordinating agencies, which provide expert analysis and data products, as well as important technical feedback on Census programs and data. Those coordinating agencies are:

- (1) the Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University;
- (2) the Docking Institute of Public Affairs at Fort Hays State University;
- (3) the Institute for Policy and Social Research at the University of Kansas; and
- (4) the Kansas Population Center at Kansas State University.

Furthermore, there are 16 affiliates, most of which are public libraries around the state, that help disseminate Census data to patrons.

My role in all of this is to enhance the visibility and accessibility of the SDC, to strengthen the SDC network, and to help Kansas have as complete a count in the 2010 decennial Census as possible.

One of my primary goals is to make it as easy as possible for patrons to find and use Census data. To that end, I am available to provide training to reference staff and others who work closely with the public about the resources available. In addition, to help the public find and understand Census data, I will be creating a webpage on the State Library site that provides commonly requested data, and links to more information resources.

If you or your patrons have any questions regarding Census information, please contact me at the SDC at sdc@kslib.info.