

## Census Bureau: St. Croix is State's Fastest-Growing County

### Over 19,000 Residents Added ; 10-County Region Grows

On March 19th, the Census Bureau released 2008 population estimates for counties, states, and metropolitan areas in the U.S.

From April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008, St. Croix County grew by 30.6% (+19,332) making it the state's fastest-growing county. The population in Dane County increased 13.2% (+56,179) over the same time period, followed by Washington at 10.2% (+11,968), Calumet 10.1% (+4,096), and Kenosha 10.0% (+14,886) to round out the top five counties.

By numeric increase, St. Croix ranks as the third fastest-growing county (+19,332). Dane ranks first by adding an estimated 56,179 residents, while Waukesha ranked second by adding 19,877. Brown County added 18,358 residents to rank fourth in numeric increase and Kenosha added 14,886 to rank fifth.

St. Croix's July 1, 2008 population is estimated at 82,487 compared to 63,155 in the year 2000.

The 13-county Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI metropolitan area added an estimated 261,060 residents (+8.08%) from April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008 according to the Census Bureau. This area continues to rank as the 16th most populous metro region, the same ranking it had in 2000. It is ranked ahead of San Diego (17th), St. Louis (18th), Tampa-St. Pete (19th), and Baltimore (20th), but behind Seattle-Tacoma (15th), Riverside-San Bernardino (14th), San Francisco-Oakland (13th), and Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale (12th).

The Census Bureau estimates Wisconsin added 264,259 residents since April 1, 2000 (+4.9%). Its July 1, 2008 population is estimated at 5,627,967.

Minnesota added an estimated 300,914 residents from 2000-2008 (+5.76%). Its July 1, 2008 population is estimated at 5,220,393.

The 10-county region of western, west central, and northwest Wisconsin had growth that ranged from a 6.2% decline (-958) in Rusk County to St. Croix's 30.6% increase. The region grew by an estimated 9.0% (+38,777).

<i>County</i>	<i>July 1, 2008</i>	<i>April 1, 2000</i>	<i>Numeric</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Barron	45,590	44,963	627	1.4%
Chippewa	60,456	55,197	5,259	9.5%
Clark	33,553	33,557	-4	-
Dunn	42,688	39,858	2,830	7.1%
Eau Claire	98,286	93,140	5,146	5.5%
Pepin	7,357	7,213	144	2.0%
Pierce	40,254	36,804	3,450	9.4%
Polk	44,270	41,319	2,951	7.1%
Rusk	14,389	15,347	-958	-6.2%
St. Croix	82,487	63,155	19,332	30.6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>469,330</b>	<b>430,553</b>	<b>38,777</b>	<b>9.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; St. Croix Economic Development Corp.

Note: The 10 counties of western, west central, and northwest Wisconsin comprise Momentum West, a regional economic development and marketing organization

## Governor Doyle Announces New Logo and Theme Line for State Brand *Asks Residents to 'Live Like You Mean It'*

On March 16th, Governor Jim Doyle unveiled the new logo and theme line for the state brand: "Live Like You Mean It." The announcement marks the next step in building a unifying competitive brand and business strategy for the state, an initiative that Governor Doyle first announced a year ago when he asked his Department of Tourism to explore the attributes that differentiate Wisconsin from its competitors.



"No matter how people come in contact with Wisconsin, they'll know precisely what we stand for in this state. We are a place where the people are fiercely proud, hard working, loyal and have fun with life; and where the culture fuels creativity and embraces original thinking," Governor Doyle said. "This is another tool we'll use to keep loyal visitors coming back, communicate why a business should relocate or expand here, and let talented employees know why they should choose Wisconsin."

The Wisconsin brand platform paints a picture of the state as a place that nurtures creativity and celebrates originality. It's a reflection of the spirit of Wisconsinites, and an invitation to others to live, work and play here. The new state identity will be applied first to Tourism marketing, with other state agencies, associations and even private businesses all having the opportunity to join.

The Department of Tourism will begin applying the identity immediately to its marketing giving the logo mark instant visibility. The color selections for the logo came directly from consumer research conducted last year in Wisconsin and neighboring states. The earthy organic green hue of the word "Wisconsin" is reminiscent of the state's natural resources and stewardship of the land, while the rich red of the theme line and silhouette conveys the passion, energy, loyalty and pride that define the state's people.

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## 22nd Annual Tax Study Favors Wisconsin

In mid-March, the Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Office and Industrial Properties (NAIOP) released its 22nd annual comparative tax study to highlight the economic tax challenges faced by Minnesota businesses. The 2009 study covers the 2008 tax year.

NAIOP's study tracks property taxes and other tax costs on similar industrial facilities in states surrounding Minnesota. In the study, property taxes paid in 2008 were calculated on a 70,000 square foot building occupied by a light manufacturing company employing 99 workers. In each state, the property taxes were calculated on an actual building. Each building was comparable to the others in size, location, and current use. The states that were examined included Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, Colorado, Ohio, New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, Florida, and Massachusetts.

In Minnesota, the 70,000 square foot building generated \$127,899 in property taxes (\$1.83 per square foot) compared to \$57,639 for a similar building in Wisconsin (\$0.82 per square foot). Property taxes on the Minnesota facility was the third-highest. Only Illinois, with property taxes of \$196,408 (\$2.80 per square foot) and South Dakota, with taxes of \$128,963 (\$1.84 per square foot) ranked higher. Wisconsin's taxes were among the lowest; only New Mexico (\$56,890), North Dakota (\$52,082), Texas (\$46,268), and Ohio (\$42,995) were lower.

NAIOP's tax study also combined the property taxes with unemployment, corporate, personal property, and sales taxes. Combining all those costs, a Minnesota manufacturer paid around \$200,000 in 2008 compared to Wisconsin's total tax bill of just over \$100,000.

The NAIOP study also concluded that the effective business property tax rate in Minnesota was almost \$3.00 per \$100 of market value, compared to Wisconsin's rate of \$2.20 per \$100 of value.

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