

MONDAY OCTOBER 20, 2008 Last modified: Saturday, October 11, 2008
9:05 AM CDT

County, state population growing

By ROD STETZER
rod.stetzer@lee.net

Spurred by the populations of two prison, new state estimates show Chippewa County as having the fourth fastest growth county in Wisconsin since the 2000 Census.

The 12.1 percent increase by Chippewa County trails only St. Croix County at 26.2 percent, Calumet at 13.9 percent and Juneau at 12.5 percent. In fifth place was Polk County at 11.1 percent.

Chippewa County has grown from 55,195 in 2000 to 61,872 in the new estimate. And the number of people eligible to vote increased from 40,593 to 46,645.

However, overall the county grew by only 268 people, or 0.4 percent, from 2007 to 2008, the state said.

The state Department of Administration estimates the state's population grew 0.5 percent last year. That's an increase of 27,000 people. Since 2007, the state's population has grown nearly 6 percent.

The state's current population is estimated at nearly 5.7 million people.

State and local officials use the estimates for a variety of purposes, including the distribution of state funds, district attorney allocation and calculation of voter turnout.

The state counts the population of prisons in Chippewa Falls and Stanley toward the county's total. Both prisons have shown major increases in population since the 2000 Census.

That's one reason Stanley shows up as the fifth fastest growing municipality since 2000, growing from 1,898 to 3,374 in 2008. That's an increase of 77.8 percent.

But while Stanley grew, the nearby village of Boyd shrank. The village showed an 8.1 percent population decrease, going from 680 in 200 to 625 in 2008.

Chippewa Falls has grown by 3.8 percent, from 12,925 to 13,410.

State demographers who create the estimates rely on vehicle registrations, tax

ings, school enrollment, changes in housing units, institutional enrollment, and birth and death records.

Most of the state growth has been in the Fox River Valley, parts of western Wisconsin, Dane County and the southeast.

Milwaukee, the state's largest city, has seen a 1 percentage point loss in population since the 2000 census, according to the estimates done by the state's Department of Administration.

Conversely, Madison has seen nearly 9 percent growth since 2000.

All cities with about 50,000 population have grown since 2000 except for Milwaukee, Racine, West Allis and Sheboygan.

Here's a breakdown of county population from the largest to the smallest:

Towns

LaFayette: 5,935; Eagle Point: 3,257; Wheaton: 2,677; Anson: 2,114; Tilden: 1,343; Lake Holcombe: 1,126; Edson: 1,094; Bloomer: 1,028; Cleveland: 1,027; Delmar: 972; Sampson: 930; Woodmohr: 855; Sigel: 842; Colburn: 792; Arthur: 758; Goetz: 753; Auburn: 717; Cooks Valley: 699; Howard: 693; Birch Creek: 533; Estella: 498; Ruby: 471; Hallie: 160.

Villages

Lake Hallie: 6,320; Cadott: 1,391; Boyd: 625; New Auburn: 554

Cities

Chippewa Falls: 13,410; Bloomer: 3,473; Stanley: 3,374; Eau Claire (the portion in Chippewa County): 2,002; Cornell: 1,449

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Copyright © 2008 Chippewa Valley Newspapers