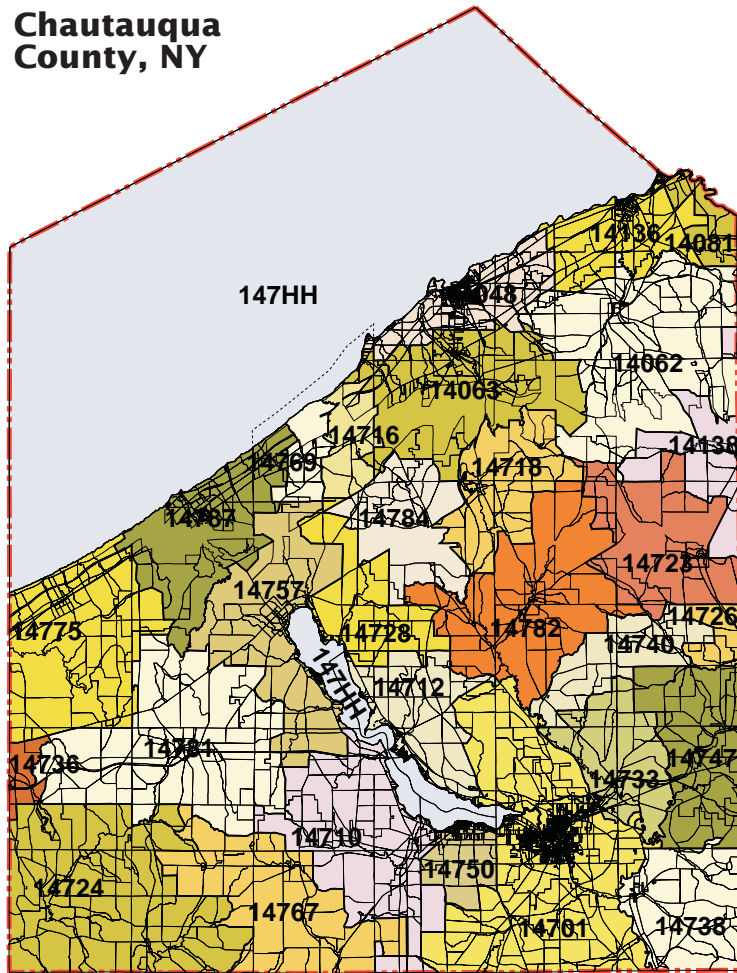## Census 2000 ZCTA Example

Chautauqua County, NY

More Information on ZCTAs

Products and Services Staff

Phone: 301-763-1128
Fax: 301-457-4710
E-mail: geo.geography@census.gov
Web: http://www.census.gov/geo/ZCTA/zcta.html

Obtaining ZCTAs

Census 2000 TIGER/Line® Files:
ZCTAs for the entire United States and Puerto Rico will be available in the Census 2000 TIGER/Line® files. ZCTAs are stored in Record Type S.
http://www.census.gov/geo/www/tiger/

American FactFinder® Internet Site:
Users are able to plot ZCTA maps and create tables showing Census 2000 data tabulated by ZCTAs.
http://factfinder.census.gov/

Cartographic Boundary Files:
Generalized ZCTA boundary files are available for download from the Census Bureau's Internet site.
http://www.census.gov/geo/www/cob/

LandView® 5:
LandView® 5 is a desktop mapping system that allows users to display and plot ZCTAs along with other map features. Comes with a cartographic database for the entire United States.
http://landview.census.gov/

Summary Files 1 – 4 (SF 1 – 4):
Population and housing characteristics from Census 2000 will be tallied by ZCTA. SF 1and SF 2 contain the 100 percent data from the short form. SF 3 and SF 4 contain the sample data from the long form.
http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/2khome.htm

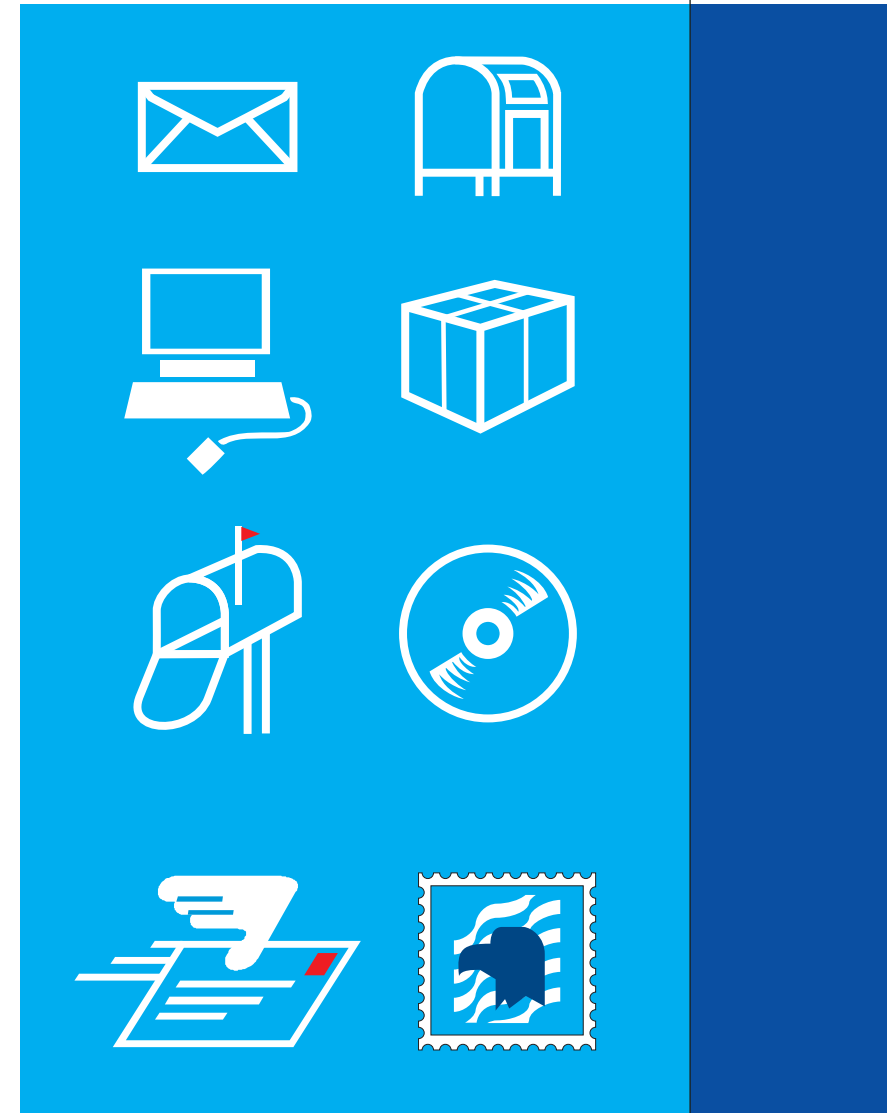## Ordering ZCTA Products

Customer Services

Phone: 301-763-INFO (4636)
Fax: 301-457-3842 (fax orders only)
Web: http://www.census.gov/mp/www/Tempcat/how2ordr.html

Census 2000 ZCTAs™
ZIP Code Tabulation Areas for
Census Bureau Data Products

2000

USCENSUSBUREAU

Helping You Make Informed Decisions

United States
Census
2000

What Are ZCTAs™?

ZIP Code Tabulation Areas (ZCTAs™) are a new statistical entity developed by the U.S. Census Bureau for tabulating summary statistics from Census 2000. ZCTAs are generalized area representations of U.S. Postal Service (USPS) ZIP Code service areas. They represent either USPS five- or three-digit ZIP Code areas. ZCTAs are created based on the following criteria:

- ZCTAs follow census block boundaries. The ZCTA code for each census block generally represents the majority ZIP Code of the addresses within that census block.

- **ZCTAs are not exact representations of the USPS's ZIP Code delivery areas.**

- ZCTA codes cover all land and water areas.

- ZCTAs include some dedicated post office box ZIP Codes in areas served only by post office boxes.

- ZCTAs representing post office box ZIP Codes generally have more than 10 addresses.

- ZCTAs exclude unique, single delivery point ZIP Codes, such as those for firms and organizations.

- ZCTAs are distinct from other Census Bureau statistical areas, such as census tracts, because they are not stable over time and are computer-delineated based on the location of addresses at the time of Census 2000 rather than manually delineated by local program participants or Census Bureau staff before the census.

- ZCTAs are distinct from other representations of ZIP Codes because they are based on address information and ZIP Codes collected or verified during Census 2000 operations.

- ZCTAs frequently cross county and place boundaries and may occasionally cross from one state into another.

ZCTA™ is a trademark of the U.S. Census Bureau.

ZIP Code® is a registered trademark of the United States Postal Service.

TIGER/Line® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Census Bureau.

LandView® is a registered trademark of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

American FactFinder® is a trademark of the U.S. Census Bureau.

How ZCTAs Are Created

Census Tract 12 – Block 1102
Street Address ZIP Code
1 Dee St 22345
3 Dee St 22345
9 Dee St 22345
10 Jullian Dr 22345
105 May Rd 22346

Majority ZIP: 22345

1. Determine the majority ZIP Code for each census block with addresses.

ZIP Codes are verified to ensure valid USPS values. The majority ZIP Code reflects residential and commercial addresses, including non-city-style addresses.

2. Assign a ZCTA code to every census block that contains addresses with ZIP Codes.

3. Extend ZCTA coverage to adjacent census blocks not assigned a ZCTA code.

See "Extending ZCTA Coverage" for map examples.

4. Run edits and review results of the process.

Edits set ZCTA codes assigned to water blocks and ensure that all Census 2000 tabulation blocks have an appropriate ZCTA code.

Extending ZCTAs Coverage

Fill holes within a ZCTA coverage

"Holes" (census blocks with no addresses) are assigned code of surrounding ZCTA.

Fill gaps between ZCTAs

Each ZCTA grows outward to fill all gaps between ZCTAs.

Assign ZCTAs to islands and water features

Islands are assigned to a nearby land ZCTA. Larger water features get a special ZCTA code (three-digit ZIP Code + "HH").

Assign ZCTAs to fringe areas

Unassigned blocks on a ZCTA edge are filled with the adjacent ZCTA code. Large undeveloped areas are assigned thethree-digit ZIP Code with a "XX" suffix.

Assign ZCTAs to sparsely settled areas

"Windows" that include the ZCTA "fragments" are assigned to one ZCTA. The rest of the area is assigned the three-digit ZIP Code with a "XX" suffix.