

**MODERN DAY DUDLEY:
A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

Presented below are a series of demographics and statistics aimed at helping the reader understand the modern day composition of Dudley's citizenry. All of the presented information comes from the 1990 US Census, unless otherwise specified.

<u>Population</u>								Change 1960-1998		
	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1996*</u>	<u>1998*</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>		
Dudley	6,510	8,087	8,717	9,540	9,662	9,802	3,166	50.1%		
Charlton	3,685	4,654	6,719	9,576	10,058	10,345	6,660	181.0%		
Oxford	9,282	10,345	11,680	12,588	13,014	13,318	4,036	43.5%		
Southbridge	16,523	17,057	16,665	17,816	17,420		17,460		937	5.7%
Webster	13,680	14,917	14,480	16,196	16,065		16,115		2,435	17.8%

* = 1996 and 1998 population estimates provided by the US Census Bureau.

Population Growth - A Comparison: The table above indicates that Dudley's population has seen an increase of roughly 50% in the last 38 years. This represents an additional 83 people per year since 1960. Of the four towns surrounding Dudley (Charlton, Oxford, Southbridge and Webster), Dudley has the second highest growth rate (Charlton has the highest). Yet numerically speaking, Charlton and Oxford have added more new residents. The neighboring communities of Southbridge and Webster have a much lower growth rate, both percentage-wise and numerically. In terms of comparison to the CMRPC region (which covers 40 communities within Worcester County), Dudley's rate of growth for the past 38 years (50.1%) has been much higher than the region's rate of growth (19.7%) for the same time period.

Persons Per Square Mile: Dudley's total land area consists of 21.05 square miles (*not* including its waterbodies and streams). Dividing the Town's total population by its land area indicates that Dudley has roughly 466 people per square mile.

The Sexes: Dudley is fairly evenly split between women and men, with the 1990 Census reporting that 50.2% of its 9,540 residents were women, and 49.8% were men.

Politics: According to the Secretary of State, roughly half of Dudley's residents (4,787) were registered to vote in 1994. Of the registered voters, 43.9% were Democrats; 9.1% were Republicans; and 47% did not have a particular party affiliation.

Persons With Disabilities: It is interesting to note that roughly one in four Dudley residents considers themselves to have some sort of disability (ranging from mild to severe), according to

the 1990 Census. This represents roughly 25% of Dudley's population. Yet, of those persons under 65 years of age, only 191 people (or 2%) described themselves as completely prevented from working because of their disability.

Age Distribution (1990)

	Number <u>Of People</u>	Percentage of <u>Total Population</u>
Under 5 years of age:	605	6.3%
5 to 17:	1,617	17.0%
18 to 24:	1,382	14.5%
25 to 44:	2,955	31.0%
45 to 64:	1,757	18.4%
Over 64 years of age:	1,224	12.8%

Median Age: 33.1

Age Distribution - Changes Since the 1960 Census: Since 1960, Dudley's population has gotten older. In 1990, roughly 23% of the Town's population consisted of people 18 and younger. Back in 1960, this age group made up roughly 36% of Dudley's total population. In the same time period, Dudley's elderly population (65 and older) has grown from 7.3% of the Town's total population to roughly 13%.

Ethnicity: On the surface, Dudley does not appear to be very diverse (97% of the population is white); however, the table below indicates that the ancestries of Dudley's residents span the European continent.

Ancestry (1990) *

Polish: 2,660	French: 2,155	Irish: 1,707	English: 1,064
French Canadian: 875	Italian: 823	German: 693	Swedish: 289

* Please note that survey respondents could choose more than one ancestry. Many more ancestries were identified than those reported above. The ancestry categories above represent the larger ancestry groups reported.

Housing Units

Change 1960-1998

<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1998*</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
	2,035	2,626	3,140	3,583	3,889	1,854
						91.1%

* = The 1998 housing unit figure was determined by adding the number of building permits for new houses issued from 1990 through 1998 to the 1990 Census housing unit count. Building permit information was obtained from the Building Inspector's

entry in the annual Town Reports.

Persons Per Household: The above table indicates that Dudley's housing supply has grown faster than its population. This is not surprising when one considers the national trend towards smaller household sizes. Couples are having fewer children today, and many households are of the single parent variety. Dudley's Census data confirms this trend. In 1960, the typical Dudley household contained 3.2 people. By 1990, the persons per household figure had decreased to 2.67. The figure is probably a bit lower today.

Households by Type (1990)

	<u># of Households</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Married Couple Family:	2,120	62.6%
Male Householder:	102	3.0%
Female Householder:	330	9.7%
Non-Family Household:	835	24.7%

Household Type - A Comparison: Dudley's percentage of households made up of married couple families is a bit less than Charlton (70.4%): about the same as Oxford (62.7%); yet much higher than Southbridge (49.7%) and Webster (51.4%). This trend holds true for non-family households as well.

Household Type - Changes Since the 1980 Census: Back in 1980, the married couple family category comprised 68.4% of Dudley's households as compared to 62.6% in 1990. The largest increase has been in the non-family household category which grew from 21.2% in 1980 to 24.7% in 1990. The female head of household category also grew from 8.7% to 9.7% during the same timeframe.

Type of Housing Unit (1990)

	<u># of Units</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Single Family Homes:	2,319	64.7%
Two to Four Units:	933	26.0%
Five or More Units:	300	8.4%
Other:	31	0.9%

Type of Housing - A Comparison: Dudley's percentage of single family homes is a bit less than Oxford (66%), much less than Charlton (79%); yet much higher than Southbridge (32%) and Webster (43%). Dudley's housing mix has been fairly stable from 1980 to 1990. The percentage of single family and multi-family housing units has remained relatively unchanged.

Occupancy (1990)

	<u># of Units</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Owner Occupied Housing:	2,343	69.2%
Renter Occupied Housing:	1,044	30.8%

Occupancy - A Comparison: Of the four surrounding communities, Dudley ranks in the middle in regard to owner-occupied housing. Charlton and Oxford have higher owner-occupancy rates (78% and 73% respectively), while Southbridge and Webster have much lower owner-occupancy rates (45% and 53% respectively). From 1980 to 1990, the percentage of owner occupied housing has dropped roughly 5%, while the percentage of renter occupied housing has grown roughly 5%.

The previous tables indicate that Dudley consists primarily of married families living in owner-occupied single-family homes. Roughly two out of three residents live in this type of arrangement. Conversely, this also means that roughly one in three Dudley residents (a statistically significant portion) live in: non-family households, rental housing, and/or multi-family housing. Some of Dudley's households probably have all three of the above characteristics.

Population Mobility: The 1990 Census asked residents where they lived five years previously (1985), and the survey results are quite interesting. Roughly 66% of the respondents were living at the same house in Dudley, a good indication of residential stability. Roughly 24% were living somewhere else in Worcester County, 5% were living somewhere else in Massachusetts, 4% were living in another state, and 1% were living abroad. These figures indicate that one third of Dudley's residents came to Town within the last five years. It also means that if you meet three people in the street, chances are that one of them will move on in the next five years. The 1980 Census showed similar results.

Household Income (1990)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
Less than \$10,000 per year:	467	13.8%
\$10,000 to \$24,999:	792	23.5%
\$25,000 to \$49,999:	1,141	33.8%
\$50,000 to \$99,999:	888	26.3%
Over \$100,000:	88	2.6%
Dudley Median Household Income for 1990:		\$34,139.
Worcester County Median Household Income for 1990:		\$35,774.
Massachusetts Median Household Income for 1990:		\$36,774.

Dudley Per Capita Income for 1990:	\$13,708.
Worcester County Per Capita Income for 1990:	\$15,500.
Massachusetts Per Capita Income for 1990:	\$17,224.

Household Income - A Comparison: Dudley had a slightly higher percentage of households making less than \$25,000 (37.3) as compared to the County (34.4%) and the State (31.6%). Dudley's percentage of households making \$100,000 or more is somewhat lower (2.6%) than the County (4.5%) and the State (6.6%).

Poverty Level (1990): Dudley's percentage of residents living at or below the national poverty level was 5.9% in 1990. This is considerably lower than the County (8.3%) and the State (8.9%). Thus, while Dudley's median household income is less than the County and State, Dudley's poverty level is lower than the County and State. This indicates that while the average Dudley household is not rich, they aren't poor either. This indicates a blue-collar working class environment where the local economy is stable. From 1980 to 1990, Dudley has seen a drop in the percentage of its population living at or below the poverty level. In 1990, 5.9% of the population lived at or below the poverty level, while in 1980 this figure was 7.3%.

Unemployment: Since 1990, Dudley's unemployment rate has decreased substantially from a high of 9.6% in 1991 to a low of 4.0% for the year 1998. Dudley's unemployment rate for 1998 was a bit higher than the County average (3.4%) and the overall State average (3.3%).

Dudley Residents - Occupation (1990)

<u>Type of Occupation</u>	<u>Number Employed</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
Executive, administrative & managerial:	616	12.5%
Professional specialty occupations:	693	14.1%
Technical and support:	163	3.3%
Sales (wholesale & retail):	407	8.3%
Administrative support & clerical:	832	16.9%
Service occupations:	553	11.2%
Farming and forestry:	61	1.2%
Manufacturing:	1,083	22.0%
Transportation:	212	4.3%
Laborers & handlers:	218	4.4%
Other employment categories:	82	1.7%

Significant Changes Since the 1980 Census: The most significant change is in the manufacturing category. In 1990, 22% of Dudley's labor force was employed in manufacturing, while in 1980, roughly 35% of the local labor force was employed in manufacturing. Occupational categories showing modest growth since 1980 include: executive, administrative & managerial; professional; administrative support & clerical; and service occupations. It should be noted that manufacturing still represents the largest employment category for Dudley's labor force.

Jobs in Dudley (1998)

<u>Type of Occupation</u>	<u>Number Employed</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
Agriculture:	22	Less than 1%
Construction:	107	4.0%
Manufacturing:	971	36.1%
Transportation:	23	Less than 1%
Sales (wholesale & retail):	509	18.9%
Finance:	42	1.6%
Service:	508	18.9%
Government:	501	18.6%

Significant Changes Since the 1990 Census: From 1990 through the year of 1998, the number of people working in Dudley has grown 29%, from 2,087 in 1990 to 2,689 in 1998. The manufacturing, construction, sales, finance and government sectors have all added new jobs since the 1990 Census. Manufacturing still represents the largest sector of the local economy (36%).

Commuting to Work: The 1990 Census reported that of those Dudley residents in the labor force, 80.5% drove to work alone, 11% carpoled, 0.3% used public transportation, 1.2% used other means, and 6.9% walked or worked at home. The average commuting time was approximately 23 minutes. There was a significant difference between the 1980 and the 1990 Census regarding commuter trends. Back in 1980, 67.5% of the labor force drove to work alone while 24.1% carpoled.

Educational Attainment of People 25 and Over (1990)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of Total</u>
Less than high school graduate (no diploma):	1,647	27.7%
High school graduate:	2,004	33.8%
Some college (no degree):	831	14.0%
Associates degree:	375	6.3%

Bachelor's degree:	716	12.1%
Graduate or professional degree:	363	6.1%

Educational Attainment - A Comparison: The educational attainment of Dudley's citizens is right in line with that of its immediate neighbors. Southbridge has the lowest percentage of people obtaining some form of college degree (18.9% as compared to Dudley's 24.5%), while Charlton has the highest percentage of college educated citizens (25.7%, just slightly higher than Dudley's 24.5%). Dudley's percentage of college educated citizens, as well as its four Massachusetts neighbors, is somewhat less than the Worcester County average (30.2%) and the Statewide average (34.5%).

Educational Attainment - Changes Since the 1980 Census: It is clear that Dudley citizens are becoming better educated. In 1980, roughly 38% of respondents had less than a high school diploma. By 1990, this figure had dropped to roughly 28%. All other educational attainment categories showed an increase since the 1980 Census.

Public/Private School Attendance: The Massachusetts Department of Education reports that during the 1998/99 school year, roughly 91% of Dudley students went to public schools, while the remaining 9% went to private schools.

Dropout Rate: The Department of Education also reports on drop-out rates. From the five-year period between 1993 and 1997, Shepherd Hill Regional High School had an average drop-out rate of 4.7% which was higher than the Worcester County average (4.3%) and the Statewide average (3.7%) for the same time period.

College Bound: The Department of Education reports that between the five-year period between 1993 and 1997, roughly 75% of the graduating class from Shepherd Hill Regional High School went on to college or some other form of post-secondary education. Shepherd Hill's percentage of college-bound graduates is right in line with the overall statewide average.