

Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Census Bureau

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey

AGENCY: U.S. Census Bureau, Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: To ensure consideration, written comments must be submitted on or before April 3, 2017.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at PRAComments@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to William Abriatis, U.S. Census Bureau, Room 6K081, Washington, DC 20233-6500, (301) 763-3686 (or via the Internet at william.m.abriatis@census.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The Monthly Wholesale Trade Survey (MWTS) provides a continuous measure of monthly sales, end-of-month inventories, and inventories/sales ratios in the United States by selected kinds of business for merchant wholesalers,

excluding manufacturers' sales branches and offices. Estimates from the MWTS are released in three different reports each month. High level aggregate estimates for end-of-month inventories are first released as part of the Advance Economic Indicators Report approximately 27 days after the close of the reference month. The Advance Economic Indicators Report is a new report first released on July 28, 2016, and will be released monthly on an ongoing basis. The full Monthly Wholesale Trade Report containing both sales and inventories estimates is released approximately 40 days after the close of the reference month. Sales and inventories estimates from the MWTS are also released as part of the Manufacturing and Trade Inventories and Sales (MTIS) report issued approximately 43 days after the close of the reference month. The Bureau of Economic Analysis uses this information to improve the inventory valuation adjustments applied to estimates of the Gross Domestic Product. The Bureau of Labor Statistics uses the data as input to develop Producer Price Indexes and productivity measurements.

Estimates produced from the MWTS are based on a probability sample and are published on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) basis. The sample design consists of small, medium, and large cases requested to report sales and inventories each month. The sample, consisting of about 4,200 wholesale businesses, is drawn from the Business Register, which contains all Employer Identification Numbers (EINs) and listed establishment locations. The sample is updated quarterly to reflect employer business "births" and "deaths". New employer businesses identified in the Business and Professional Classification Survey are added and employer businesses determined to be no longer active are removed.

II. Method of Collection

Respondents are initially contacted by mailing them the MWTS form. Respondents have an option of reporting their data online, returning the paper form by fax or mail, or giving data by telephone. After initial contact,

respondents have a choice to receive future correspondence by mailed form, faxed notice, or both. The faxed notice informs the respondent that the online system is open for reporting for the specified reference month.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0607-0190.

Form Number(s): SM4212-A and SM4212-E.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: U.S. merchant wholesale firms, excluding manufacturers' sales branches and offices.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,200.

Estimated Time per Response: 7 minutes.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 5,880 hours.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$0.

Respondent's Obligation: Voluntary.

Legal Authority: Title 13, United States Code, Sections 131 and 182.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Sheleen Dumas,

PRA Departmental Lead, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

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