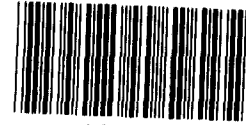


GAO

Report to Congressional Committees



143504

March 1991

ASSISTED HOUSING

Utility Allowances Often Fall Short of Actual Utility Expenses (Vol. II)



Notice: This is a reprint of a GAO report.

**Resources, Community, and
Economic Development Division**

B-232897

March 26, 1991

The Honorable Donald W. Riegle, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on Banking,
Housing and Urban Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Henry B. Gonzalez
Chairman, Committee on Banking,
Finance and Urban Affairs
House of Representatives

This is the second volume of our report on utility allowances provided in public housing and section 8 certificate housing, prepared to fulfill the requirements of section 102(b) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987. Volume I discusses how utility allowances are provided to assisted households, the extent to which the allowances cover utility costs, and alternatives for ensuring that a greater proportion of assisted households pay 30 percent of their adjusted income for rent and utilities.

Volume II includes (1) detailed responses to a nationwide questionnaire on public housing agency (PHA) practices in providing allowances and (2) rent burdens we observed at six PHAs. (Rent burden is defined as that portion of adjusted income that assisted households pay for shelter costs and utility expenses.) Section 1 describes the approach we used for our questionnaire; section 2 contains the results of our questionnaire; section 3 explains how we collected rent burden data at six PHAs; and section 4 presents the average annual and monthly rent burdens at each of the six PHAs. Information contained in volume II was collected and analyzed between October 1988 and June 1990.

Copies of this report are being sent to congressional committees interested in housing matters; the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and other interested parties. It will be made available to others upon request.

This work was performed under the general direction of John M. Ols, Jr., Director, Housing and Community Development Issues. He may be contacted at (202) 275-5525. Other major contributors are listed in appendix III of volume I.



J. Dexter Peach
Assistant Comptroller General

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Abbreviations

GAO General Accounting Office
HUD Department of Housing and Urban Development
PHA public housing agency

Approach Used for Nationwide Questionnaire on Utility Allowance Practices

To determine how many public housing agencies (PHAs) provide allowances and to gather information on the allowances provided, how the allowances were derived, and other related topics, we sent a questionnaire to statistical samples of PHAs for both public housing and section 8 certificate programs.

Data Base Development

To secure a list of PHAs that would allow us to draw our samples, we used several data bases from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. Our first step was to consolidate three HUD data bases into a single list that identified the name and address of each PHA, as well as the number of public housing and section 8 housing units it administered. We then reviewed the resulting consolidated data base for potential duplicate listings and missing names and addresses. When these were identified, we worked with HUD to try to resolve the discrepancies. In addition, we obtained a list of PHA names and addresses from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. We used this list to fill in as many incomplete entries as possible.¹

Overall, the edited data base included 4,087 PHAs for which we had a name, address, and the number of public housing and/or section 8 units it administered.

Questionnaire Pretesting

We pretested our questionnaire at nine PHAs in Arizona, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia. We also solicited comments on the draft instrument from officials within HUD's public housing and section 8 program offices, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the National Housing Law Project Center, and the Neighborhood Legal Services Program for the District of Columbia.

Sampling

From the list of 4,087 PHAs compiled from HUD records, we identified 3,217 agencies that administered 1,296,892 public housing units and 2,205 agencies that administered 955,345 section 8 certificate housing units. To collect information on public housing units, we divided the PHAs into two groups, using 500 units as a cutoff point. We found 379

¹We did not perform an overall comparison of the Association's list with the consolidated HUD data base since the Association could not provide its list in machine readable form. Performing such a task by hand would have been impractical.

**Section 1
Approach Used for Nationwide Questionnaire
on Utility Allowance Practices**

PHAs that managed more than 500 units and 2,838 PHAs that managed 500 or fewer units. We sent questionnaires to each of the 379 agencies that administered more than 500 units and drew a simple random sample of 500 for the other group. Together these samples covered 1,007,821 public housing units.

We divided the 2,205 agencies that administered section 8 certificate units into two sample groups. We identified 1,374 agencies that administered more than 100 units and 831 that administered 100 or fewer units. The 100-unit division point was selected after pretests showed that larger PHAs are less likely to collect data centrally on the characteristics of units receiving utility allowances. Therefore, an agency with more than 100 section 8 units would likely find it difficult to provide detailed unit information from its records. We randomly sampled and sent questionnaires to 500 PHAs that managed more than 100 units and to 400 PHAs that managed 100 or fewer units. Together these samples covered 354,492 section 8 units.

**Questionnaire
Distribution,
Response, and Editing**

We mailed 1,594 questionnaires in May 1989 and collected data through November 1989.² If agencies did not respond, we sent a follow-up mailing; we also called larger PHAs to encourage responses. We examined all questionnaires for consistency, and contacted agencies to resolve ambiguous response patterns. In cases where our analysis indicated that responses for individual questions were not reliable, no summary statistics are reported.

Overall, 1,321 PHAs responded (an 83 percent response rate). However, 44 respondents said that they did not administer a public housing or section 8 program. Accordingly, we eliminated these respondents. As a result, we based our analysis on 1,277 usable responses.

²The difference between the number of PHAs selected to receive a questionnaire (1,779) and the number to which questionnaires were actually mailed (1,594) is due to the fact that some PHAs administer both public housing and section 8 programs.

Survey Questionnaire Results and Related Sampling Errors

This section contains the detailed responses we received to our nationwide questionnaire. The following notations appear throughout the questionnaire:

- * Indicates a response option within a question that was unreliable and therefore not reported
- ** Indicates how results were reported for questions 14 and 40
- *** Indicates that responses to an entire question were unreliable and therefore not reported
- N Represents the estimated number of public housing agencies that would have responded had a questionnaire been sent to all agencies

Presentation of our results is twofold. First, the totaled results for each question are shown on left-hand pages. Second, the corresponding sampling errors for each question are displayed on the facing right-hand page.¹

¹Sampling errors define the upper and lower bounds of the estimates made for our questionnaire results. Sampling errors were calculated at the 95-percent confidence level. This means that 19 out of 20 times, the sampling procedures used would produce a range that includes the true value.

United States General Accounting Office

GAO

**Survey of Public
Housing Agency
Utility
Allowance
Practices**

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

United States General Accounting Office



**Survey of Public Housing Agency Utility
Allowance Practices**

The U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), an agency which evaluates federal programs, is required by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 to study ways to improve how public housing and section 8 tenants receive utility allowances. Of particular interest to Congress is (1) how utility allowances are set and (2) whether differences exist in how utility allowances are set for public and section 8 housing.

As part of our study, we are sending a questionnaire to randomly selected Public Housing Agencies (PHAs). This questionnaire should be completed by the person(s) who are most familiar with the metering and utility allowance system for the public and section 8 housing programs administered by your agency. You may wish to consult with other staff in your agency in order to complete this questionnaire. Your response is extremely important. It will be used to describe utility allowance-setting practices for all PHAs. Your answers will be combined with those of others who respond, and reported to Congress in summary form.

It may be the case that your agency administers both public housing and section 8 units. In order to reduce the amount of data we are seeking, a label appearing on page 3 of this questionnaire will indicate whether we are seeking information on your public housing units only, your section 8 housing units only, or both types of units.

Depending on how your agency maintains records, the questionnaire should take between one hour and one day to complete. We have numbered your questionnaire to aid us in our follow-up efforts.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed business reply envelope within 10 days, if possible. This will help us to avoid costly follow-up mailings or telephone calls.
- If you have any questions, please call Dave Dorpfeld on (518) 472-3527 or (212) 264-6470 or Frank Grossman on (212) 264-6474. If the business reply envelope is missing, please return your completed questionnaire to:

Mr. John Ols, Jr.
U.S. General Accounting Office
441 G Street, N.W., Room 4476
Washington, DC 20548

Thank you for your assistance.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

DEFINITIONS: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING DEFINITIONS BEFORE COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE: THEY MAY DIFFER SOMEWHAT FROM THOSE YOUR AGENCY TYPICALLY USES.

Federally-sponsored public housing: Is locally-owned low-rent public housing whose rental projects are regulated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under an Annual Contributions Contract.

Section 8 rental housing: Is section 8 rental housing assistance provided through HUD in which your public housing agency establishes utility allowances.

•DO NOT INCLUDE project-based section 8 sub-programs (e.g., "new construction") in which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used. GAO is performing related work on project-based section 8 sub-programs.

•Also, although utility allowances are provided under the section 8 voucher program, for purposes of this study, DO NOT INCLUDE section 8 voucher programs that your agency administers. GAO is performing related work on section 8 voucher programs.

•DO NOT INCLUDE any units that your agency administers for another state or local agency. That is, include only units for which your agency has entered into an Annual Contributions Contract with HUD.

Units: Apartments and homes that are occupied, available for rent, or will be available for rent shortly. DO NOT INCLUDE units that are permanently out of service, such as those vacant units that have been approved for demolition. If a unit is undergoing renovation such that metering and allowances may be affected when the unit is occupied, complete the questions as if the renovation were NOT taking place.

TYPES OF METERS AND SERVICES: PHAs have units with the following types of meters and services.

Individually metered utilities: The tenant purchases the utility service directly from a utility company, such as a natural gas or electric utility company. A utility company's meter is used to determine consumption for individual units. In some cases, the utility company owns the meter and bills the PHA directly, instead of billing the tenant. For purposes of this questionnaire, this situation should be treated as check metering (see below).

Check metered utilities, or are considered as such: A meter (owned either by a utility company or the PHA) is used to determine consumption for an individual unit. The PHA pays the utility company for utilities consumed. The meter reading is used to rebill tenants for their consumption over the amount specified in the utility allowance (often called "excess consumption").

Master metered utilities, or are considered as such: A meter is used to determine consumption for the building as a whole. Individual units lack any metering capability. In contrast, some units may have meters, but the PHA may choose not to use them for billing or rebilling purposes. Instead, these PHAs pay the utility bill and the tenant does not. In this case, the PHA considers these units as master metered and no utility allowance is provided.

Nonmetered service: A supplier provides the service at a fixed rate because metered consumption is not possible (e.g., trash, wood, coal, and/or tenant-supplied appliances).

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

PART I-BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Which of the following types of federally-sponsored housing units does your agency administer? (Check all that apply) (17-18)
- 1. Public housing units
 - 2. Section 8 units—excluding (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency
 - 3. Neither federally-sponsored public housing nor section 8 units STOP! PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.
 - 4. This agency is not a public housing agency (authority) STOP! PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

3. How many federally-sponsored public housing units does your agency currently administer? (Enter number) (N=2,124) (18-17)
- 1,033,179 Number of public housing units administered
4. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 3, how many units receive an allowance for any type of utility? (Enter number) (N=2,124) (18-23)
- 628,960 Number of public housing units receiving a utility allowance
5. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 4, how many public housing units currently receive an allowance that includes costs to heat and/or cool the unit? (Enter number. If none enter 0) (N=1,781) (24-41)

PLEASE COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE ONLY FOR THE PROGRAM(S) DESCRIBED IN THE LABEL BELOW.

	Number of Public Housing Units
1. Heating cost only	284,130
2. Cooling cost only	15,578
3. Both heating and cooling costs	*

PART II-PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS AND UTILITY ALLOWANCES

2. Does your agency provide allowances for metered utilities or nonmetered services for any public housing units? (Check one) (N=2,610) (11)
- 81.4 1. Yes
- 18.6 2. No ———>GO TO QUESTION 21

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

PART I-BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Which of the following types of federally-sponsored housing units does your agency administer? (Check all that apply) (17-18)

- 1. Public housing units
- 2. Section 8 units--excluding (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency
- 3. Neither federally-sponsored public housing nor section 8 units STOP! PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.
- 4. This agency is not a public housing agency (authority) STOP! PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.

PLEASE COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE ONLY FOR THE PROGRAM(S) DESCRIBED IN THE LABEL BELOW.

3. How many federally-sponsored public housing units does your agency currently administer? (Enter number) (+/- N=108) (12-17)

25,561 Number of public housing units administered

4. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 3, how many units receive an allowance for any type of utility? (Enter number) (+/- N=108) (18-23)

21,413 Number of public housing units receiving a utility allowance

5. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 4, how many public housing units currently receive an allowance that includes costs to heat and/or cool the unit? (Enter number. If none enter 0) (24-31)
(+/- N=112)

	Number of Public Housing Units
1. Heating cost only	18,448
2. Cooling cost only	312
3. Both heating and cooling costs	*

PART II-PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS AND UTILITY ALLOWANCES

2. Does your agency provide allowances for metered utilities or nonmetered services for any public housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=90) (11)

- 3.1 1. Yes
- 3.1 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 21

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

6. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 4, for each of the metered utilities listed below, please provide the following:

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any public housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

b. Under Column B, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of public housing units which currently have individually metered utilities. (Enter number. Give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

c. Under Column C, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of public housing units which currently have check metered utilities, or are considered as such. (Enter number. Give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

27-48
27-48

	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units Individually Metered	Column C Number of Units Check Metered	Column A	N B	C
	% No (1)	% Yes (2)					
1. Electricity	1.1	98.9	401,537	176,651	2,119	1,976	1,186
2. Natural gas	19.6	80.4	206,944	142,355	1,936	1,366	924
3. Propane (bottled gas)	92.6	7.4	4,446	1,623	1,340	94	41
4. Water and sewer combined	50.0	50.0	82,199	30,593	1,736	784	419
5. Water only	84.0	16.0	10,734	6,111	1,312	192	113
6. Fuel oil	93.9	6.1	2,134	*	1,282	67	*
7. Other (Specify)	98.7	1.3	*	*	752	*	*

7. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by public housing units? (Check one) (N=2,101)

18.7 1. Yes

81.3 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 9

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

6. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 4, for each of the metered utilities listed below, please provide the following:

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any public housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

b. Under Column B, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of public housing units which currently have individually metered utilities. (Enter number. Give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

c. Under Column C, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of public housing units which currently have check metered utilities, or are considered as such. (Enter number. Give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

37-48
37-48

	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units Individually Metered (+/-)	Column C Number of Units Check Metered (+/-)	(+/- N)		
	% No (1)	% Yes (2)			Column A	B	C
1. Electricity	0.9	0.9	19,144	10,393	108	111	108
2. Natural gas	3.6	3.6	14,797	10,939	111	111	100
3. Propane (bottled gas)	2.8	2.8	2,311	328	111	39	25
4. Water and sewer combined	4.7	4.7	11,663	6,094	113	97	74
5. Water only	4.0	4.0	4,440	1,370	110	54	41
6. Fuel oil	2.5	2.5	1,308	*	110	30	*
7. Other (Specify)	1.3	1.3	*	*	95	*	*

7. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by public housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=109)

- 3.4 1. Yes
- 3.4 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 9

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

8. For each of the nonmetered services listed below, please provide the following.

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any public housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

b. Under Column B, indicate the number of public housing units which currently receive an allowance for nonmetered services. (Enter number. If none enter 0)

9. In which of the following calendar year(s) did your agency review the utility allowance schedule for any public housing units in order to determine whether or not amounts for any utility or service met HUD guidance? (Check all that apply) (N=2,112)

- 37.8 % 1. Prior to 1985
- 32.6 % 2. 1985
- 33.0 % 3. 1986
- 40.9 % 4. 1987
- 55.3 % 5. 1988
- 32.4 % 6. 1989
- 3.4 % 7. Don't know

	N	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units With Nonmetered Allowances Units	
		% No (1)	% Yes (2)	N	N
1. Wood	271	99.6	0.4	*	*
2. Coal	271	100.0	0.0	*	*
3. Trash pickup	378	9.6	90.4	39,943	328
4. Sewer	283	68.8	31.2	7,574	69
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	302	60.0	40.0	16,605	71
6. Other (Specify)	137	82.0	18.0	1,221	19

10. In what calendar year did your agency set its current utility allowance schedule for any utility or service provided to any public housing units? (Check one) (N=2,119)

- 13.8 % 1. Prior to 1985
- 7.3 % 2. 1985
- 5.6 % 3. 1986
- 15.5 % 4. 1987
- 32.2 % 5. 1988 → GO TO QUESTION 12
- 23.8 % 6. 1989 → GO TO QUESTION 12
- 1.9 % 7. Don't know → GO TO QUESTION 12

Section 2
 Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
 Sampling Errors

Sampling Errors for Corresponding
 Public Housing Questions

8. For each of the nonmetered services listed below, please provide the following.

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your FHA has established an allowance for any public housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

b. Under Column B, indicate the number of public housing units which currently receive an allowance for nonmetered services. (Enter number. If none enter 0)

	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units With Nonmetered Allowances	
	(+/-)N	% No (1)	% Yes (2)	(+/-) Units N
1. Wood	63	0.1	0.1	* *
2. Coal	63	*	*	* *
3. Trash pickup	74	5.7	5.7	8,885 70
4. Sewer	65	11.1	11.1	3,887 33
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	67	11.3	11.3	6,111 33
6. Other (Specify)	46	13.3	13.3	718 17

9. In which of the following calendar year(s) did your agency review the utility allowance schedule for any public housing units in order to determine whether or not amounts for any utility or service met HUD guidance? (Check all that apply) (+/- N=108)

- 4.1 1. Prior to 1985
- 4.0 2. 1985
- 4.0 3. 1986
- 4.2 4. 1987
- 4.3 5. 1988
- 4.0 6. 1989
- 1.6 7. Don't know

10. In what calendar year did your agency set its current utility allowance schedule for any utility or service provided to any public housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=108)

- 3.0 1. Prior to 1985
- 2.2 2. 1985
- 1.9 3. 1986
- 3.1 4. 1987
- 4.0 5. 1988 → GO TO QUESTION 12
- 3.6 6. 1989 → GO TO QUESTION 12
- 1.2 7. Don't know → GO TO QUESTION 12

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

11. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to revise any public housing utility allowance schedule in 1988 or 1989? (Check one for each) pg 47

	Check one for each					N
	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Moderate Role (4)	Major Role (5)	
1. Utility rates have not changed by more than 10% since allowances were last set	19.5	5.8	14.4	12.2	49.1	824
2. Revision would decrease PHA rental income	68.2	7.9	11.1	3.7	9.1	799
3. Tenant consumption has not changed significantly	20.2	5.4	14.3	13.6	46.5	819
4. Current allowance is "fair" and "adequate"	11.6	2.1	7.7	11.1	67.4	840
5. Other (Specify)	60.5	0.0	1.6	0.0	37.9	126

12. In calendar year 1988, did your agency compare actual utility expenses of specific public housing units with their allowance in order to determine the need to revise the utility allowance schedule for any utility or service? (Check one) pg 55

- 1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 14
- 2. No

13. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to compare actual utility expenses of specific public housing units with their allowance? (Check one for each) pg 55

	Check one for each				
	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Moderate Role (4)	Major Role (5)
1. Agency does not keep the type of data needed for this analysis					
2. Agency management does not see the need for this analysis					
3. Allowance was set recently, insufficient time has elapsed					
4. Prior analysis of this data was inconclusive					
5. Agency does not have the staff needed to perform this analysis					
6. Other (Specify)					

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

11. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to revise any public housing utility allowance schedule in 1988 or 1989? (Check one for each) (a7-41)

	Check one for each					(+/- %)
	No Role	Minor Role	Some Role	Moderate Role	Major Role	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
1. Utility rates have not changed by more than 10% since allowances were last set	5.1	3.1	5.0	4.6	6.9	96
2. Revisions would decrease PHA rental income	6.7	4.0	4.5	2.8	4.2	97
3. Tenant consumption has not changed significantly	5.3	3.0	5.0	4.7	6.9	98
4. Current allowance is "fair" and "adequate"	4.3	2.1	3.7	4.3	6.4	99
5. Other (Specify)	16.9	0	0.5	0	16.9	43

12. In calendar year 1988, did your agency compare actual utility expenses of specific public housing units with their allowance in order to determine the need to revise the utility allowance schedule for any utility or service? (Check one) ***

- 1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 14
- 2. No

13. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to compare actual utility expenses of specific public housing units with their allowance? (Check one for each) *** (a3-40)

	Check one for each				
	No Role	Minor Role	Some Role	Moderate Role	Major Role
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1. Agency does not keep the type of data needed for this analysis					
2. Agency management does not see the need for this analysis					
3. Allowance was set recently, insufficient time has elapsed					
4. Prior analysis of this data was inconclusive					
5. Agency does not have the staff needed to perform this analysis					
6. Other (Specify)					

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

14. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 4, in an average month during calendar year 1988, about how many public housing units had utility expenses which fall into the following categories? (Enter number for each. Give your best estimate or check the box. If none enter 0) (N=2,124)

45.9 Have not performed this analysis (89) (87-24)

	(N=1,107) ** Number of Public Housing Units
1. Utility expenses less than the utility allowance	77,598
2. Utility expenses about equal to the utility allowance	108,537
3. Utility expenses greater than the utility allowance	66,848

15. Did your agency use actual utility consumption data of specific public housing units when it most recently set its utility allowance schedule for public housing units for any utility or service? (Check one) *** (28)

- 1. Yes ——— GO TO QUESTION 17
- 2. No

** Only PHAs which provided answers consistent with question 4 are included in this analysis.

16. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to use actual consumption data of specific public housing units when you most recently set your utility allowance schedule for public housing units? (Check one for each) *** (28-31)

	Check one for each				
	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Moderate Role (4)	Major Role (5)
1. State or local privacy laws prohibit agency from obtaining data					
2. State or local privacy laws inhibit agency from obtaining data					
3. Utility company privacy policies prevent agency from obtaining data					
4. Data are not used because actual tenant consumption data may not reflect the "reasonable consumption" standards set in HUD regulations					
5. Obtaining data from utility suppliers would be too burdensome					
6. Other (Specify)					

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

14. Of the public housing units you entered in Question 4, in an average month during calendar year 1988, about how many public housing units had utility expenses which fall into the following categories? (Enter number for each. Give your best estimate or check the box. If none enter 0) (+/- N=108)
- 4.2 Have not performed this analysis

(69)
5/7-24)

(+/- N=108)

	Number of Public Housing Units
1. Utility expenses less than the utility allowance	7,280
2. Utility expenses about equal to the utility allowance	11,353
3. Utility expenses greater than the utility allowance	7,278

15. Did your agency use actual utility consumption data of specific public housing units when it most recently set its utility allowance schedule for public housing units for any utility or service? (Check one) ***
1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 17
2. No

16. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to use actual consumption data of specific public housing units when you most recently set your utility allowance schedule for public housing units? (Check one for each) ***

Check one for each

	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Moderate Role (4)	Major Role (5)
1. State or local privacy laws prohibit agency from obtaining data					
2. State or local privacy laws inhibit agency from obtaining data					
3. Utility company privacy policies prevent agency from obtaining data					
4. Data are not used because actual tenant consumption data may not reflect the "reasonable consumption" standards set in HUD regulations					
5. Obtaining data from utility suppliers would be too burdensome					
6. Other (Specify)					

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

<p>17. For allowances currently in effect, which of the following methods were used to determine utility allowance schedules for public housing units? (Check all that apply) (N=2,110)</p> <p>24.2 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Formal engineering studies of utility consumption (28-40)</p> <p>31.9 2. <input type="checkbox"/> In-house energy usage survey</p> <p>11.3 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Regional household consumption survey data</p> <p>48.5 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Data provided by utility company for the community</p> <p>67.1 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Actual consumption data of specific public housing units (all or a sample of units)</p> <p>19.2 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Allowances obtained from HUD local area office</p> <p>21.8 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Did not obtain allowance from HUD local area office, but used an approach suggested by them</p> <p>2.1 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Allowances based on discussions with tenant associations</p> <p>1.3 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>NOTE: Question 18 deals with individually metered utilities only; Question 19 deals with check metered utilities only; and Question 20 deals with nonmetered services only.</p> <p>18. What is your agency's practice regarding public housing units which have individually metered utilities and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check one)</p> <p>8.1 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable--Agency does not use this type of meter (N=2,073) (41)</p> <p>96.9 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility company directly</p> <p>3.1 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>N for items 2 and 3 in question 18 is 1,905.</p>	<p>19. What is your agency's practice regarding public housing units which have check metered utilities (or are considered as such) and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply) (42-48)</p> <p>70.3 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable--Agency does not use this type of meter (N=2,105)</p> <p>74.8 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does nothing. Tenant receives full utility allowance (including households with "negative rent")</p> <p>21.1 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives that portion of the utility allowance that is equal to the actual consumption (e.g., if an allowance is 600 therms of gas and the unit consumes 400 therms, only 400 therms are given that month)</p> <p>0.3 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against their shelter rent. Rent is not reduced past zero dollars (no "negative rent" occurs)</p> <p>* 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against unrelated tenant expenses (such as a damage deposit)</p> <p>5.2 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives a credit for the unused portion of the allowance which is applied against future months when utility expenses exceed the allowance</p> <p>1.9 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>N for items 2 to 7 in question 19 is 624.</p> <p>20. What is your agency's practice regarding public housing units which have nonmetered services and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply)</p> <p>76.5 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable--Agency does not provide nonmetered services (N=1,641) (49-52)</p> <p>74.5 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility supplier directly (e.g., trash, wood, coal)</p> <p>27.0 3. <input type="checkbox"/> For tenant-supplied appliances, the tenant always receives the full allowance</p> <p>8.0 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>N for items 2 to 4 in question 20 is 391.</p>
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**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

17. For allowances currently in effect, which of the following methods were used to determine utility allowance schedules for public housing units? (Check all that apply) (+/- N=108)

- 3.6 1. Formal engineering studies of utility consumption (32-48)
- 4.0 2. In-house energy usage survey
- 2.7 3. Regional household consumption survey data
- 4.3 4. Data provided by utility company for the community
- 4.0 5. Actual consumption data of specific public housing units (all or a sample of units)
- 3.3 6. Allowances obtained from HUD local area office
- 3.6 7. Did not obtain allowance from HUD local area office, but used an approach suggested by them
- 1.1 8. Allowances based on discussions with tenant associations
- 0.8 9. Other (Specify)

NOTE: Question 18 deals with individually metered utilities only; Question 19 deals with check metered utilities only; and Question 20 deals with nonmetered services only.

18. What is your agency's practice regarding public housing units which have individually metered utilities and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check one)

- 2.3 1. Not applicable--Agency does not use this type of meter (+/- N=109)
- 1.6 2. Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility company directly (+/- N=112)
- 1.6 3. Other (Specify) (+/- N=112)

19. What is your agency's practice regarding public housing units which have check metered utilities (or are considered as such) and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply)

- 3.8 1. Not applicable--Agency does not use this type of meter (+/- N=108)
- 6.4 2. Agency does nothing. Tenant receives full utility allowance (including households with "negative rent") (+/- N=86)
- 6.0 3. Tenant receives that portion of the utility allowance that is equal to the actual consumption (e.g., if an allowance is 600 therms, only 400 therms are given that month) (+/- N=86)
- 0.4 4. Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against their shelter rent. Rent is not reduced past zero dollars (no "negative rent" occurs) (+/- N=86)
- * 5. Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against unrelated tenant expenses (such as a damage deposit)
- 3.5 6. Tenant receives a credit for the unused portion of the allowance which is applied against future months when utility expenses exceed the allowance (+/- N=86)
- 1.6 7. Other (Specify) (+/- N=86)

20. What is your agency's practice regarding public housing units which have nonmetered services and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply)

- 4.2 1. Not applicable--Agency does not provide nonmetered services (+/- N=113)
- 8.9 2. Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility supplier directly (e.g., trash, wood, coal) (+/- N=74)
- 9.1 3. For tenant-supplied appliances, the tenant always receives the full allowance (+/- N=74)
- 5.5 4. Other (Specify) (+/- N=74)

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

21. Does your agency currently assess a separate charge for tenant-owned or tenant-leased appliances (such as, food freezers, refrigerators, stoves, air conditioner units, etc.) used in any public housing units? (Check one) (N=2,603)
- 31.2 1. Yes
68.8 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 25
23. Does your agency maintain a record of the number of public housing units that are charged for tenant-owned or tenant-leased appliances? (Check one) (N=782)
- 100% 1. Yes
13.4 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 25

22. Please indicate for which of the following appliances your agency assesses a separate charge in public housing units. (Check Yes or No for each. If appliance is not permitted then check Not Permitted)
24. In calendar year 1988, about what percent of the public housing units were charged for tenant-owned or tenant-leased appliances? (Enter percent. Give your best estimate. If none enter 0) (N=468)
- 22.1 Percent of public housing units charged for tenant-owned or tenant-leased appliances (55,555 of 251,631 units)

	Separate Charges?			N
	Yes (1)	No (2)	Not Permitted (3)	
1. Air conditioner	90.9	5.8	3.3	758
2. Food freezer	70.3	18.4	11.4	763
3. Second refrigerator	33.8	28.1	38.1	696
4. Dishwasher	11.4	46.7	42.4	658
5. Washing machine	16.9	41.8	41.3	649
6. Clothes dryer	19.6	35.0	45.4	669
7. Microwave oven	6.0	93.5	0.5	636
8. Color television set	3.7	96.3	0.0	631
9. Multiple television sets	3.9	95.2	0.9	635
10. Stereo component systems	0.2	99.8	0.0	628
11. Electric space heater	8.9	61.8	29.4	648
12. Electric fan	5.8	94.2	0.0	628
13. Other appliance (Specify)				
	34.2	59.8	5.9	225

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

42. In what calendar year did your agency set its current utility allowance schedule for any utility or service provided to any section 8 housing units? (Check one) (10)

- 1.8 1. Prior to 1985
- 1.1 2. 1985
- 1.4 3. 1986
- 1.9 4. 1987
- 3.0 5. 1988 → GO TO QUESTION 44
- 2.7 6. 1989 → GO TO QUESTION 44
- 0.7 7. Don't know → GO TO QUESTION 44

+/- N=48 for items 1 to 7 in question 42.

42. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to revise your section 8 housing utility allowance schedule in 1988 or 1989? (Check one for each) (87-11)

	Check one for each					(+/- N)
	No Role (1)	Little Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Major Role (4)	Very Major Role (5)	
1. Utility rates have not changed substantially since allowances were last set	4.2	2.9	3.7	3.6	5.6	46
2. Tenant consumption has not changed significantly	5.2	3.7	3.9	4.1	5.0	46
3. Upward revision may lead some landlords to stop renting to section 8 certificate holders	5.8	3.8	4.0	2.1	4.8	45
4. Current allowance is fair and adequate	4.1	2.5	3.7	4.6	5.7	46
5. Other (Specify)	12.1	*	*	*	12.2	24

44. In calendar year 1988, did your agency compare actual utility expenses of specific section 8 housing units with their allowance in order to determine the need to revise the utility allowance schedule for any utility or service? (Check one) *** (12)

- 1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 46
- 2. No

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Public Housing

25. Please provide your agency's name and the name, title and telephone number of the person completing this questionnaire so we will know who to contact if clarification of any answers is necessary. Please make a copy of your completed questionnaire so you can refer to it if necessary.

Public Housing Agency Name

Name of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Title of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Telephone Number () _____
Area Code

26. If you have any additional comments on utility allowances for public housing units, please provide them in the space below. Attach additional sheets, if necessary. (N=2,610) 12.0% gave comments

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Public Housing Questions**

25. Please provide your agency's name and the name, title and telephone number of the person completing this questionnaire so we will know who to contact if clarification of any answers is necessary. Please make a copy of your completed questionnaire so you can refer to it if necessary.

Public Housing Agency Name

Name of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Title of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Telephone Number () _____
Area Code

26. If you have any additional comments on utility allowances for public housing units, please provide them in the space below. Attach additional sheets, if necessary. (+/- N=90) 2.6%

Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

PART III-SECTION 8 HOUSING UNITS AND
UTILITY ALLOWANCES

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

Since your PHA is part of a sample of PHAs which administer section 8 units, complete Questions 27 to 53 ONLY if the section 8 program is identified on the label appearing on page 3.

27. Does your agency provide allowances for metered utilities or nonmetered services for any section 8 housing units? (Check one) (N=1,717)

95.3 1. Yes

4.7 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 52

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

28. How many federally-sponsored section 8 housing units does your agency currently administer? (Enter number) (N=1,636)

857,192 Number of section 8 housing units administered

29. Several of the following questions request the number of section 8 housing units that receive specific utility allowances. Please look at Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40 in order to answer the following question.

Which of the following describes what you and your staff will have to do in order to complete Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40? (Check all that apply) (N=1,558)

- 62.8 1. Go through individual manual files
20.1 2. Go through individual computerized files
28.6 3. Review existing summaries of files
12.1 4. Other (Specify)

30. Given your answer to the previous question, about how many hours do you expect it will take to complete Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40? (Enter number) (N=1,636)

28,619 Total number of hours
mean=20.5

As described on page 1, GAO is required by law to request the number of section 8 housing units that receive specific utility allowances.

31. Which of the following best describes the type of numbers you or your staff will be able to provide for Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40? (Check one)

2.2 1. Actual numbers for all questions → GO TO QUESTION 35

92.9 2. Estimated numbers for some questions → GO TO QUESTION 35

4.9 3. Cannot provide any numbers → GO TO QUESTION 32
(N=1,636)

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

**PART III-SECTION 8 HOUSING UNITS AND
UTILITY ALLOWANCES**

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

Since your PHA is part of a sample of PHAs which administer section 8 units, complete Questions 27 to 53 ONLY if the section 8 program is identified on the label appearing on page 3.

27. Does your agency provide allowances for metered utilities or nonmetered services for any section 8 housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=46)

- 1.1 1. Yes
1.1 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 52

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

28. How many federally-sponsored section 8 housing units does your agency currently administer? (Enter number) (+/- N=48)

135,518 Number of section 8 housing units administered

29. Several of the following questions request the number of section 8 housing units that receive specific utility allowances. Please look at Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40 in order to answer the following question.

Which of the following describes what you and your staff will have to do in order to complete Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40? (Check all that apply)

- 3.0 1. Go through individual manual files
2.5 2. Go through individual computerized files
2.8 3. Review existing summaries of files
2.0 4. Other (Specify)

+/- N for items 1-4 in question 29 is 49.

30. Given your answer to the previous question, about how many hours do you expect it will take to complete Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40? (Enter number) (+/- N=53)

+/- 6.3 Total number of hours for mean

As described on page 1, GAO is required by law to request the number of section 8 housing units that receive specific utility allowances.

31. Which of the following best describes the type of numbers you or your staff will be able to provide for Questions 35, 36, 37, 39, and 40? (Check one)

- 0.9 1. Actual numbers for all questions → GO TO QUESTION 35
1.5 2. Estimated numbers for some questions → GO TO QUESTION 35
1.3 3. Cannot provide any numbers → GO TO QUESTION 32

+/- N for items 1, 2, and 3 for question 31 is 48.

Section 2
 Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
 Sampling Errors

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

32. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

	Allowance Established?		N
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Electricity	0.9	99.1	1,634
2. Natural gas	6.2	93.8	1,598
3. Propane (bottled gas)	34.8	65.2	1,484
4. Water and sewer combined	38.7	61.3	1,507
5. Water only	38.4	61.6	1,429
6. Fuel oil	35.8	64.2	1,445
7. Other (Specify)			
	65.8	34.2	625

33. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by section 8 housing units? (Check one) (N=1,616)

- 74.1 1. Yes
 25.9 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 41

34. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any section 8 housing units for the nonmetered services listed below. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

	Allowance Established?		N
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Wood	77.3	22.7	1,143
2. Coal	86.6	13.4	1,120
3. Trash pickup	24.4	75.6	1,236
4. Sewer	48.4	51.6	1,203
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	19.7	80.3	1,243
6. Other (Specify)			
	79.1	20.9	379

AFTER COMPLETING QUESTION 34
 SKIP TO QUESTION 41

Note: Not all PHAs could report the number of units that received specific allowances (see question 31). To give the total picture for all PHAs, regardless of this ability, results on this page combine answers from questions 32 to 34 with answers to questions 37 to 39. On the following pages, responses to questions 32 to 34 are given separately for those PHAs that could not report the exact number of units for each allowance.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

2.6 32. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

	Allowance Established?		(+/-N)
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Electricity	0.5	0.5	48
2. Natural gas	1.4	1.4	49
3. Propane (bottled gas)	3.0	3.0	52
4. Water and sewer combined	3.1	3.1	51
5. Water only	3.1	3.1	52
6. Fuel oil	3.1	3.1	52
7. Other (Specify)			
	4.6	4.6	51

2.6 33. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by section 8 housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=48)

1. Yes
2. No ———> GO TO QUESTION 41

2.6 34. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any section 8 housing units for the nonmetered services listed below. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

	Allowance Established?		(+/-N)
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Wood	3.0	3.0	55
2. Coal	2.5	2.5	55
3. Trash pickup	3.0	3.0	55
4. Sewer	3.5	3.5	55
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	2.8	2.8	55
6. Other (Specify)			
	5.1	5.1	43

**AFTER COMPLETING QUESTION 34
SKIP TO QUESTION 41**

Note: Not all PHAs could report the number of units that received specific allowances (see question 31). To give the total picture for all PHAs, regardless of this ability, sampling errors on this page correspond to a combination of answers from questions 32 to 34 and answers to questions 37 to 39. On the following pages, sampling errors for questions 32 to 34 are given separately for those PHAs that could not report the exact number of units for each allowance.

Section 2
 Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
 Sampling Errors

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

32. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

	Allowance Established?		N
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Electricity	5.3	94.7	78
2. Natural gas	9.4	90.6	74
3. Propane (bottled gas)	29.0	71.0	69
4. Water and sewer combined	29.1	70.9	71
5. Water only	29.7	70.3	74
6. Fuel oil	31.2	68.8	64
7. Other (Specify)			
	50.0	50.0	30

33. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by section 8 housing units? (Check one) (N=81)

- 60.6 1. Yes
 39.4 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 41

34. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any section 8 housing units for the nonmetered services listed below. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

	Allowance Established?		N
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Wood	62.3	37.7	36
2. Coal	73.8	26.2	42
3. Trash pickup	11.0	89.0	44
4. Sewer	25.4	74.6	46
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	9.9	90.1	49
6. Other (Specify)			
	57.9	42.1	13

AFTER COMPLETING QUESTION 34
 SKIP TO QUESTION 41

Note: Totals on this page represent responses of PHAs that could not report the number of units which received specific allowances. Aggregate results for all PHAs are given on the preceding pages.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

32. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

	§ § Allowance Established?		(+/-N)
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Electricity	5.2	5.2	21
2. Natural gas	7.8	7.8	21
3. Propane (bottled gas)	13.0	13.0	20
4. Water and sewer combined	13.0	13.0	20
5. Water only	12.9	12.9	21
6. Fuel oil	14.2	14.2	19
7. Other (Specify)			
	22.2	22.2	13

33. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by section 8 housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=22)

- 13.2 1. Yes
13.2 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 41

34. Please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any section 8 housing units for the nonmetered services listed below. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

	§ § Allowance Established?		(+/-N)
	No (1)	Yes (2)	
1. Wood	20.3	20.3	15
2. Coal	17.4	17.4	16
3. Trash pickup	11.2	11.2	16
4. Sewer	15.2	15.2	17
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	10.2	10.2	17
6. Other (Specify)			
	34.6	34.6	9

**AFTER COMPLETING QUESTION 34
SKIP TO QUESTION 41**

Note: Sampling errors on this page represent responses of PHAs that could not report the number of units which received specific allowances. Sampling errors for aggregate results for all PHAs are given on the preceding pages.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

35. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 28, how many units receive an allowance for any type of utility? (Enter number or give your best estimate) (N=1,555) (28-41)

680,896 Number of section 8 housing units receiving a utility allowance

36. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 35, how many section 8 housing units currently receive an allowance that includes costs to heat and/or cool the unit? (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0) (48-50)
(N=857)

	Number of Section 8 Housing Units
1. Heating cost only	202,744
2. Cooling cost only	*
3. Both heating and cooling costs	148,033

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

35. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 28, how many units receive an allowance for any type of utility? (Enter number or give your best estimate) (+/- N=50) (28-41)

112,891 Number of section 8 housing units receiving a utility allowance

36. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 35, how many section 8 housing units currently receive an allowance that includes costs to heat and/or cool the unit? (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0) (42-58)

	Number of Section 8 Housing Units	(+/- N)
1. Heating cost only	53,371	55
2. Cooling cost only	*	
3. Both heating and cooling costs	40,738	55

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

37. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 35, for each of the metered utilities listed below, please provide the following.

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)

b. Under Column B, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of section 8 housing units which currently have individually metered utilities. (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

c. Under Column C, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of section 8 housing units which currently have check metered utilities, or are considered as such. (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency. 77-47

	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units Individually Metered	Column C Number of Units Check Metered	N		
	% No (1)	% Yes (2)			Column A	B	C
	1. Electricity	0.7			99.3	503,119	*
2. Natural gas	6.0	94.0	325,863	*	1,524	1,297	*
3. Propane (bottled gas)	35.1	64.9	34,064	*	1,416	775	*
4. Water and sewer combined	39.2	60.8	154,708	*	1,436	792	*
5. Water only	38.9	61.1	112,466	*	1,355	729	*
6. Fuel oil	36.0	64.0	55,829	*	1,381	763	*
7. Other (Specify)	66.6	33.4	10,481	*	594	111	*

38. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by section 8 housing units? (Check one) (N=1,535)

- 74.8 1. Yes 47
25.2 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 40

Section 2
 Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
 Sampling Errors

Sampling Errors for Corresponding
 Section 8 Questions

37. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 35, for each of the metered utilities listed below, please provide the following.

- a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No.)
- b. Under Column B, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of section 8 housing units which currently have individually metered utilities. (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0)
- c. Under Column C, for those metered utilities with an allowance, estimate the number of section 8 housing units which currently have check metered utilities, or are considered as such. (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency. 77-471

	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units Individually Metered (+/-)	Column C Number of Units Check Metered (+/-)	(+/- N)		
	% No (1)	% Yes (2)			Column A	B	C
1. Electricity	0.5	0.5	69,644	*	50	53	*
2. Natural gas	1.4	1.4	43,392	*	51	55	*
3. Propane (bottled gas)	3.1	3.1	9,593	*	53	54	*
4. Water and sewer combined	3.1	3.1	27,965	*	53	54	*
5. Water only	3.2	3.2	22,693	*	54	53	*
6. Fuel oil	3.1	3.1	16,487	*	53	54	*
7. Other (Specify)							
	4.7	4.7	5,392	*	50	25	*

38. Have any utility allowances been established for nonmetered services (e.g., trash, wood, coal and/or tenant-supplied appliances) used by section 8 housing units? (Check one) (+/- N=51)

- 2.6 1. Yes
- 2.6 2. No → GO TO QUESTION 40

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

39. For each of the nonmetered services listed below, please provide the following information.

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

b. Under Column B, indicate the number of section 8 housing units which currently receive an allowance for nonmetered services. (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

Column A N		Column A Allowance Established?		Column B Number of Units With Nonmetered Allowances	
		% No (1)	% Yes (2)	Units N	N
1,001	1. Wood	75.9	24.1	5,898	219
975	2. Coal	86.2	13.8	1,661	122
1,084	3. Trash pickup	19.6	80.4	139,233	795
1,051	4. Sewer	46.3	53.7	75,689	485
1,084	5. Allowance for tenant-supplied appliances	15.6	84.4	139,066	814
331	6. Other (Specify)	78.4	21.6	12,450	58

40. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 35, in an average month during calendar year 1988, about how many section 8 housing units had utility expenses which fall into the following categories? (Enter number for each or give your best estimate. If none enter 0) (N=1,555)

68.1 Have not performed this analysis

(N=478) **

	Number of Section 8 Housing Units
1. Utility expenses less than the utility allowance	16,341
2. Utility expenses about equal to the utility allowance	76,065
3. Utility expenses greater than the utility allowance	43,798

41. In which of the following calendar year(s) did your agency review the utility allowance schedule for any section 8 housing units in order to determine whether or not amounts for any utility or service met HUD guidance? (Check all that apply) (N=1,608)

- %
- 45.0 1. Prior to 1985
 - 38.0 2. 1985
 - 40.3 3. 1986
 - 48.2 4. 1987
 - 65.0 5. 1988
 - 40.6 6. 1989
 - 4.1 7. Don't know

**Only PHAs which provided answers consistent with question 35 are included in this analysis.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

REMEMBER Please exclude: (1) section 8 vouchers; (2) project-based units for which HUD requires that the allowance it develops be used (e.g., "new construction"); and (3) units that your agency administers for another state or local agency.

39. For each of the nonmetered services listed below, please provide the following information.

a. Under Column A, please indicate whether or not your PHA has established an allowance for any section 8 housing units. (Check No or Yes. If not applicable check No)

b. Under Column B, indicate the number of section 8 housing units which currently receive an allowance for nonmetered services. (Enter number or give your best estimate. If none enter 0)

	Column A Allowance Established?		Column B	
	Column A (+/- N)	% No (1)	% Yes (2)	Number of Units With Nonmetered Allowances (+/-) N
1. Wood	56	3.3	3.3	3,816 34
2. Coal	56	2.8	2.8	1,363 27
3. Trash pickup	56	2.9	2.9	21,262 54
4. Sewer	56	3.8	3.8	17,933 47
5. Allowance for tenant-supplied 56 appliances		2.7	2.7	27,304 54
6. Other (Specify)				
	41	5.6	5.6	9,101 18

40. Of the section 8 housing units you entered in Question 35, in an average month during calendar year 1988, about how many section 8 housing units had utility expenses which fall into the following categories? (Enter number for each or give your best estimate. If none enter 0) (+/- N=50)

2.9 Have not performed this analysis

	Number of Section 8 Housing Units	(+/-)
1. Utility expenses less than the utility allowance	5,705	47
2. Utility expenses about equal to the utility allowance	17,968	47
3. Utility expenses greater than the utility allowance	13,883	47

41. In which of the following calendar year(s) did your agency review the utility allowance schedule for any section 8 housing units in order to determine whether or not amounts for any utility or service met HUD guidance? (Check all that apply)

- 3.0 1. Prior to 1985
- 2.9 2. 1985
- 3.0 3. 1986
- 3.0 4. 1987
- 2.9 5. 1988
- 3.0 6. 1989
- 1.2 7. Don't know

+/- N=49 for items 1 to 7 in question 41.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

42. In what calendar year did your agency set its current utility allowance schedule for any utility or service provided to any section 8 housing units? (Check one) (N=1,633) (79)
- 9.9 1. Prior to 1985
 3.6 2. 1985
 5.3 3. 1986
 11.4 4. 1987
 41.9 5. 1988 → GO TO QUESTION 44
 26.5 6. 1989 → GO TO QUESTION 44
 1.4 7. Don't know → GO TO QUESTION 44

43. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to revise your section 8 housing utility allowance schedule in 1988 or 1989? (Check one for each) (97-111)

N	Check one for each				
	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Adequate Role (4)	Major Role (5)
1. Utility rates have not changed substantially since allowances were last set 459	15.9	7.7	12.9	10.8	52.8
2. Tenant consumption has not changed significantly 459	29.7	12.7	14.7	15.0	27.9
3. Upward revision may lead some landlords to stop renting to section 8 certificate holders 440	48.8	12.4	13.4	3.8	21.6
4. Current allowance is "fair" and adequate 451	15.1	5.0	13.2	19.7	47.0
5. Other (Specify) 101	44.5	2.7	2.1	0.0	50.7

44. In calendar year 1988, did your agency compare actual utility expenses of specific section 8 housing units with their allowance in order to determine the need to revise the utility allowance schedule for any utility or service? (Check one) *** (112)
1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 46
 2. No

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

42. In what calendar year did your agency set its current utility allowance schedule for any utility or service provided to any section 8 housing units? (Check one) (78)

- 1.8 1. Prior to 1985
- 1.1 2. 1985
- 1.4 3. 1986
- 1.9 4. 1987
- 3.0 5. 1988 → GO TO QUESTION 44
- 2.7 6. 1989 → GO TO QUESTION 44
- 0.7 7. Don't know → GO TO QUESTION 44

+/- N=48 for items 1 to 7 in question 42.

43. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to revise your section 8 housing utility allowance schedule in 1988 or 1989? (Check one for each) (87-11)

	Check one for each					(+/- N)
	No Role (1)	Little Role (2)	Some Role (3)	A Fair Amount (4)	A Great Amount (5)	
1. Utility rates have not changed substantially since allowances were last set	4.2	2.9	3.7	3.6	5.6	46
2. Tenant consumption has not changed significantly	5.2	3.7	3.9	4.1	5.0	46
3. Upward revision may lead some landlords to stop renting to section 8 certificate holders	5.8	3.8	4.0	2.1	4.8	45
4. Current allowance is "fair" and "adequate"	4.1	2.5	3.7	4.6	5.7	46
5. Other (Specify)	12.1	*	*	*	12.2	24

44. In calendar year 1988, did your agency compare actual utility expenses of specific section 8 housing units with their allowance in order to determine the need to revise the utility allowance schedule for any utility or service? (Check one) *** (12)

- 1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 46
- 2. No

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

45. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to compare actual utility expenses of specific section 8 housing units with their allowance? (Check one for each) *** (13-18)

	Check one for each				
	(1) No Role	(2) Minor Role	(3) Some Role	(4) Moderate Role	(5) Major Role
1. Agency does not keep the type of data needed for this analysis					
2. Agency management does not see the need for this analysis					
3. Allowance was set recently, insufficient time has elapsed					
4. Prior analysis of this data was inconclusive					
5. Agency does not have the staff needed to perform this analysis					
6. Other (Specify)					

46. Did your agency use actual utility consumption data of specific section 8 housing units when it most recently set its utility allowance schedule for section 8 housing units for any utility or service? (Check one) *** (19)

1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 48
2. No

47. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to use actual consumption data of specific section 8 housing units when you most recently set your utility allowance schedule for section 8 housing units? (Check one for each) *** (20-25)

	Check one for each				
	(1) No Role	(2) Minor Role	(3) Some Role	(4) Moderate Role	(5) Major Role
1. State or local privacy laws prohibit agency from obtaining data					
2. State or local privacy laws inhibit agency from obtaining data					
3. Utility company privacy policies prevent agency from obtaining data					
4. Data are not used because actual tenant consumption data may not reflect the "similar unit in the locality" standard set in HUD's handbook					
5. Obtaining data from utility suppliers would be too burdensome					
6. Other (Specify)					

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

45. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to compare actual utility expenses of specific section 8 housing units with their allowance? (Check one for each) *** (15-18)

Check one for each

	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Moderate Role (4)	Major Role (5)
1. Agency does not keep the type of data needed for this analysis					
2. Agency management does not see the need for this analysis					
3. Allowance was set recently, insufficient time has elapsed					
4. Prior analysis of this data was inconclusive					
5. Agency does not have the staff needed to perform this analysis					
6. Other (Specify)					

46. Did your agency use actual utility consumption data of specific section 8 housing units when it most recently set its utility allowance schedule for section 8 housing units for any utility or service? (Check one) *** (19)

1. Yes → GO TO QUESTION 48
2. No

47. How much of a role (if any) did each of the following reasons play in your agency's decision not to use actual consumption data of specific section 8 housing units when you most recently set your utility allowance schedule for section 8 housing units? (Check one for each) *** (20-25)

Check one for each

	No Role (1)	Minor Role (2)	Some Role (3)	Moderate Role (4)	Major Role (5)
1. State or local privacy laws prohibit agency from obtaining data					
2. State or local privacy laws inhibit agency from obtaining data					
3. Utility company privacy policies prevent agency from obtaining data					
4. Data are not used because actual tenant consumption data may not reflect the "similar unit in the locality" standard set in HUD's handbook					
5. Obtaining data from utility suppliers would be too burdensome					
6. Other (Specify)					

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

48. For allowances currently in effect, which of the following methods were used to determine utility allowance schedules for section 8 housing units? (Check all that apply) (N=1,621)

18.6 1. Regional household consumption survey data ⁽¹⁸⁻³²⁾

67.3 2. Data provided by utility company for the community

43.2 3. Actual consumption data of specific section 8 housing units (all or a sample of units)

24.1 4. Allowances obtained from HUD local area office

27.9 5. Did not obtain allowance from HUD local area office, but used an approach suggested by them

2.6 6. Allowances based on discussions with tenant associations

11.1 7. Other (Specify)

NOTE: Question 49 deals with individually metered utilities only; Question 50 deals with check metered utilities only; and Question 51 deals with nonmetered services only.

49. What is your agency's practice regarding section 8 housing units which have individually metered utilities and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check one) (N=1,607 for item 1)

2.0 1. Not applicable--Agency does not use this type of meter

98.3 2. Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility company directly

1.7 3. Other (Specify)
Note: N for items 2 and 3 in question 49 is 1,575.

50. What is your agency's practice regarding section 8 housing units which have check metered utilities (or are considered as such) and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply) (N=1,631 for item 1)

97.41. Not applicable--This type of meter is not used ⁽²⁴⁻⁴⁰⁾

100.02. Agency does nothing. Tenant receives full utility allowance (including households with "negative rent")

* 3. Tenant receives that portion of the utility allowance that is equal to the actual consumption (e.g., if an allowance is 600 therms of gas and the unit consumes 400 therms, only 400 therms are given that month)

* 4. Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against their shelter rent. Rent is not reduced past zero dollars (no "negative rent" occurs)

* 5. Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against unrelated tenant expenses (such as a damage deposit)

* 6. Tenant receives a credit for the unused portion of the allowance which is applied against future months when utility expenses exceed the allowance

* 7. Other (Specify)
Note: N for items 2 to 7 in question 50 is 42.

51. What is your agency's practice regarding section 8 housing units which have nonmetered services and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply) (N=1,407 for item 1)

22.4 1. Not applicable--Agency does not provide nonmetered services ⁽⁴¹⁻⁴⁴⁾

80.5 2. Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility supplier directly (e.g., trash, wood, coal)

57.1 3. For tenant-supplied appliances, the tenant always receives the full allowance

1.2 4. Other (Specify)
Note: N for items 2 to 4 in question 51 is 1,098.

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

<p>48. For allowances currently in effect, which of the following methods were used to determine utility allowance schedules for section 8 housing units? (Check all that apply) (+/- N=48)</p> <p>2.3 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Regional household consumption survey data ⁽²⁶⁻²⁸⁾</p> <p>2.8 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Data provided by utility company for the community</p> <p>3.0 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Actual consumption data of specific section 8 housing units (all or a sample of units)</p> <p>2.6 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Allowances obtained from HUD local area office</p> <p>2.7 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Did not obtain allowance from HUD local area office, but used an approach suggested by them</p> <p>0.9 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Allowances based on discussions with tenant associations</p> <p>1.9 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>NOTE: Question 49 deals with individually metered utilities only; Question 50 deals with check metered utilities only; and Question 51 deals with nonmetered services only.</p> <p>49. What is your agency's practice regarding section 8 housing units which have individually metered utilities and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check one) +/-N for item 1 in question 49 is 49.</p> <p>0.8 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable--Agency does not use this type of meter ⁽²⁶⁾</p> <p>0.8 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility company directly</p> <p>0.8 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>N for items 2 and 3 in question 49 is 49.</p>	<p>50. What is your agency's practice regarding section 8 housing units which have check metered utilities (or are considered as such) and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply) +/-N for item 1 in question 50 is 48.</p> <p>0.9 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable--This type of meter is not used ⁽³⁴⁻⁴⁰⁾</p> <p>* 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does nothing. Tenant receives full utility allowance (including households with "negative rent")</p> <p>* 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives that portion of the utility allowance that is equal to the actual consumption (e.g., if an allowance is 600 therms of gas and the unit consumes 400 therms, only 400 therms are given that month)</p> <p>* 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against their shelter rent. Rent is not reduced past zero dollars (no "negative rent" occurs)</p> <p>* 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives a credit for unused portion of the allowance which is applied against unrelated tenant expenses (such as a damage deposit)</p> <p>* 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Tenant receives a credit for the unused portion of the allowance which is applied against future months when utility expenses exceed the allowance</p> <p>* 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>51. What is your agency's practice regarding section 8 housing units which have nonmetered services and consume less than their utility allowance for a given month? (Check all that apply) +/-N for item 1 in question 51 is 53.</p> <p>2.7 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable--Agency does not provide nonmetered services ⁽⁴¹⁻⁴⁴⁾</p> <p>2.9 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Agency does nothing. Tenant always receives the full allowance and pays the utility supplier directly (e.g., trash, wood, coal)</p> <p>3.6 3. <input type="checkbox"/> For tenant-supplied appliances, the tenant always receives the full allowance</p> <p>0.8 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</p> <p>+/-N for items 2 to 4 in question 51 is 56.</p>
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**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

Questionnaire Results for Section 8

52. Please provide your agency's name and the name, title and telephone number of the person completing this questionnaire so we will know who to contact if clarification of any answers is necessary. Please make a copy of your completed questionnaire so you can refer to it if necessary.

53. If you have any additional comments on utility allowances for section 8 housing units, please provide them in the space below. Attach additional sheets, if necessary. (N=1,717) 16.2% gave comments.

Public Housing Agency Name

Name of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Title of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Telephone Number () _____
Area Code

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

**Section 2
Survey Questionnaire Results and Related
Sampling Errors**

**Sampling Errors for Corresponding
Section 8 Questions**

52. Please provide your agency's name and the name, title and telephone number of the person completing this questionnaire so we will know who to contact if clarification of any answers is necessary. Please make a copy of your completed questionnaire so you can refer to it if necessary.

Public Housing Agency Name

Name of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Title of Person Completing This Questionnaire

Telephone Number () _____
Area Code

53. If you have any additional comments on utility allowances for section 8 housing units, please provide them in the space below. Attach additional sheets, if necessary. (N=1,717) 16.2% gave (48) comments.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Methodologies for Sampling Households and Collecting Data at Six PHAs

To determine the rent burdens incurred by assisted households, we judgmentally selected six PHAs nationwide on the basis of size, geographic dispersion, differences in metering configurations, and other factors. The PHAs selected were in Chandler, Arizona; Cuyahoga County, Ohio; Dakota County, Minnesota; East Detroit, Michigan; Phoenix, Arizona; and West Memphis, Arkansas.

Population Development and Sampling Plan

At the six PHAs, we worked with staff to develop comprehensive lists of the public housing and section 8 certificate units for which the PHAs had established allowances. Units that were master-metered were excluded from these lists. We then determined how utilities in the units were likely to be metered, either by individual, check, or mixed meters.¹

We devised sampling plans in order to determine population estimates for rent burdens incurred for PHA units with allowances. The sampling plans were designed to provide separate estimates for each PHA's public housing and section 8 program. In programs with a small number of units, we selected all units. Where check-metered utilities existed, we also designed our sample plan so that we could make population estimates for rent burdens according to each of the three methods used to meter utilities—by individual, check, or mixed meters.² In each category we sampled units randomly. Table 3.1 shows the population sizes, sample sizes, and the number of households for which we obtained sufficient information to make rent burden calculations.

¹Individually metered utility usage is measured by the utility company and the assisted household pays its bill directly to the company. These households receive a utility allowance through a reduction in the amount that the household would pay as rent to equal 30 percent of adjusted income. For check-metered units, utility consumption for a building as a whole is measured by the utility company and paid by the PHA; however, the PHA uses check-meters for each unit to measure individual unit consumption. These households receive a utility allowance in the form of a set number of consumption units (e.g., kilowatt-hours) which they may consume without a surcharge. If the household exceeds the allowance, it is surcharged by the PHA for excess consumption. Mixed-metered units are those units in which at least one utility is individually metered and another is check-metered.

²We did not gather data on mixed-metered units at Cuyahoga County because the time and cost to do so would have been excessive.

**Section 3
Methodologies for Sampling Households and
Collecting Data at Six PHAs**

Table 3.1: Populations of Units With Allowances and Sample Sizes Drawn

Agency, program, and sample strata	Original population size^a	Number of units sampled	Number of usable cases	Estimated population size
Chandler				
Public housing ^b	198	198	150	150
Section 8	264	264	144	144
Cuyahoga County				
Public housing				
Individual meter	1,881	293	197	1,265
Check meter	913 ^c	206	133	589
Section 8	6,236	384	176	2,858
Dakota County				
Public housing	277	270	212	218
Section 8	1,315	350	204	767
East Detroit				
Public housing	100	100	95	95
Section 8	25	25	16	16
Phoenix				
Public housing ^d	2,270	214	175	1,857
Section 8	2,394	315	150	1,140
West Memphis				
Public housing				
Individual meter	31	31	21	21
Check meter	117	117	81	81
Mixed meter	250	127	99	195
Section 8	249	150	54	90
Total	16,520	3,044	1,907	9,486

^aPopulations of units with utility allowances. May be less than the total number of units administered because not all units that a PHA administers receive allowances.

^bAll units were mixed-metered.

^cThere were 3,525 check-metered units; however, many of the records for these units were incomplete due to faulty meters, missing records, or the failure of the staff to read meters. Therefore we could not include these units. The 913 units represent the total number of usable records.

^dAll units were check-metered.

Overall, we sampled 3,044 units and obtained 1,907 cases (63 percent) with usable information for households that had rent computed under the 30-percent rent burden standard. When we sampled units, we found a large number of ineligible cases, such as a unit identified by a PHA as a section 8 certificate unit when in fact it was a voucher unit, and units with more than 3 months of data missing. We dropped these units from our sample. We randomly drew replacement samples to compensate for

the ineligible cases; some of these had to be dropped for similar reasons. Because of the substantial time and effort involved in reviewing case files and obtaining utility company data, further replacement sampling was not feasible.

**Disposition of Cases in
Which the 30-Percent Rent
Burden Standard Did Not
Apply**

Our estimates are for those households subject to the 30-percent-of-adjusted-income rent burden standard. Federal housing law requires that households pay the highest of three amounts for rent: (1) 30 percent of the household's adjusted monthly income, (2) 10 percent of the household's total monthly income, or (3) the portion of any welfare payment designated for housing expense. Households may have rent charged under one standard for the entire year or may be under one standard for part of the year and another standard for the remainder of the year, as income and household circumstances change. In our samples, we did not find any welfare rents being charged. We found 19 instances in which households were under the 10-percent standard for some or all of the year. We dropped these cases from our sample to improve the clarity of the results.

**Standardized
Approach Used in
Gathering Data**

To ensure consistency in our data collection, we developed a standardized data collection instrument in which we entered all information on income, rent, allowance, and utility expense by utility, unit size, number of occupants, and metering configuration.

12 Months' Data Collected

We collected 12 consecutive months of information so that rent burden calculations would not be influenced by the use of data from only warmer or cooler months. The period covered for each of the six PHAs varied slightly because the period for which information was readily available from each utility company varied. This variation applies only to those analyses for which we aggregated all public housing or section 8 housing results. It does not apply to individual results at each PHA, since we gathered information on a consistent 12-month period. While the period covered by our work varied slightly, the monthly analyses provided in section 4 do not identify the year. The data were generally collected for the period from March 1988 to February 1989.

During the 12-month period, incomes and adjustments to income from sampled households often changed. PHAs then recalculated adjusted

income to take the new circumstances into account. We incorporated these changes into our results.

Limit of One Household to a Unit During the Study Period

Families move in and out of assisted housing. We decided that only one family could occupy the sampled unit during the period studied so that different household consumption patterns in a single unit would not bias our data. We also decided that the household had to occupy the unit on the last day of the study period so that we would have a common period for each of our samples. If these conditions were not satisfied, the sampled unit was dropped and another was randomly selected.

How Missing Data Were Handled

In some instances, income or utility expense data were missing. If more than 3 months' data were missing for any data element, we dropped that unit from our sample and randomly sampled another unit. For those units with 1 to 3 months of data missing for any data element, we estimated the missing data by taking the average of the surrounding values. For example, if a gas bill was not available for June, we used the average of the May and July bills. Of the 1,907 usable cases, 423 cases had 1 or more data elements missing over the 12-month period. Each case had multiple data elements for each month.

Another data problem occurred when a utility company shut off service to a sampled household during our study period. We retained the unit in our study no matter how long the shutoff lasted. We did this because the household continued to receive the allowance during that period. In our sample, no more than one utility was shut off for any household. Of the 1,907 households in our sample, 24 had a utility service shutoff for 1 or more months of our study period.

Quarterly Allowances and Tenant-Supplied Appliances

For the most part, PHAs supplied allowances monthly and utilities were billed monthly. However, in some cases allowances were provided and bills were rendered every 3 months. In these cases, we entered the allowance and consumption amounts quarterly rather than allocating a portion of the allowance and expense to each month. This approach may provide some "spikes" in the month-to-month rent burdens shown but does not affect annual rent burden computations. (See fig. 4.4.)

Sometimes major appliances, such as refrigerators or ranges, are not supplied with the rental unit and the tenant is expected to supply them. In these cases, the PHA provides an allowance for these tenant-supplied

appliances. We had no basis for determining the use of the allowances (e.g., whether the tenant used a previously owned appliance or bought or rented one). Rather, we recorded that the allowance was provided to the household but did not record an “expense” or cost associated with the tenant-owned appliance. This procedure has the effect of somewhat decreasing observed rent burdens, even though such allowances only amounted to \$2 to \$7 per month.

Data Sources

In most cases, we gathered income, rent, allowance, and other household data directly from PHA files maintained for each household. If the PHAs supplied summary information, we verified the accuracy of this information by comparing it with PHA file material. For the most part, we collected utility consumption data directly from utility companies serving the individually metered households, since current and complete data typically were not collected by the PHAs. If the PHA had some or all of the utility billing records in its possession, we discussed the records’ contents with utility companies to ensure that these records accurately represented the information that we wanted to gather.

Other than gathering billing records from and confirming rate structures with utility companies, we did not collect any information independent of PHA files. For example, we did not independently verify tenant income and family characteristics (by checking with employers and visiting households, for example) to determine that these were correctly reported to the PHA. These tasks would have been too time-consuming and costly for us to perform. Also, we did not determine whether assisted households received energy assistance from other sources, such as local government programs. Energy assistance payments to help meet utility costs would decrease overall rent burdens, but the six PHAs did not consider any such payments in determining the allowance for the household or the amount of rent the household would pay.

Data Verification Procedures

We found that several of the PHAs made errors in calculating household income and utility allowance amounts. These errors sometimes affected the rent paid by assisted households. For example, we found arithmetic errors, use of outdated allowance schedules, and transcription errors in transferring income and income adjustments to the PHA work sheets used to compute the rent.

We found instances in which several PHAs provided allowances for utility services that were included in the rent. We also found instances

in which PHA records contained inconsistent information on utilities paid for by the tenants. For example, one PHA's records showed that a household at a single address had gas heat for several months, electric heat later in the year, and then gas heat again still later in the year. When these instances occurred, we tried to reconcile the problems encountered with the PHAs or through utility companies. When neither the PHA nor the utility companies could provide definitive resolution, we decided how to record information according to the preponderance of evidence.

Except for two samples, we verified all information in tenants' files by checking source documents in the files against PHA work sheets used to calculate tenant rent and allocate utility allowances.³ This verification included rechecking tens of thousands of calculations.

Our Results Show the "What Should Have Been" Rent Burdens

As a result of the problems cited above, some tenants paid too little or too much in shelter rent. For example, if the household's utility allowance was less than it should have been because of arithmetic or other errors, the resulting rent burden was greater than it should have been. To show the rent burdens that "should have been" observed, we corrected all PHA errors before entering the information into our data base. This approach gives a better picture of the degree to which allowances matched utility expenses. To ensure that our corrections were appropriate, we discussed questionable cases with PHA staff. The "what should have been" data base is the one reported.

We also constructed a second data base, the "what was" data base, which included the errors in the PHAs' files. If a tenant's utility allowance was incorrectly added, or a utility that should have been included was not, we recorded the information consistent with the PHA's error in this second data base. This approach shows what the assisted household actually experienced. An analysis of the effect of PHA errors using the "what was" data base is included in chapter 3 of volume I (GAO/RCED-91-40A).

³For the Dakota County public housing sample and the West Memphis section 8 sample, extensive data checks found few or no errors, and further verification was discontinued.

Rent Burdens Observed at Six PHAs

The figures presented here compare the estimated average annual and monthly rent burdens incurred by public housing and section 8 certificate households at six PHAs with the 30-percent standard set out in the housing law. Rent burden data are generally presented by type of program—public housing or section 8. However, where data are presented for individual PHAs, our results are further summarized according to the type of metering system used to measure consumption of utilities—check, individual, or mixed metering.

Since we reviewed only six judgmentally selected PHAs out of approximately 4,100 PHAs that administer public housing and section 8 certificate programs—many of which provide utility allowances—our results should not be taken as providing estimates of the rent burden of the entire assisted housing population. The six PHAs we reviewed were

- City of Chandler, Community Services Department, Housing Division, Chandler, Arizona;
- Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, Cleveland, Ohio;
- Dakota County Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Rosemount, Minnesota;
- East Detroit Housing Commission, East Detroit, Michigan;
- City of Phoenix, Neighborhood Improvement and Housing Department, Phoenix, Arizona; and
- West Memphis Housing Authority, West Memphis, Arkansas.

Overall Rent Burdens

The rent burden experienced by an estimated 4,471 public housing households receiving utility allowances during a 12-month period at 6 PHAs averaged 30.5 percent (+0.3) of adjusted income, as indicated in figure 4.1.¹ Rent burdens for these households usually fluctuated from month to month, depending on factors such as seasonal weather patterns and household consumption habits. The average monthly household rent burden ranged from a high of 33.5 percent (+0.5) in January—usually a high-cost heating month—to a low of 28.9 percent (+0.4) in September—usually a low energy-consumption month. Only one month, August, showed an average rent burden that coincided with the 30-percent standard. Average rent burdens for public housing

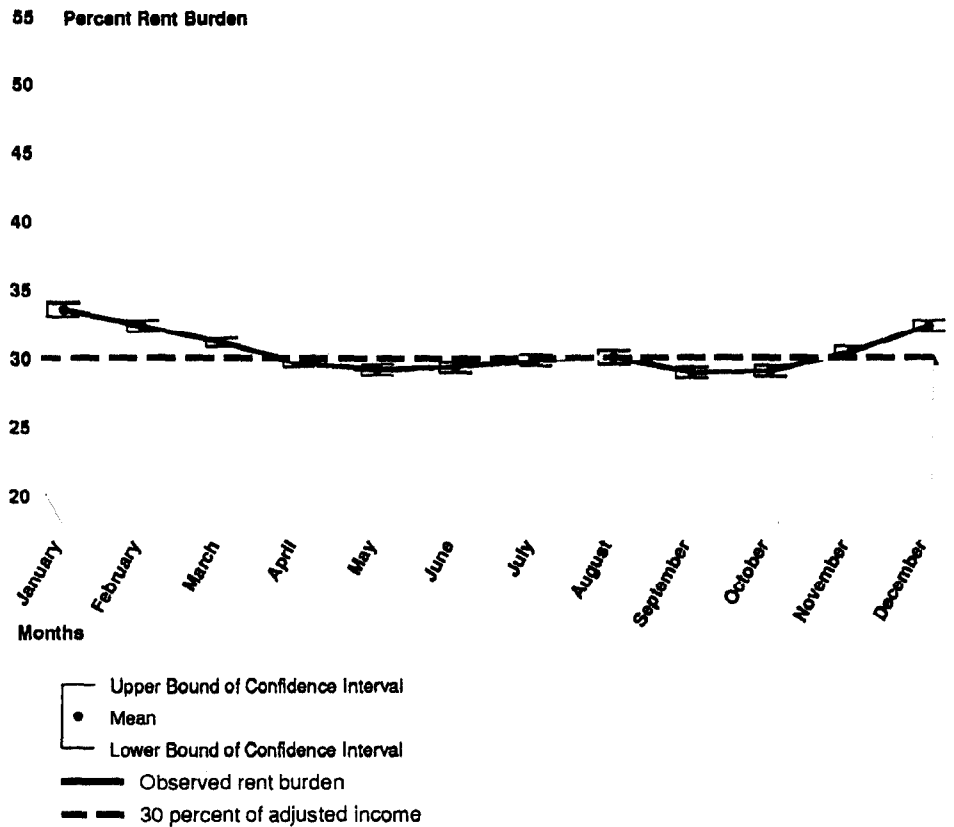
¹Sampling errors are given in parentheses. Sampling errors define the upper and lower bounds of the estimates made for our review results. Sampling errors were calculated at the 95-percent confidence level. This means that 19 out of 20 times, the sampling procedures used would produce a range that includes the true value. Where we reviewed all case files, no sampling error estimates were calculated.

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households fell below the standard for 6 months and above the standard for the remaining 5 months.

On average, total and adjusted monthly income for these public housing households was \$454 (+\$17) and \$379 (+\$16), respectively. Monthly utility allowances averaged \$55 (+\$3) and the households incurred an average monthly out-of-pocket utility expense of \$1 (+\$1) above the allowance.²

Figure 4.1: Monthly Rent Burdens for Public Housing Households at Six PHAs



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 30.5 percent (+0.3) for 4,471 (+155) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 1,163 out of 1,556 households.

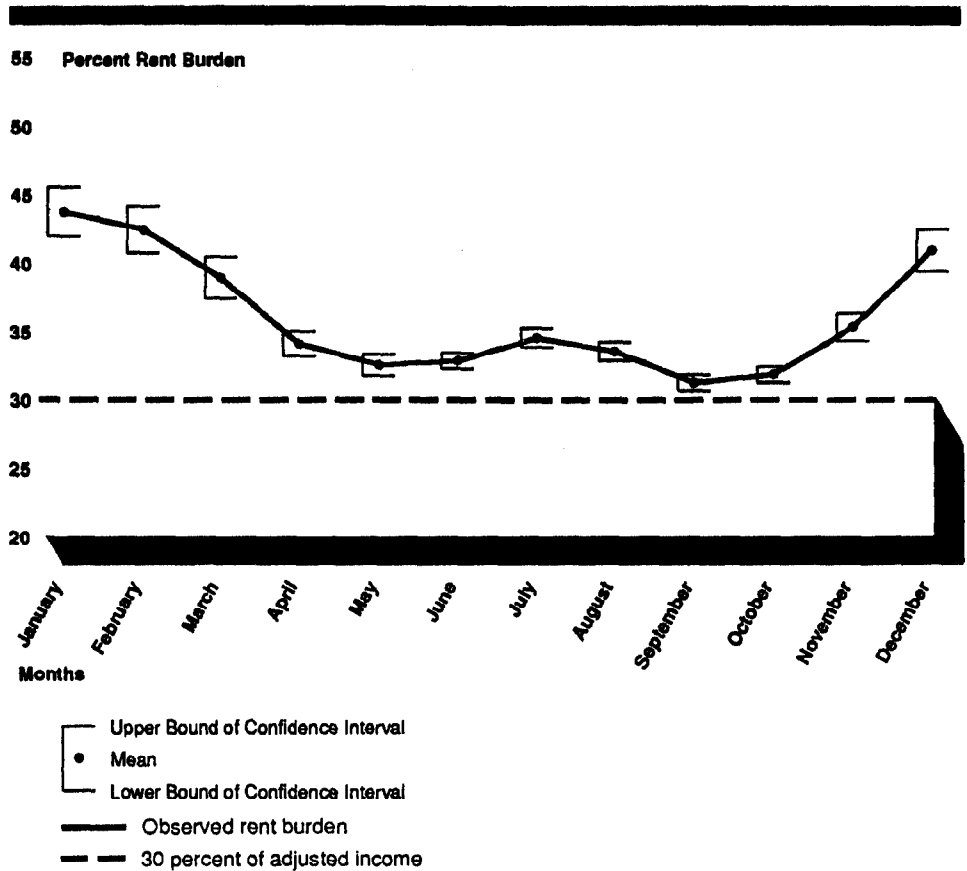
²The average utility allowance figure does not include Phoenix public housing utility allowances because the sliding rate scales for amounts consumed could not be converted easily to dollar amounts.

Section 4
Rent Burdens Observed at Six PHAs

For an estimated 5,015 section 8 certificate households that received allowances, the average rent burden for a 12-month period was 36 percent (+0.8) at 6 PHAs. (See fig. 4.2.) Just as public housing household rent burdens fluctuated from month to month, so too did those of section 8 households—only more dramatically. Fluctuations ranged from an average high of 43.7 percent (+1.8) in January to an average low of 31.2 percent (+0.6) in September.

On average, total monthly income for section 8 households was \$544 (+\$24) and adjusted monthly income averaged \$458 (+\$23). Utility allowances averaged \$64 (+\$2) monthly—approximately 16 percent higher than those for public housing households. In an average month, section 8 households paid \$27 (+\$4) more than the allowance for utility usage.

Figure 4.2: Monthly Rent Burdens for Section 8 Certificate Households at Six PHAs



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 36 percent (+0.8) for 5,015 households (+331). This estimate is based on usable data from 744 out of 1,488 households.

Public Housing Rent Burdens at Each PHA

The average annual rent burden at each of the six PHAs varied depending on a number of factors, such as the type and number of utilities for which households received allowances. Further, how utilities are metered—individually, check, or mixed—can affect rent burdens.

Households that have utilities individually metered receive the full amount of their allowance even when their utility costs are less than the allowance. Any unused portion of a monthly allowance can be retained by the household to offset future expenses when they exceed the allowance. Check-metered households, on the other hand, are sometimes considered to have used the entire allowance regardless of whether they consumed it or not. Unlike individually metered households, check-metered households at the six PHAs we reviewed did not retain any unused portion of the allowance for application against excess expenses

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in future months. Mixed-metered households retain unused allowances for individually metered utilities but do not retain any unused portion of the allowance for check-metered utilities.³ In any event, no matter how a utility is metered, when consumption exceeds what the allowance covers, households incur additional utility expenses for that portion of the utility bill over the allowance.

City of Chandler

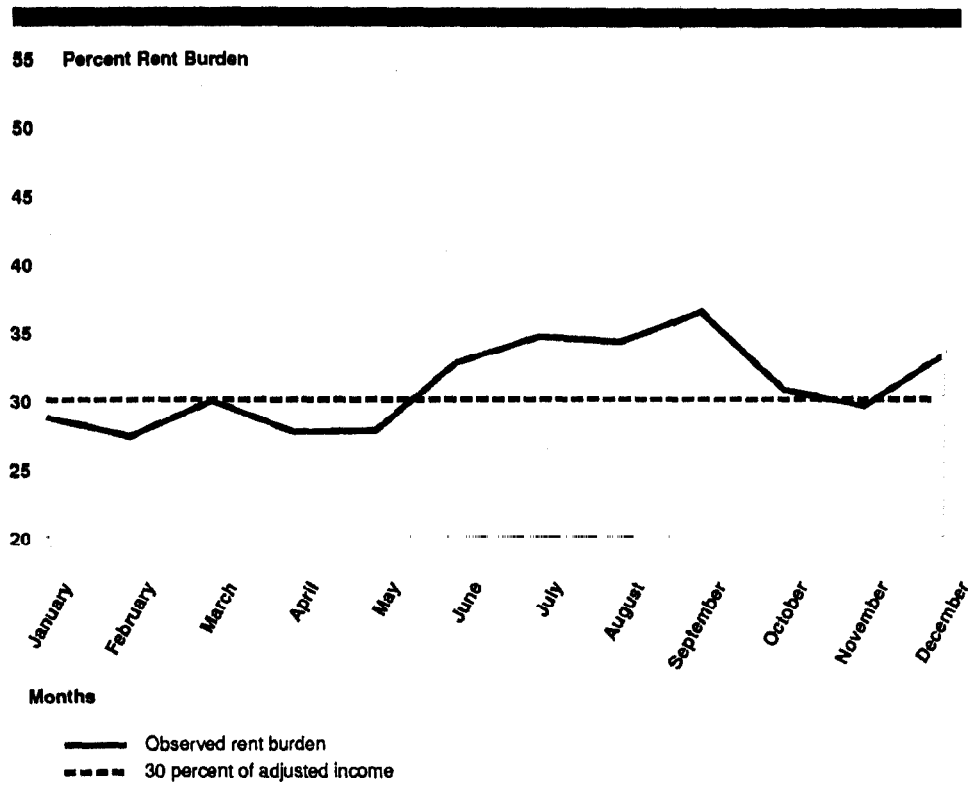
Chandler public housing units are mixed-metered; that is, gas is check-metered and electricity is individually metered. Overall, the rent burden for our 12-month study period averaged 31.1 percent. Average monthly rent burdens ranged from a high of 36.4 percent in September to a low of 27.3 percent in February. As indicated in figure 4.3, the higher rent burdens generally occurred during the warmer months of June through September. According to a PHA official, allowances covered the use of evaporative coolers during the warmer months. The official believed that this higher consumption can be attributed to warmer than normal weather conditions and less-than-energy-conscious households.

On average, public housing households in Chandler had a total monthly income of \$564 and an adjusted monthly income of \$445. The average monthly utility allowance was \$61, with the excess averaging \$5 above the allowance.

³In addition, PHAs provide allowances for nonmetered services, such as trash or sewer. The allowance is usually a flat dollar amount. For the six PHAs we reviewed, nonmetered allowances were applicable only to section 8 households and were handled in a similar manner to individually metered utilities.

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Figure 4.3: Monthly Rent Burdens for Mixed-Metered Chandler Public Housing Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 31.1 percent for 150 households. Since we reviewed all households, the results are not subject to estimation error.

Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority

Cuyahoga public housing units are either check-metered, individually metered, or mixed-metered.⁴ For those units that are check-metered, households receive an allowance to cover electricity consumption for lighting, cooking, and, in some instances, heating. Because check-metered households receive no credit when consumption is less than the allowance amount, rent burdens cannot be less than 30 percent. Individually metered units receive an allowance for gas and/or electricity depending on the type and number of utility services available at each unit.

Check-Metered Units

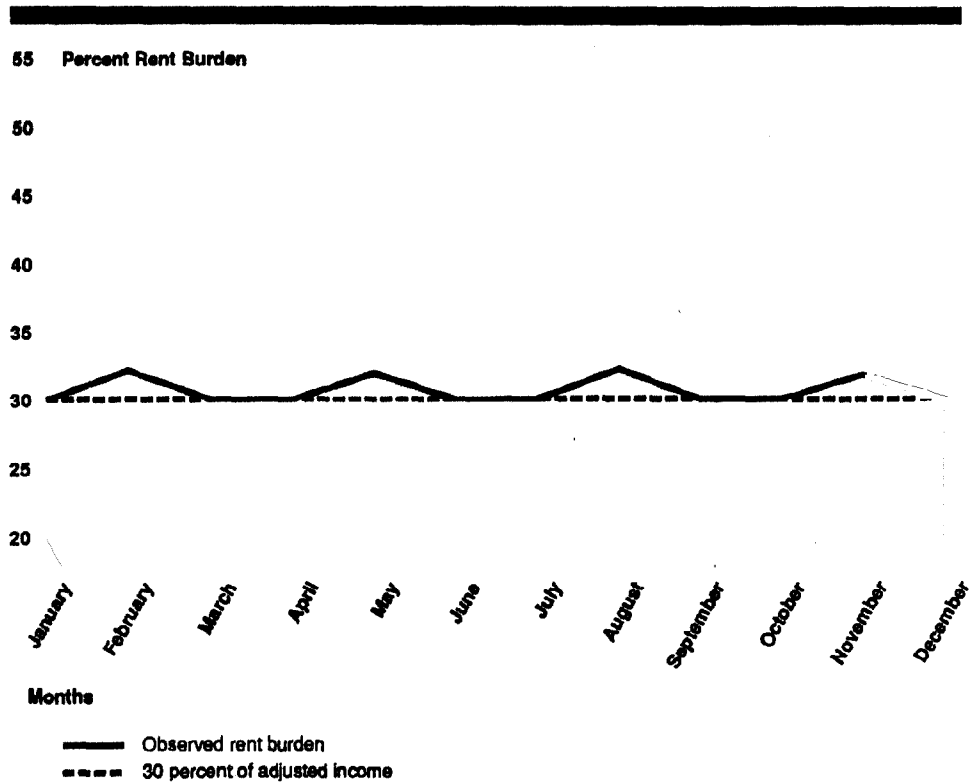
Rent burdens for Cuyahoga check-metered households averaged 30.7 percent (+0.2). (See fig. 4.4.) Since allowances are assigned and excess charges billed quarterly for these units, household expenses for 8 of the

⁴We did not gather data on mixed-metered households in Cuyahoga because the time and cost to do so would have been excessive.

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12 months include only shelter costs; thus, the rent burden for those 8 months is exactly 30 percent. However, in the four months in which quarterly bills are received, the units had average rent burdens that ranged from a high of 32.2 percent (+0.8) in August to a low of 31.8 percent (+0.6) in November. Because of the quarterly utility billings, figure 4.4 shows spikes that coincide with the billing cycle. Overall, the total monthly income for these households averaged \$325 (+\$24), while the adjusted monthly income averaged \$282 (+\$21). Further, the monthly utility allowance averaged \$20 (+\$1), with an excess of \$2 (+\$1) over the allowance in an average month.

Figure 4.4: Monthly Rent Burdens for Check-Metered Cuyahoga Public Housing Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 30.7 percent (+0.2) for 589 households (+53). This estimate is based on usable data from 133 out of 206 households.

Individually Metered Units

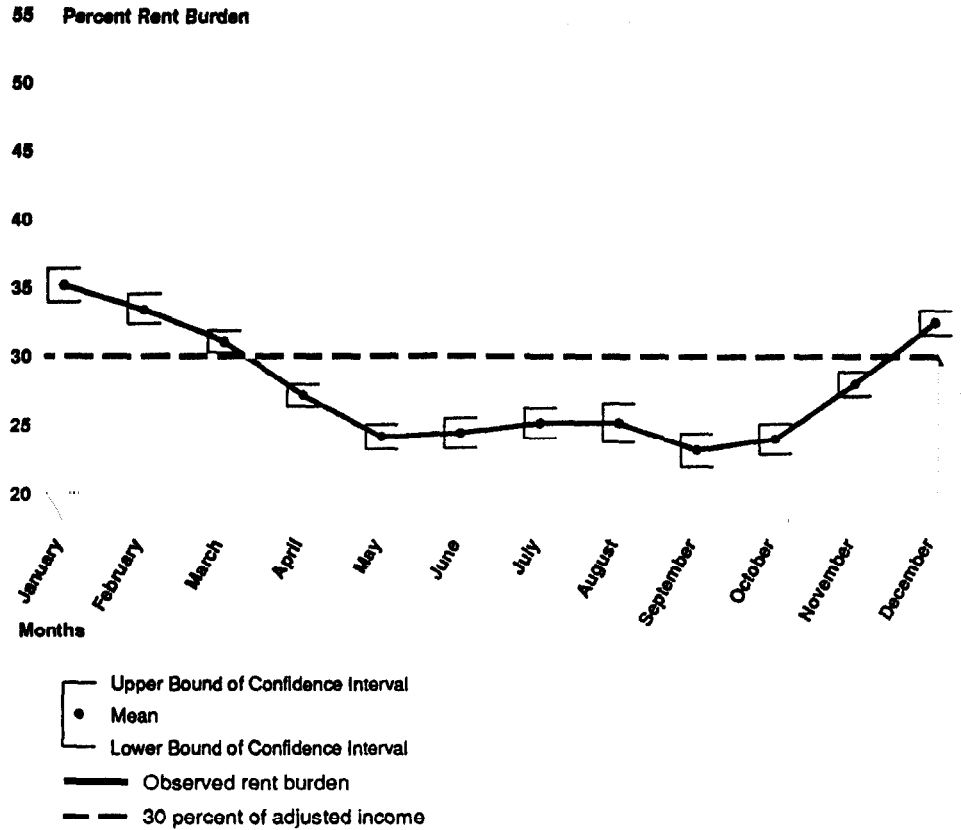
Over a 12-month period, Cuyahoga public housing units with individual meters experienced an average rent burden of 27.9 percent (+0.7)—the lowest average rent burden we observed among the 6 PHAs reviewed. Notwithstanding this low figure, average rent burdens over the 12-month period varied from a high of 35.1 percent (+1.2) to a low of 23.1

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percent (+1.2). (See fig. 4.5.) PHA officials attributed the low average annual rent burden to arbitrary changes made by them to the utility allowances that raised allowance amounts.

Overall, total monthly income for these public housing individually metered households averaged \$495 (+\$45) while the adjusted monthly income averaged \$425 (+\$44). Additionally, utility allowances averaged \$76 (+\$7), with households on average using \$10 (+\$3) less per month than their allowances over an entire 12-month period.

Figure 4.5: Monthly Rent Burdens for Individually Metered Cuyahoga Public Housing Households



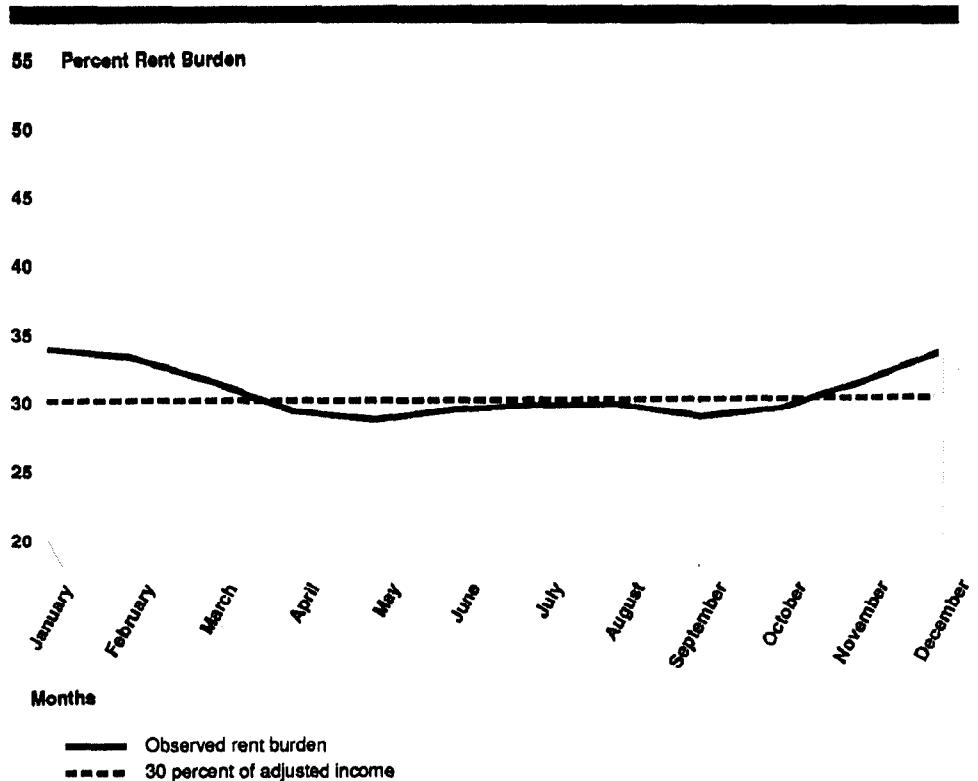
Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 27.8 percent (+0.7) for 1,265 households (+93). This estimate is based on usable data from 197 out of 293 households.

Dakota County Housing and Redevelopment Authority

All public housing units that we reviewed in Dakota County had individual meters for electricity and gas. Allowances covered uses such as lighting, appliances, heating, and/or cooking. As figure 4.6 indicates, the average annual rent burden in Dakota County was 30.7 percent (+0.04). For 7 of the 12 months reviewed, the rent burden fell below the 30-percent standard. It only rose above the standard during the colder months of November through March. During the entire 12-month period, the average rent burden ranged from a high of 33.8 percent (+0.01) in January to a low of 28.6 percent (+0.05) in May.

For these households, total monthly income averaged \$900 (+\$9) while the adjusted monthly income averaged \$777 (+\$9). The utility allowance averaged \$53 (+\$1), with an average monthly excess above the allowance of \$5 (the sampling error is less than one dollar).

Figure 4.6: Monthly Rent Burdens for Individually Metered Dakota County Public Housing Households



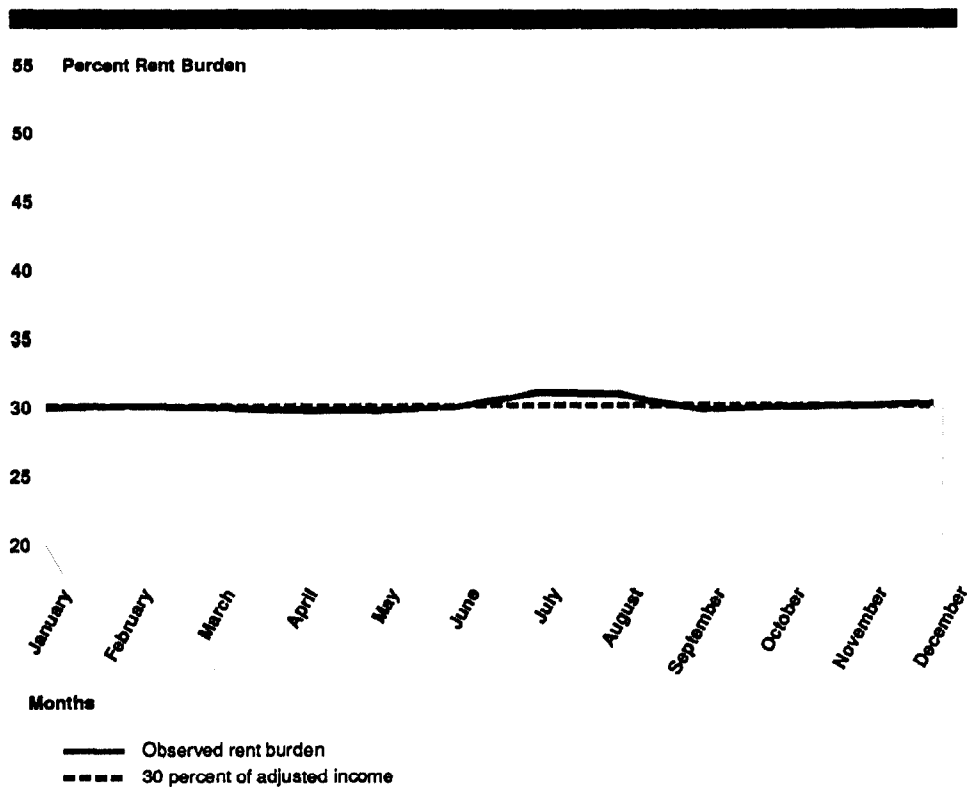
Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 30.7 percent (+0.04) for 218 (+2) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 212 out of 270 households. Upper and lower bounds of the confidence intervals are too small to be shown in this figure.

East Detroit Housing
 Commission

All the East Detroit public housing units have individual meters for electricity, which is used for lighting and appliances. All households are one-bedroom units and most are occupied by only one person. The average annual rent burden was 30 percent. The average rent burden fluctuated slightly from month to month, ranging from 29.7 percent in 3 months to 30.9 percent in 1 month. Average rent burdens for the remaining 8 months fell between these bounds. (See fig. 4.7.) A HUD official attributed the consistent rent burden to the fact that units are all the same size, use only one utility, and usually have only one occupant.

Total and adjusted monthly incomes for these households averaged \$624 and \$526, respectively. Monthly utility allowances averaged \$10, with an average excess of less than \$1.

Figure 4.7: Monthly Rent Burdens for Individually Metered East Detroit Public Housing Households

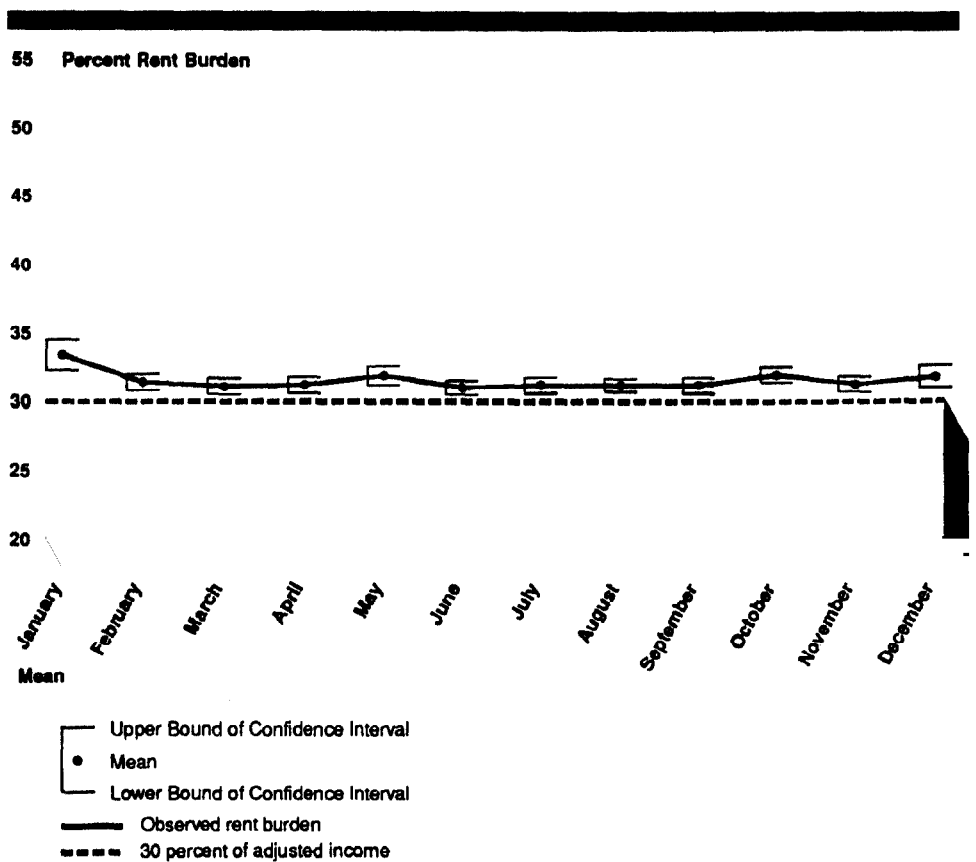


Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 30 percent for 95 households. This estimate is based on usable data from 95 out of 100 households. Since we reviewed all households, the results are not subject to estimation errors.

Phoenix Neighborhood Improvement and Housing Department

Public housing households in Phoenix are check-metered for gas and electric utilities, which are used for lighting, heating, and/or cooking. As indicated in figure 4.8, these households had an average annual rent burden of 31.5 percent (+0.6). Rent burdens for these households deviated moderately from month to month, with a high of 33.3 percent (+1.1) during January and a low of 30.9 percent (+0.5) in June. Monthly total income averaged \$403 (+\$24) and adjusted monthly income averaged \$325 (+\$21). Further, these households incurred average expenses of \$4 (+\$1) in excess of the utility allowance. We could not calculate the average utility allowance for Phoenix public housing households. This is because it would have been too time-consuming to duplicate the complex formulas used by the PHA.

Figure 4.8: Monthly Rent Burdens for Check-Metered Phoenix Public Housing Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 31.5 percent (+0.6) for 1,857 households (+112). This estimate is based on usable data from 175 out of 214 households.

**West Memphis Housing
Authority**

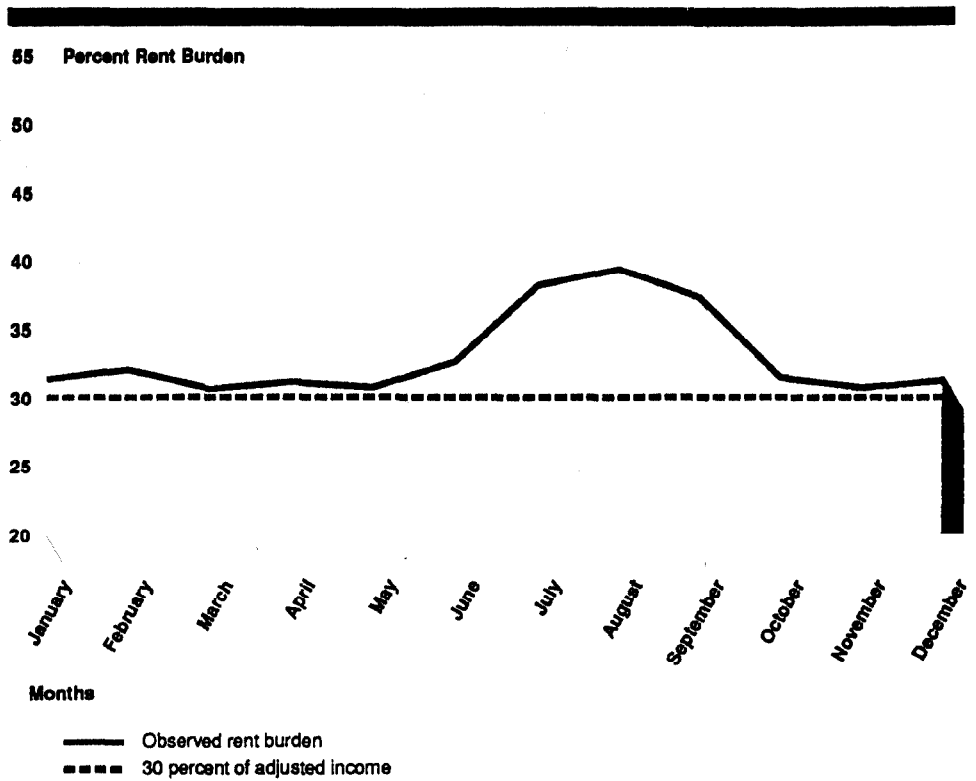
West Memphis Housing Authority public housing units include a mixture of check-metered, individually metered, and mixed-metered units.

Check-Metered Units

Some West Memphis housing units are check-metered for both gas and electricity. The average annual rent burden for these households was 33.3 percent. Rent burdens over the 12-month period ranged from an average high of 39.3 percent in August to an average low of 30.6 in March. The majority of higher monthly rent burdens occurred during the summer months. (See fig. 4.9.) The PHA's executive director attributed the higher summer rent burdens to air-conditioning usage that the allowances do not cover.

Total monthly income for West Memphis check-metered households averaged \$469, while adjusted monthly income averaged \$382. Utility allowances averaged \$59, with an average monthly excess of \$12 above the allowance.

Figure 4.9: Monthly Rent Burdens for Check-Metered West Memphis Public Housing Households



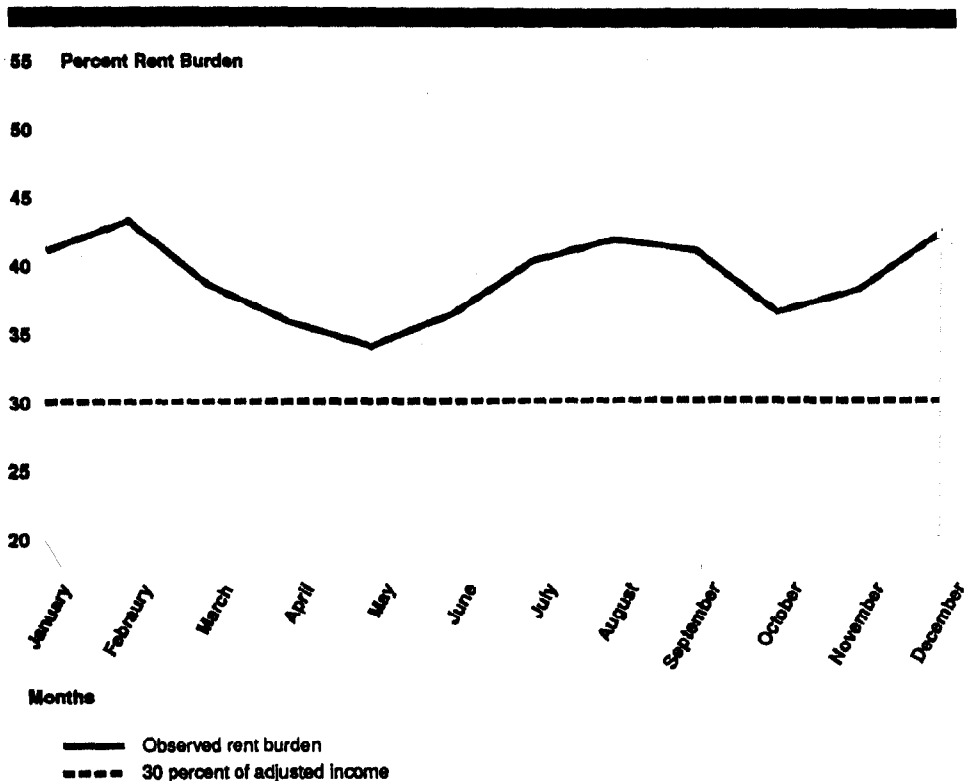
Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 33 percent for 81 households. This estimate is based on usable data from 81 out of 117 households. Since we reviewed all households, the results are not subject to estimation errors.

Individually Metered Units

Other West Memphis public housing households are individually metered for gas and electricity. The average annual rent burden for these households was 39 percent. Fluctuations in the rent burden from month to month ranged from an average high of 43.2 percent in February to an average low of 34 percent in May. (See fig. 4.10.) According to the PHA's executive director, the high rent burdens during the summer can be attributed to air-conditioning costs which allowances do not cover.

For these individually metered households, total monthly income averaged \$550, while adjusted monthly income averaged \$468. The monthly utility allowance averaged \$37, with out-of-pocket expenses over allowances averaging \$43 per month.

Figure 4.10: Monthly Rent Burdens for Individually Metered West Memphis Public Housing Households



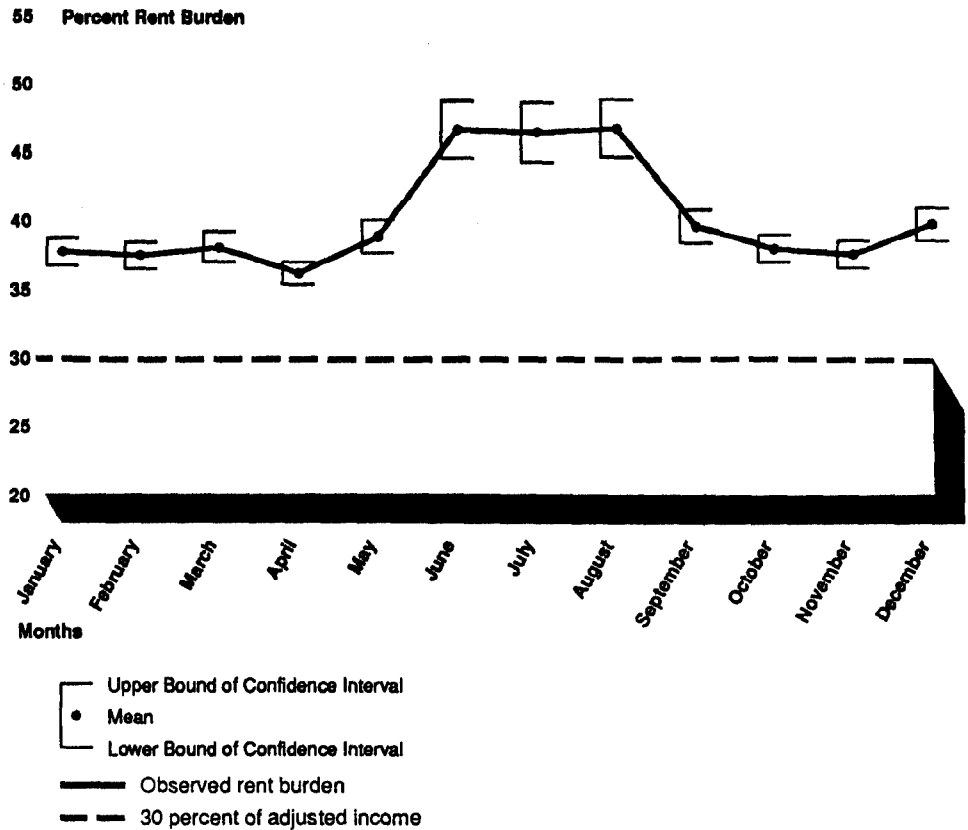
Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 39 percent for 21 households. This estimate is based on usable data from 21 out of 31 households. Since we reviewed all households, the results are not subject to estimation errors.

Mixed-Metered Units

Mixed-metered public housing households in West Memphis are individually metered for electricity and check-metered for gas. The average annual rent burden was 40.2 percent (+1.2)—the highest average annual rent burden observed among both the public housing and section 8 households we reviewed. During the 12-month period of our review, the rent burden for these households fluctuated from an average monthly high of 46.7 (+2.1) in August to an average monthly low of 36.1 (+0.8) in April. (See fig. 4.11.)

West Memphis mixed-metered households had an average total monthly income of \$400 (+\$29) and an average adjusted monthly income of \$304 (+\$24). Utility allowances averaged \$47 (+\$2), with an average excess above the allowance of \$31 (+\$2). As with the other West Memphis households, the PHA director attributed excess consumption to the use of appliances, such as air conditioners, that the allowances were not designed to cover.

Figure 4.11: Monthly Rent Burdens for Mixed-Metered West Memphis Public Housing Households



Note: The average annual rent burden was 40.2 percent (+1.2) for 195 (+13) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 99 out of 127 households.

Section 8 Rent Burdens at Each PHA

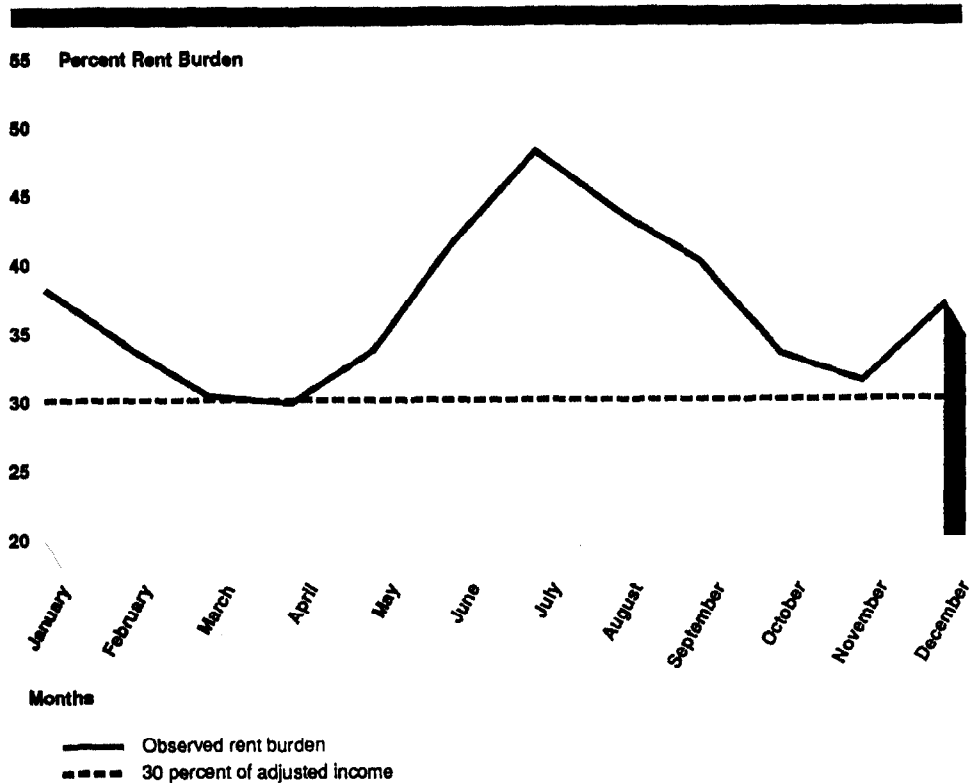
Just as average annual rent burdens varied within public housing households, so too did rent burdens vary for section 8 certificate households—only more markedly. Further, many section 8 allowances covered a greater variety of utilities. For the six PHAs we reviewed, the utilities were individually metered. The variety of utilities results from the diversity of housing dispersed through each community’s privately owned section 8 housing inventory. As a result, the range of utilities and corresponding allowances vary not only from PHA to PHA but from unit to unit and can have a potentially greater effect on rent burdens of section 8 households than on those of public housing households. A number of these section 8 households also received allowances for nonmetered utilities or services, such as trash or sewer. Public housing households are not normally provided an allowance for these services, on the basis of our observations at the six PHAs we reviewed.

City of Chandler

Chandler section 8 utility allowances cover a variety of uses and services. These include heating, cooling, cooking, heating water, lighting, and appliance operation, trash pickup, and/or tenant-supplied appliances. Overall, the average annual rent burden was 36.8 percent, with fluctuations ranging from an average high of 48.1 percent in July to an average low of 29.8 percent in April. (See fig. 4.12.) The higher rent burdens during the winter and summer were due to what one PHA official called excessive household consumption habits and variations in weather conditions.

For these households, average total monthly income was \$490 and average adjusted monthly income was \$393. Household utility allowances averaged \$66 and expenses averaged \$93. As a result, households had utility expenses averaging \$27 more than their allowances.

Figure 4.12: Monthly Rent Burdens for Chandler Section 8 Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 36.8 percent for 144 households. This estimate is based on usable data from 144 out of 264 households. Since we reviewed all households, the results are not subject to estimation errors.

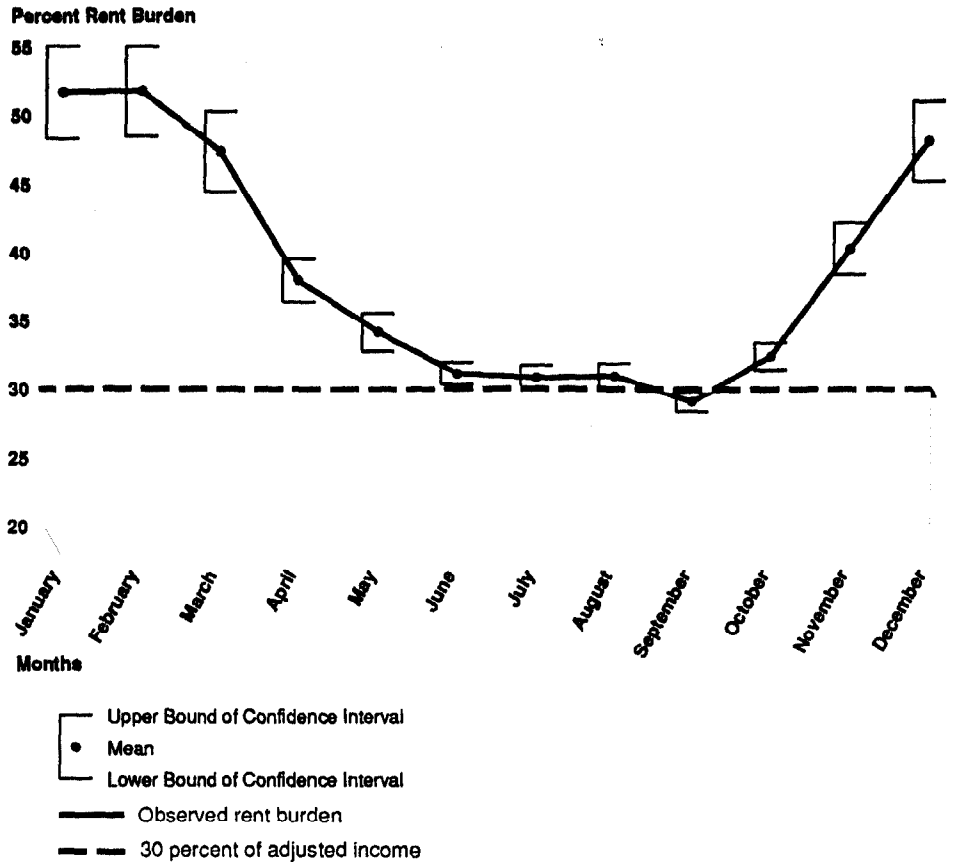
Cuyahoga

Households in Cuyahoga's section 8 program may receive utility allowances for electricity, gas, and oil; actual coverage varies from unit to unit. The rent burden for these households averaged 38.8 percent (+1.6) during our 12-month review period. Monthly fluctuations in the rent burden were primarily seasonal, with the highest average rent burdens in the winter months. The highest average rent burden during our review period, 51.7 percent (+3.3), occurred in February. The lowest average rent burden, 30.8 percent (+0.9), occurred in July. (See fig. 4.13.) PHA and HUD officials attributed the higher rent burden during the winter months to (1) older housing stock that lacked adequate weatherization; (2) elderly tenants who tend to raise thermostats and use supplemental heating sources, and (3) allowances based on consumption data from 11 years ago that has not been changed despite a less energy-efficient, aging housing stock.

Total and adjusted monthly incomes for these households averaged \$498 (+\$37) and \$422 (+\$36), respectively. Cuyahoga's section 8 households had an average monthly utility allowance of \$63 (+\$4), with monthly expenses averaging \$100 (+\$8). Out-of-pocket expenses incurred by households averaged \$37 (+\$6) over and above the established utility allowance.

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Figure 4.13: Monthly Rent Burdens for Cuyahoga Section 8 Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 38.8 percent (+1.6) for 2,858 (+301) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 176 out of 384 households.

Dakota County

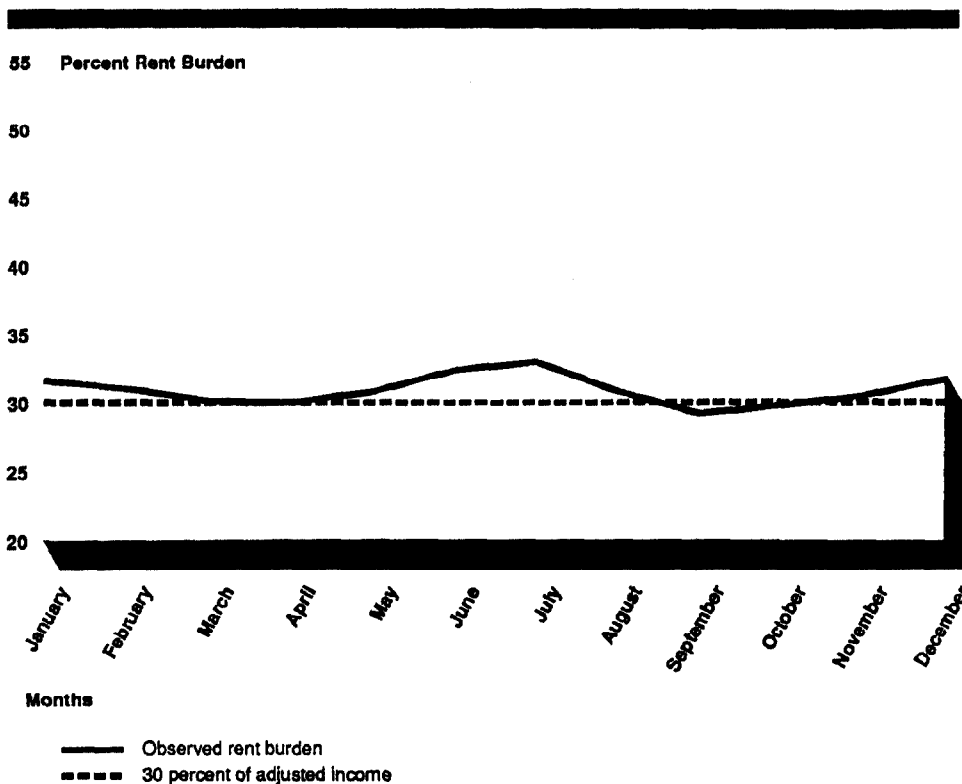
Dakota County section 8 households receive allowances for electricity and/or gas with multipurpose usage. The average annual rent burden for these households was 30.9 percent (+0.2). Monthly rent burden fluctuations were less pronounced in Dakota County than in other section 8 programs we reviewed, with a high average monthly rent burden of 33.0 percent (+0.5) and a low of 29.2 percent (+0.3). (See fig. 4.14.) PHA and HUD officials attributed the higher rent burdens to higher energy consumption during the winter and summer months because of heating and cooling costs.

Total monthly income for these households averaged \$723 (+\$38), while the adjusted monthly income averaged \$617 (+\$34). Utility allowances

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averaged \$32 (+\$3), while utility expenses averaged \$38 (+\$4). As a result, households incurred average out-of-pocket utility expenses above the allowances of \$6 (+\$1) monthly.

Figure 4.14: Monthly Rent Burdens for Dakota County Section 8 Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 30.9 percent (+0.2) for 767 (+58) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 204 out of 350 households. The monthly sampling errors were less than or equal to 0.5 percent for all months.

East Detroit

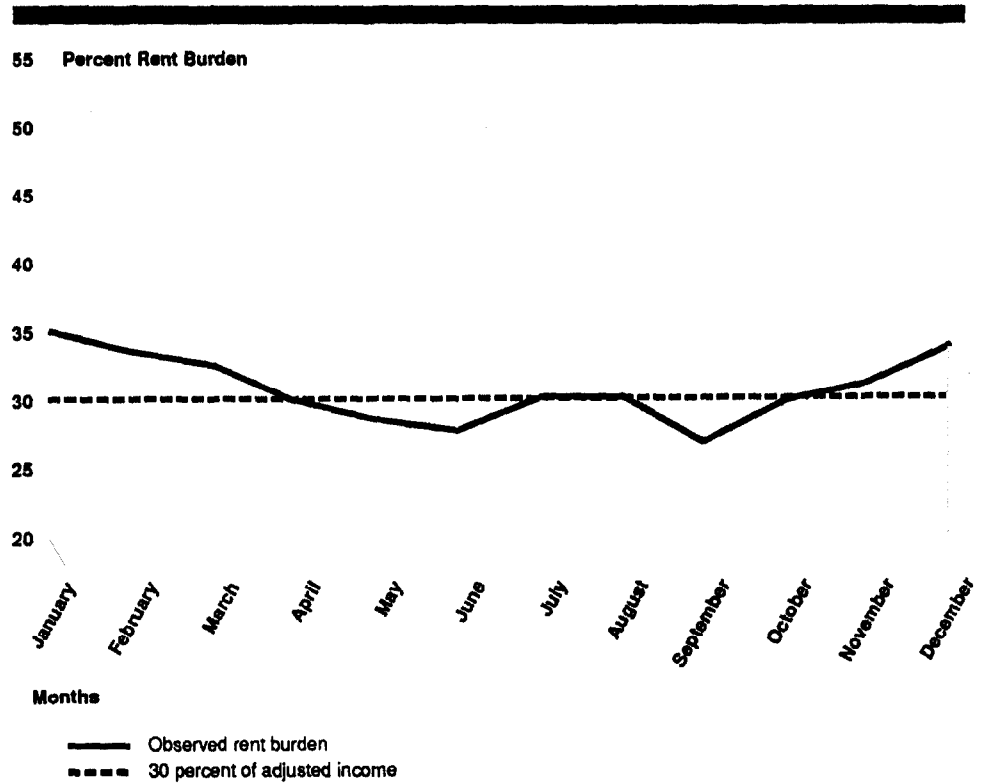
Households in East Detroit’s section 8 program receive allowances for electricity and/or gas. The rent burden for these households over a 12-month period averaged 31.0 percent. The highest average monthly rent burden was 35 percent in January and the lowest was 26.8 percent in September. (See fig. 4.15.) HUD and PHA officials attributed higher rent burdens in the winter months to energy costs higher than the heating allowance, which remained constant throughout the year.

Total monthly income for these households averaged \$628, with an adjusted monthly income averaging \$512. Utility allowances averaged

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\$53 and expenses averaged \$56. In an average month, households paid an additional \$3 in utility expenses above the allowance.

Figure 4.15: Monthly Rent Burdens for East Detroit Section 8 Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 31.0 percent for 16 households. This estimate is based on usable data from 16 out of 25 households. Since we reviewed all households, the results are not subject to estimation error.

Phoenix

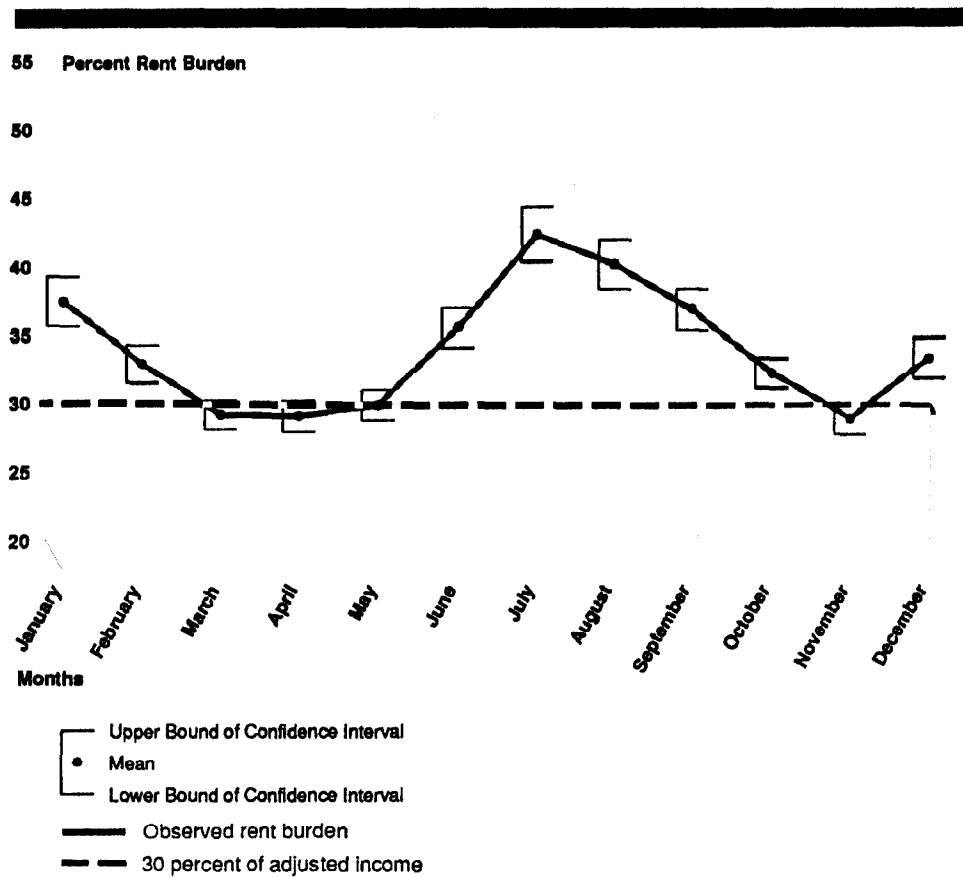
Phoenix section 8 households received allowances for gas, electricity, trash, water, and sewer. The average annual rent burden was 33.9 percent (+1.0). The highest average monthly rent burden over the 12-month review period was 42.3 percent (+2.0) in July. Conversely, the lowest average monthly rent burden was 28.8 percent (+1.1) in November, as indicated in figure 4.16.

The dispersed housing administrator acknowledged that, while Phoenix's section 8 utility allowances covered air-conditioning, the higher summer rent burdens could be attributed to air-conditioning expenses higher than the allowance and wasteful consumption. On

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average, Phoenix section 8 households had a total monthly income of \$547 (+\$40) and an adjusted monthly income of \$449 (+\$38). Utility allowances averaged \$86 (+\$4) per month—the highest at all six PHAs we reviewed—with an average utility expense of \$103 (+\$6). These households paid on average \$17 (+\$4) in additional monthly utility expenses over the allowance.

Figure 4.16: Monthly Rent Burdens for Phoenix Section 8 Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 33.9 percent (+1.0) for 1,140 (+123) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 150 out of 315 households.

West Memphis

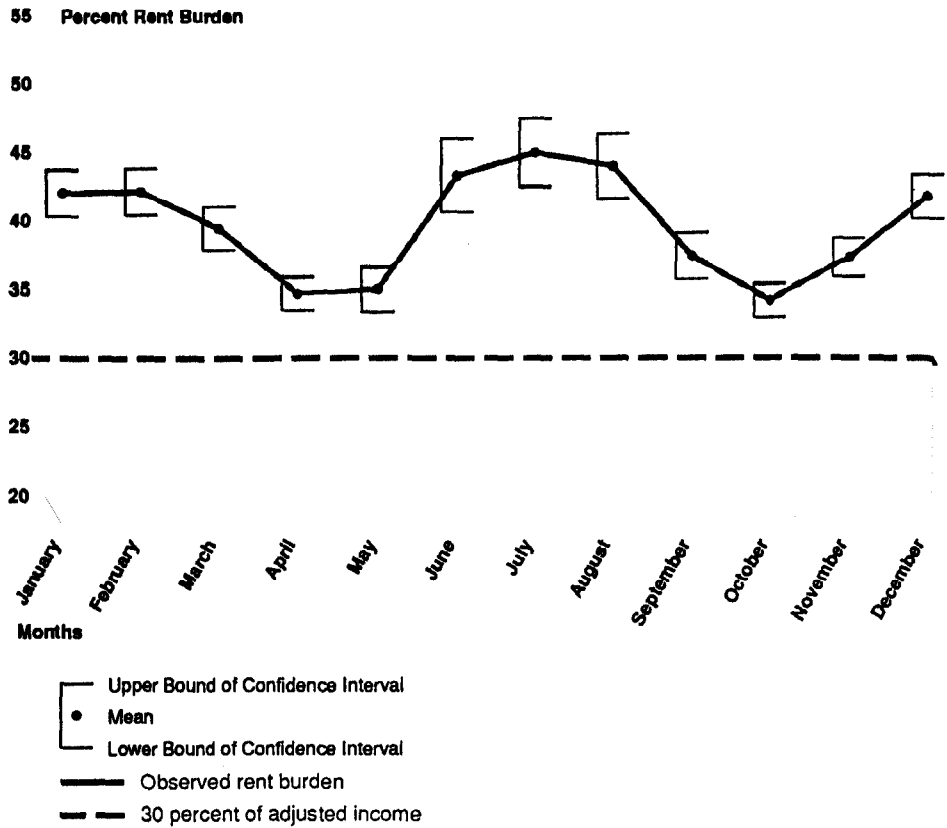
All West Memphis section 8 households reviewed received allowances for gas and electricity. Overall, the average annual rent burden for these households was 39.6 percent (+1.4). West Memphis showed the typical section 8 pattern of month-to-month fluctuations in rent burdens, with a high of 44.9 percent (+2.5) in July and a low of 34.1 percent (+1.2) in

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October. (See fig. 4.17.) The fact that West Memphis allowances do not cover air-conditioning costs may account for higher rent burdens during the summer months.

The average total and adjusted monthly incomes for these section 8 households were \$529 (+\$48) and \$441 (+\$48), respectively. The average monthly utility allowance was \$70 (+\$2), with an average monthly expense of \$112 (+\$5). As a result, households incurred utility expenses averaging \$42 (+\$4) per month above the allowances.

Figure 4.17: Monthly Rent Burdens for West Memphis Section 8 Households



Note: The average annual rent burden is estimated at 39.6 percent (+1.4) for 90 (+12) households. This estimate is based on usable data from 54 out of 150 households.

Sampling Errors for Allowance and Rent Burden Estimates

For the six PHAS at which we collected detailed household financial information, estimates of the proportion of households that (1) received utility allowances of various dollar amounts and (2) experienced rent burdens at various levels are shown in figures 2.1 through 2.4 of volume I of this report. The four tables that follow present the sampling errors associated with these estimates.

Table I.1: Sampling Errors for Proportion of Public Housing Households at Different Allowance Levels

Allowance	Households (percent)	Sampling error (percent)
\$30 or less	40.4	+3.2
\$31-\$50	16.3	+2.2
\$51-\$90	24.0	+2.8
More than \$90	19.2	+3.1

Note: This distribution is based on an estimated 2,614 households (+108). Phoenix check-metered units are not included. (See sec. 3 of this volume.) Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Table I.2: Sampling Errors for Proportion of Section 8 Households at Different Allowance Levels

Allowance	Households (percent)	Sampling error (percent)
\$30 or less	26.6	+3.8
\$31-\$50	3.7	+1.1
\$51-\$70	12.7	+2.7
\$71-\$90	40.6	+4.4
More than \$90	16.4	+2.8

Note: This distribution is based on an estimated 5,015 households (+331).

Table I.3: Sampling Errors for Proportion of Public Housing Households With Different Rent Burdens

Rent burden (percent of adjusted income)	Households (percent)	Sampling error (percent)
Less than 30	21.5	+2.1
30	33.1	+3.3
31-33	30.6	+3.3
More than 33	14.8	+2.2

Note: This distribution is based on an estimated 4,471 households (+155).

**Appendix I
Sampling Errors for Allowance and Rent
Burden Estimates**

**Table I.4: Sampling Errors for Proportion
of Section 8 Households With Different
Rent Burdens**

Rent burden (percent of adjusted income)	Households (percent)	Sampling error (percent)
Less than 27	7.4	+2.4
27-29	15.3	+3.2
30	7.4	+1.9
31-33	16.4	+3.0
34-37	13.2	+2.9
38-40	8.3	+2.6
More than 40	32.0	+4.4

Note: This distribution is based on an estimated 5,015 households (+331).

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