



Chapter 5: Residential Development
Census block groups-level presentation



Chapter 5: Residential Development: *Census block groups-level presentation*

This chapter provides information on the residential housing available in South Wilmington, as designated by the Census block groups shown in Figure 5.1. Data in the chapter include the number of housing units, home ownership and leasing, and vacancy rates. Also included are details on housing characteristics such as unit size, year built, facilities available, and property values, as well as information regarding the time of residency for the South Wilmington population. Information in this chapter was collected from Census 2000, and thus represents characteristics from the year 2000.

For the remainder of Chapter 5, references to “South Wilmington” represent the area bounded by the four Census block groups shown in Figure 5.1., an area that includes the neighborhood of Southbridge as well as developments along the New Castle/Route 9 corridor.

The U.S. Census Bureau (Census) defines a housing unit as a space designated as separate living quarters that is directly accessible by the occupant(s), be it a house, an apartment, a mobile home, or a single room (Woodward & Damon, 2001).

South Wilmington block-groups level **Key Numbers:**

Total number of housing units: 2,034

Total housing units occupied: 1,824

Percent owner-occupied: 58.3

Percent renter-occupied: 41.7

Vacancy rate: 10.3 percent

Percent housing units with telephone service: 96.4

Most common housing unit size: 3 bedrooms (56.4 percent)

Most common housing unit structure:

Owned: 1 unit, detached (62.1 percent)

Rented: 1 unit, attached (56.0 percent)

Year range most housing units built:

1950 – 1959 (36.3 percent)

Percent population living in same housing unit for 5 or more years: 63.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

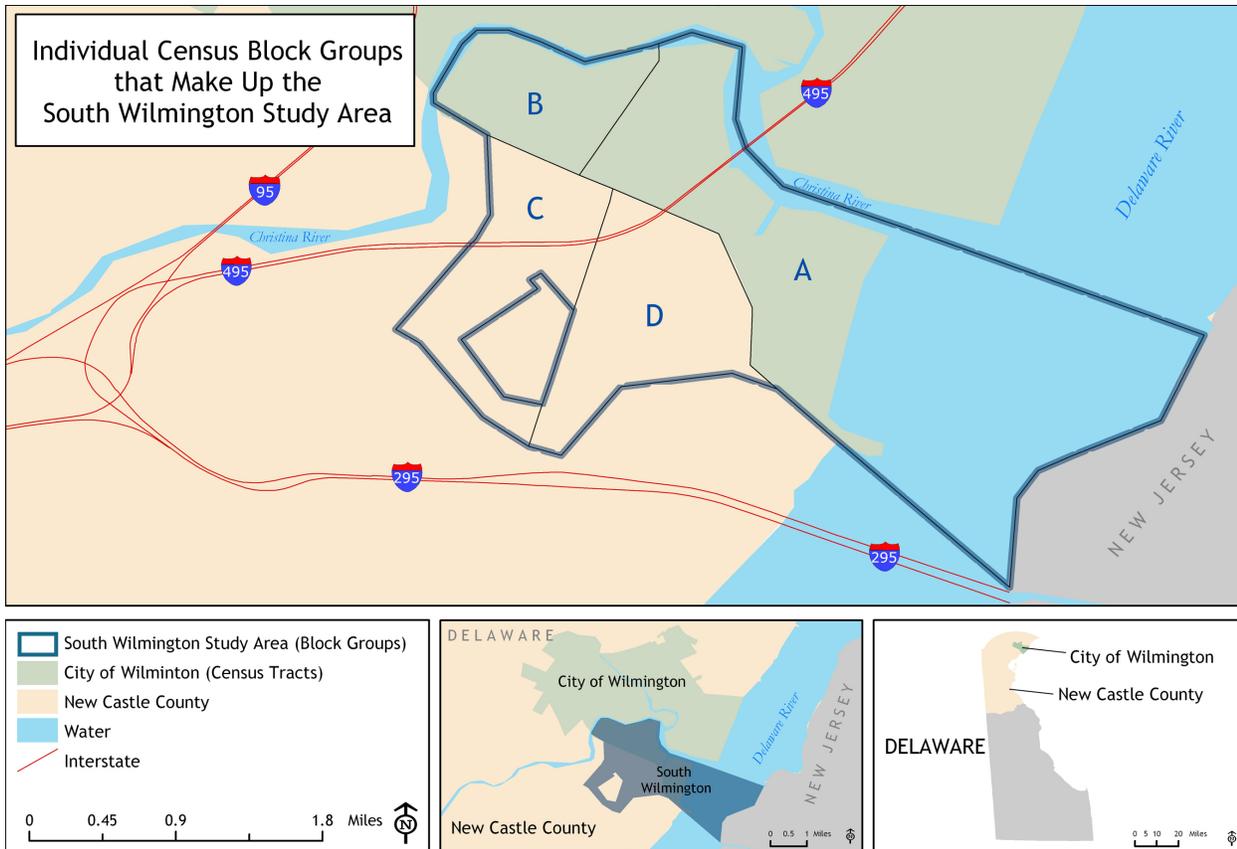


Figure 5.1. The four Census block groups that make up the South Wilmington study area used in this chapter of the report.
 Sources: Delaware Department of Transportation, 2001; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

5.a. Housing Unit Occupancy

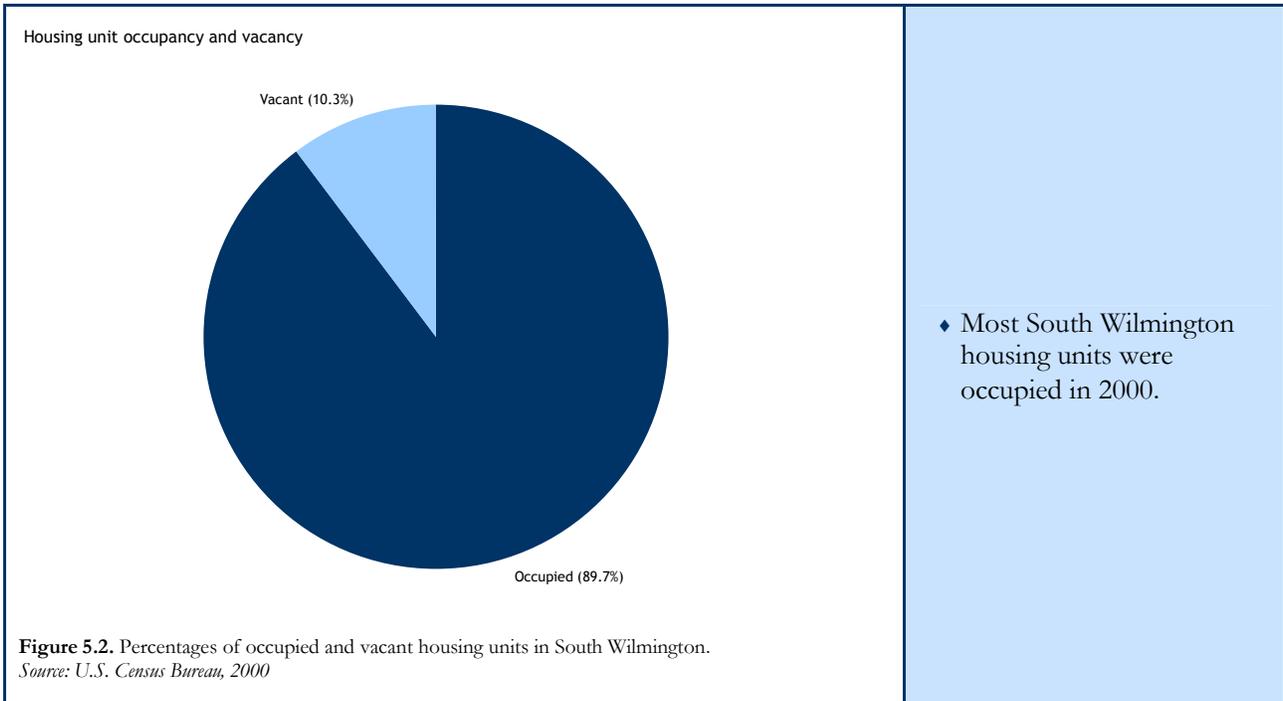
In this section, information is presented on the number of housing units in South Wilmington, the occupancy and vacancy rates of these units, and whether the occupied units are occupied by the owner or a renter.

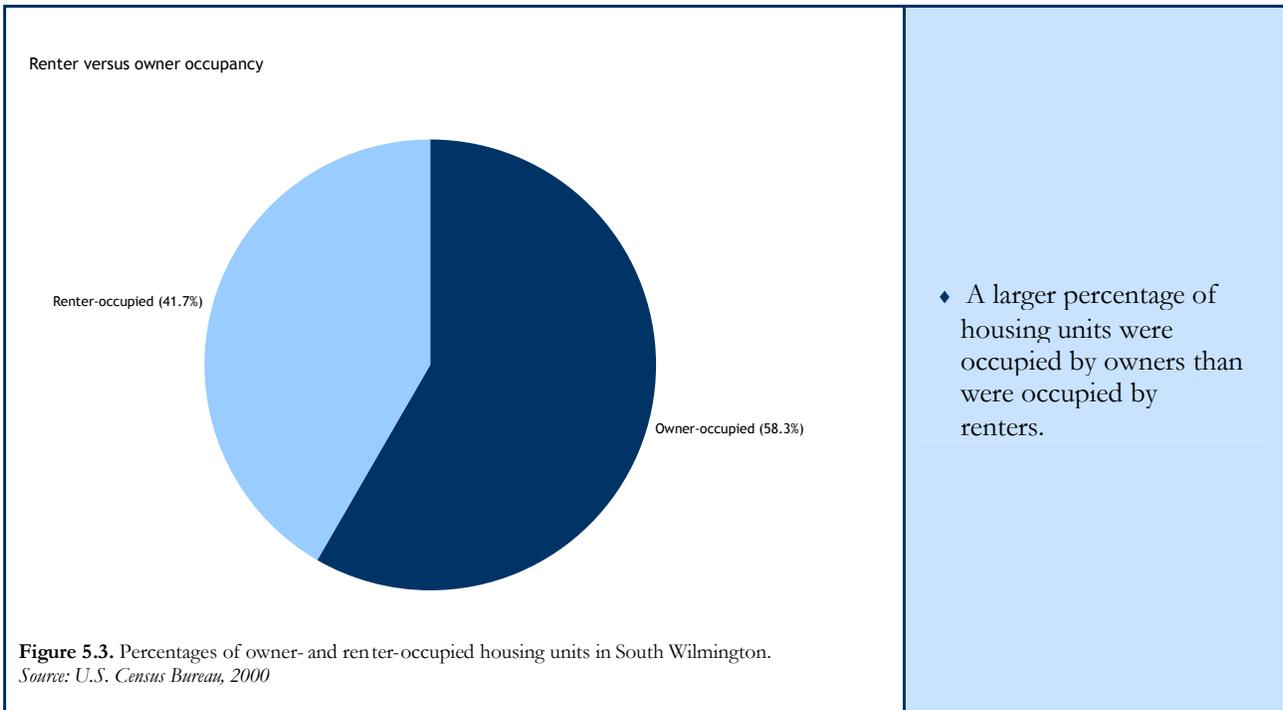
In Census 2000, a housing unit was considered “occupied” if it was the usual residence for its inhabitants (Woodward & Damon, 2001). If no one was living in the housing unit, but the unit *could* be inhabited, it was considered vacant; the Census count did not include condemned units or those lacking roofs, walls, windows, and/or doors. In 2000, of the 2,034 housing units in South Wilmington, 1,824 (89.7 percent) were occupied and 210 (10.3 percent) were vacant (Table 5.1.; Figure 5.2).

Of the occupied housing units in South Wilmington in 2000, 1,063 (58.3 percent) were occupied by the owner of the housing unit, while 761 (41.7 percent) were rented (Table 5.1.; Figure 5.3).

Total housing units	2,034
<i>Occupied</i>	1,824
<i>Vacant</i>	210
Occupied housing units	1,824
<i>Owner-occupied</i>	1,063
<i>Renter-occupied</i>	761

Table 5.1. Housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000





5.b. Housing Unit Property Values, Mortgages, and Rents

This section presents information on the value, mortgage and ownership costs, and rental rates of housing units in South Wilmington.

In the 2000 Census, home values were collected only from owner-occupied housing units; specifically, owner-occupied single-family homes on less than 10 acres without a business or medical office on the property (Bennefield, 2003). The home value reported by the Census Bureau represents the owner’s estimate of what the house and lot would sell for if it were on the market (Bennefield, 2003). In 2000, over three-quarters of the 1,038 owner-occupied housing units for which housing values were collected in South Wilmington were valued at between \$40,000 and \$99,999 (Figure 5.4). Less than 15 percent of units were valued at over \$100,000.

Approximately two-thirds of all owner-occupied housing units had an active mortgage in 2000 (Figure 5.5). Of units with mortgages, over 75 percent of owners paid monthly ownership costs of between \$500 and \$1,499; in contrast, nearly two-thirds of owners without mortgages paid between \$150 and \$299 monthly for housing-related costs (Figure 5.6).

With regards to rented South Wilmington housing units, most renters (93.8 percent) paid cash rent in 2000 (Figure 5.7). Rents most commonly ranged from \$350 to \$749 per month, with most renters (19.7 percent) paying between \$550 and \$649 a month. Less than ten percent of South Wilmington renters paid more than \$900 per month in rent in 2000.

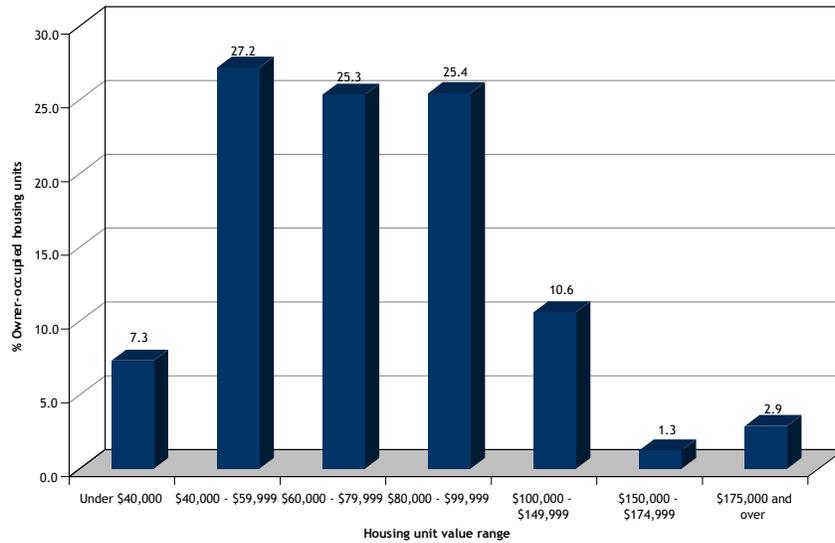


Figure 5.4. Estimated value of owner-occupied housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

◆ Most owner-occupied housing units were valued at between \$40,000 and \$99,999.

Owner-occupied housing units with or without mortgages

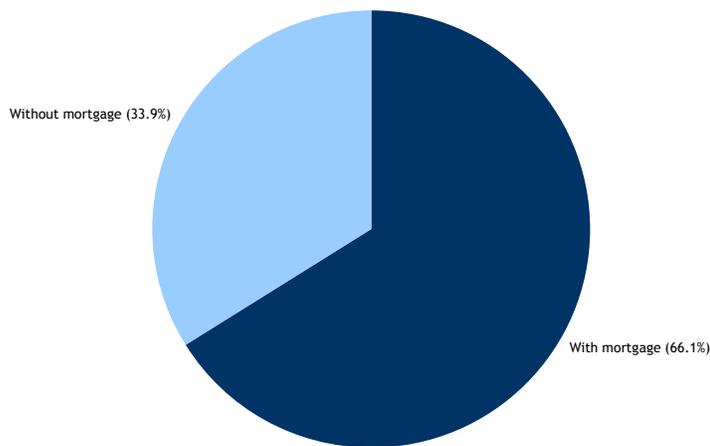
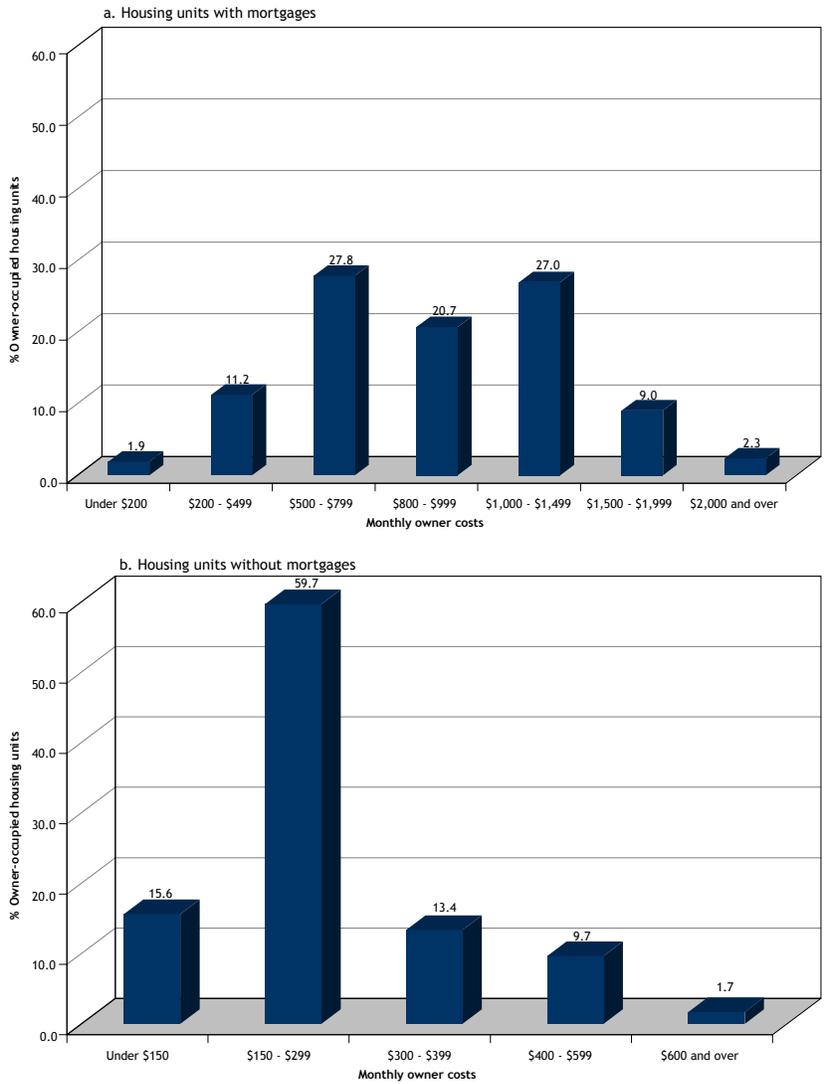


Figure 5.5. Percentages of owner-occupied housing units in South Wilmington with or without mortgages.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

◆ The majority of owner-occupied housing units in South Wilmington had mortgages in 2000.



◆ South Wilmington owners with mortgages had higher monthly housing costs than owners without mortgages.

Figure 5.6. Estimated monthly owner costs of owner-occupied housing units in South Wilmington with (top) or without (bottom) mortgages.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

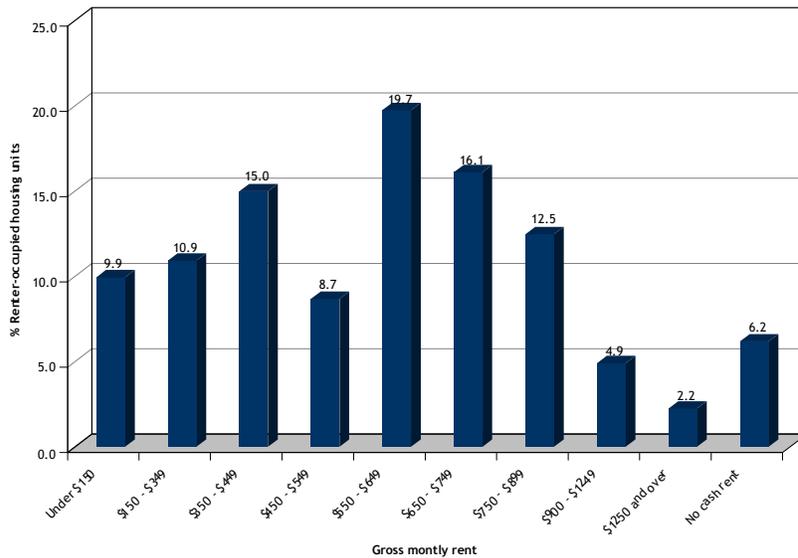


Figure 5.7. Gross monthly rent for renter-occupied housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

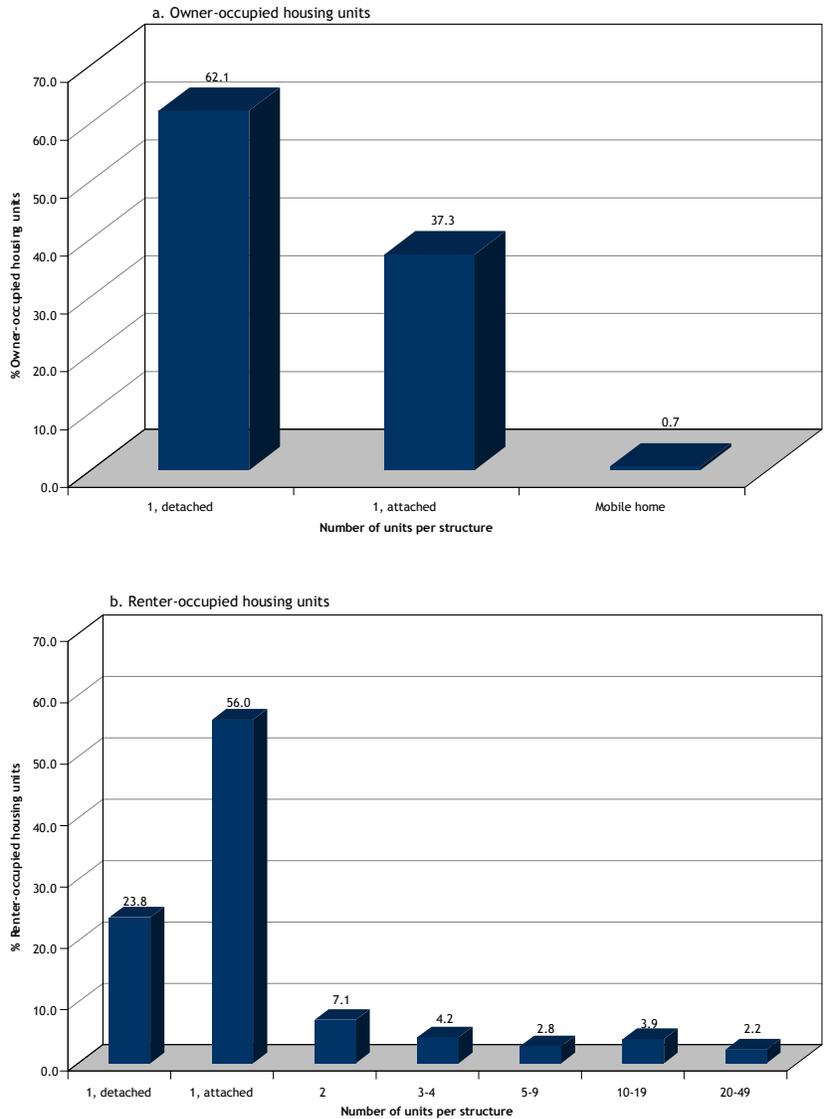
- ◆ Most South Wilmington renters paid cash rent.
- ◆ Most South Wilmington renters paid between \$550 to \$649 in monthly rent.

5.c. Housing Unit Size

In this section, information is presented on the number of housing units in each unit structure and the number of rooms and bedrooms for housing units in South Wilmington.

In South Wilmington in 2000, over 90 percent of all occupied housing units were single-family homes, with nearly equal percentages of these units being detached (i.e., not attached to another structure) and attached (e.g., town homes and row houses) (Figure 5.8.). Most detached single-family homes were owner-occupied, while the majority of attached single-family homes were rented. Of owner-occupied houses, nearly two-thirds were detached single units; no owner-occupied homes had more than one unit. Over half (56 percent) of renter-occupied housing units were attached single-family homes; about 20 percent of renters lived in apartment buildings (structures with two or more units).

According to Census 2000, most South Wilmington housing units (59.1 percent) had either five or six total rooms; only 27 housing units (1.3 percent) had one or two rooms (Figure 5.9.). Three-bedroom housing units were most common (Figure 5.10.).



- ◆ Most housing units in South Wilmington were single units.
- ◆ More detached single-family homes were owner-occupied, while more attached single-family units were renter-occupied.
- ◆ Only renters lived in structures with multiple units.

Figure 5.8. Number of units per structure of owner-occupied (top) and renter-occupied (bottom) housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

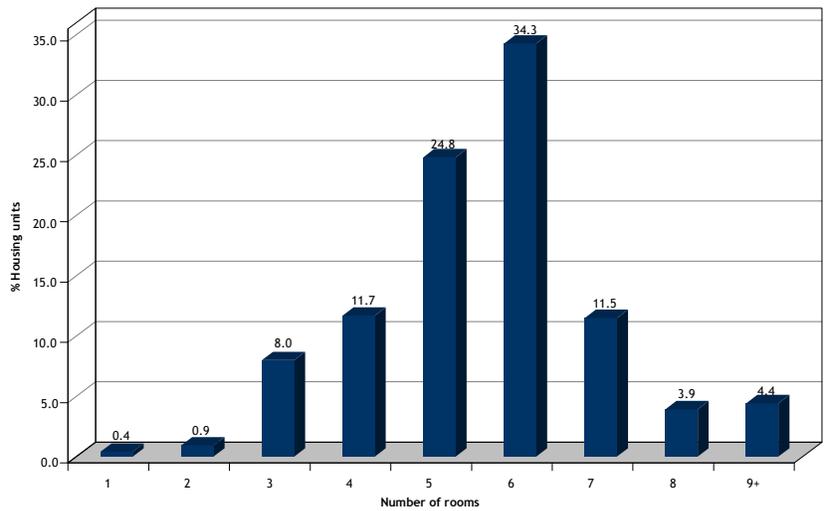


Figure 5.9. Number of rooms in housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

◆ Most housing units in South Wilmington had a total of six rooms.

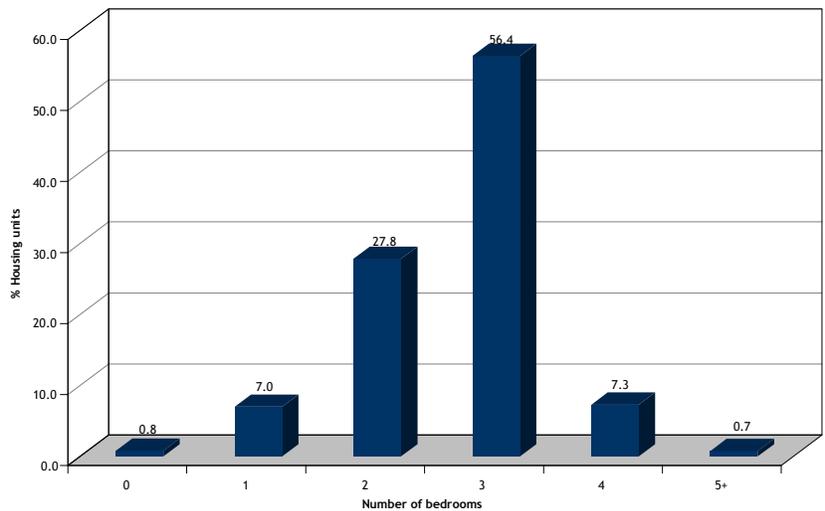
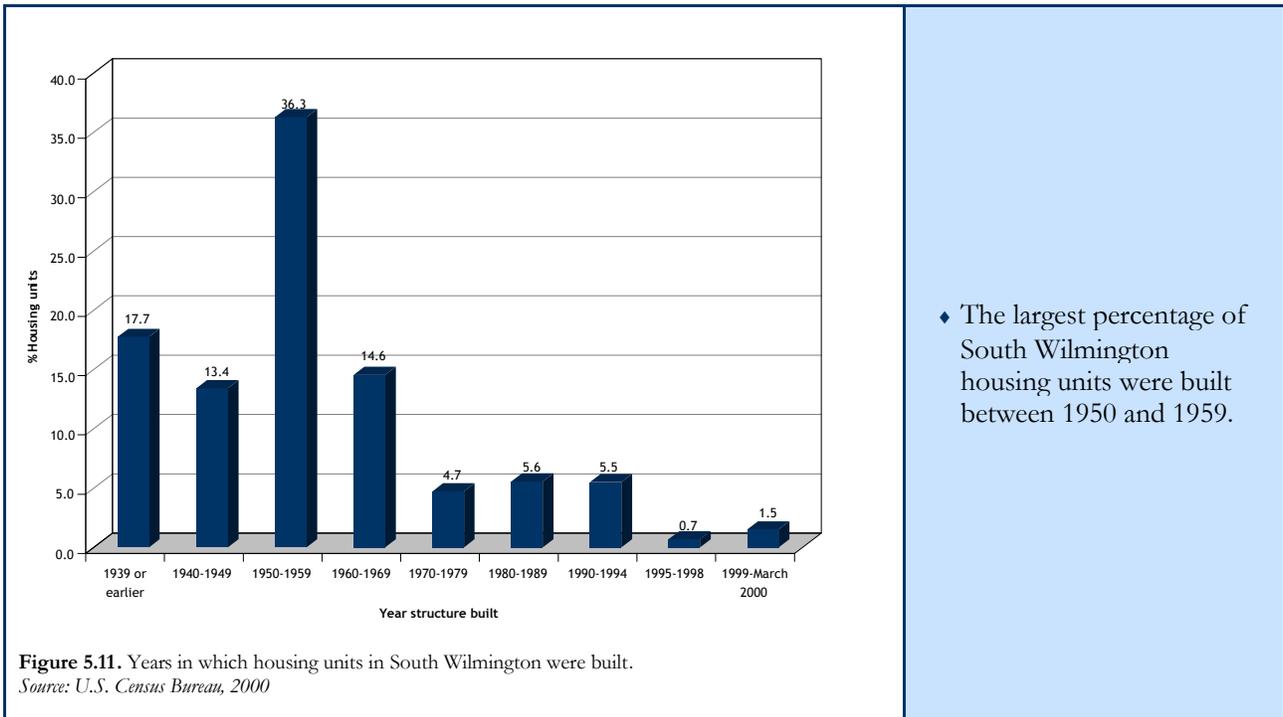


Figure 5.10. Number of bedrooms in housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

◆ Most South Wilmington housing units had three bedrooms.

5.d. Age of Housing Units

In 2000, most housing units in South Wilmington were relatively old. At the time of Census 2000, the majority of housing units in South Wilmington had been built between 1950 and 1959, and over 80 percent of housing units were at least 40 years old (i.e., built in 1960 or earlier) (Figure 5.11.). Less than three percent of all housing units were less than five years old (i.e., built between 1995 and March 2000).



5.e. Resident Tenure

In this section, information is presented regarding how long South Wilmington residents lived in the housing unit they were living in at the time of the Census (2000) and where else they might have resided.

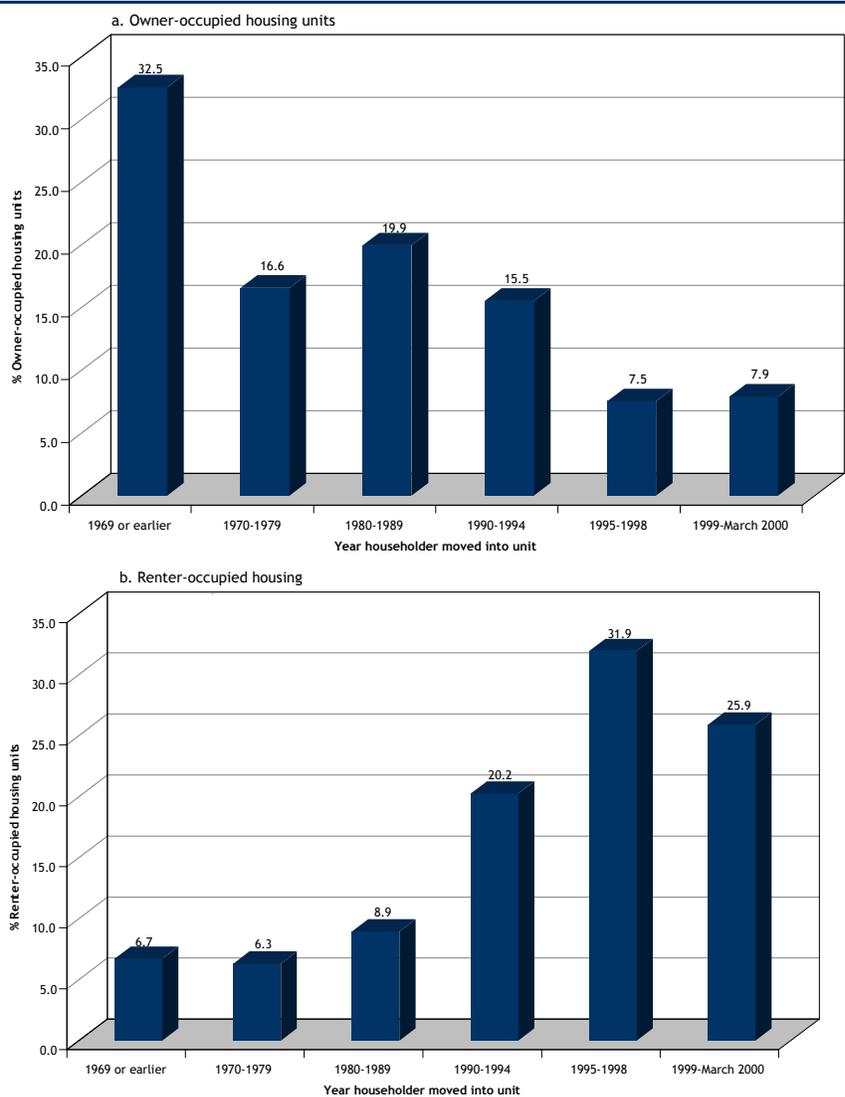
Overall, householders in South Wilmington have resided in the house in which they lived at the time of the Census for a relatively long time. Of all occupied housing units, nearly half had been occupied by the 2000 householder since 1980 or earlier; 21.8 percent of housing units had been occupied by the 2000 householder since 1969 or earlier (Table 5.2.).

Overall, owners had been living in their housing units longer than renters (Figure 5.12.). The largest percentage of owner-occupied housing units had been occupied by the 2000 householder since 1969 or earlier, while most renter-occupied housing units had been moved into by the 2000 householder between 1995 and 1998.

Most South Wilmington residents in 2000 had resided in their current homes for at least five years (Figure 5.13.). Of those residents not living in the same house that they lived in during 1995, most were living elsewhere in New Castle County (either inside or outside of the South Wilmington area). Approximately 15 percent of 2000 South Wilmington residents had not been living in Delaware for at least five years.

Year moved in	Percent of occupied housing units
1999-March 2000	15.4
1995-1998	17.7
1990-1994	17.5
1980-1989	15.4
1970-1979	12.3
1969 or earlier	21.8

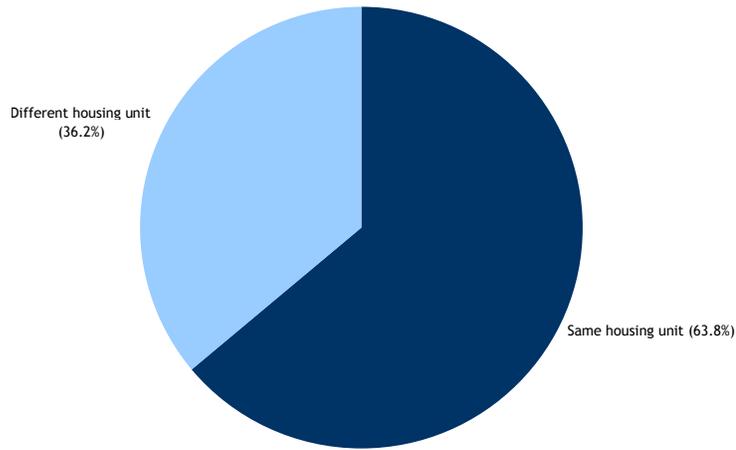
Table 5.2. Year South Wilmington householders moved into housing units.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000



◆ In 2000, South Wilmington householders who owned their homes had been living in them longer than had renters.

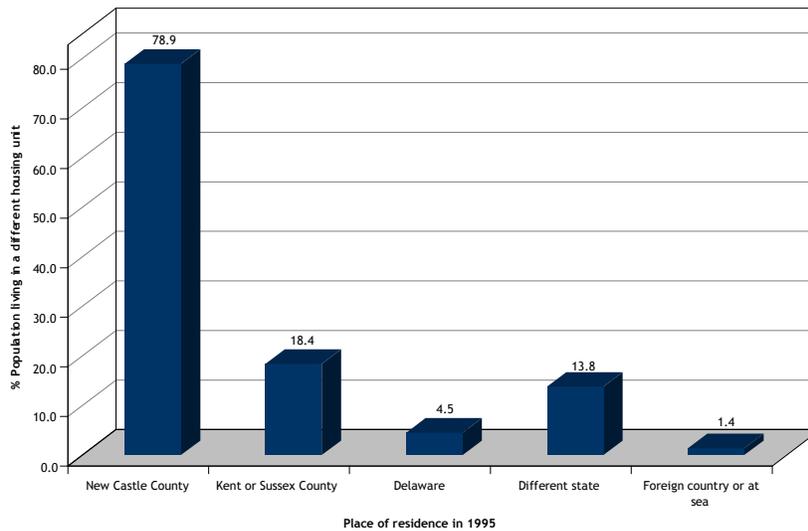
Figure 5.12. Year householders moved into owner-occupied (top) and renter-occupied (bottom) housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Residence in 1995



◆ Most South Wilmington residents lived in the same housing unit in 2000 as they were living in during 1995.

Figure 5.13. Percentages of South Wilmington residents who lived in the same housing units in 2000 as they were living in during 1995.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000



◆ The majority of South Wilmington residents who occupied a different housing unit in 1995 were living somewhere in New Castle County in 1995.

Figure 5.14. Residence of South Wilmington residents who did not live in the same housing units in 2000 as they were living in during 1995.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

5.f. Housing Unit Facilities and Utilities

In this section, information is presented on the plumbing facilities, heating fuel, telephone service, and kitchen facilities available in housing units in South Wilmington.

In 2000, less than one percent of South Wilmington housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities (Figure 5.15.). Complete plumbing facilities are defined as hot and cold piped water, a bathtub or shower, and a flush toilet (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

Nearly half (49.0 percent) of all South Wilmington occupied housing units used utility gas to heat their homes; fuel oil or kerosene was the second most common household heating fuel and electricity ranked third (Figure 5.16.). Less than one percent (14 total housing units) had no heating fuel source.

In terms of telephone service availability, most South Wilmington occupied housing units had telephone service (Table 5.3.). All (100 percent) of owner-occupied housing units had telephone service, while 91 percent of renter-occupied housing units had telephones in 2000 (Figure 5.17.). In order for a unit to be classified by the U.S. Census Bureau as having telephone services, a telephone must be located inside the housing unit; units where the inhabitants use a telephone located inside the building but not in the actual living quarters are classified as having no telephone (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

In 2000, less than one percent of all housing units in South Wilmington were lacking complete kitchen facilities (Figure 5.18.). The U.S. Census Bureau considers a housing unit to have complete kitchen facilities when it has all of the following: (1) an installed sink with piped water, (2) a stove or range, and (3) a refrigerator (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005). All kitchen facilities must be located in the unit, but they do not need to be in the same room. A housing unit having only a microwave or portable heating equipment (e.g., a hot plate or camping stove) or an ice box rather than a refrigerator is not counted as having complete kitchen facilities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

Plumbing facility availability

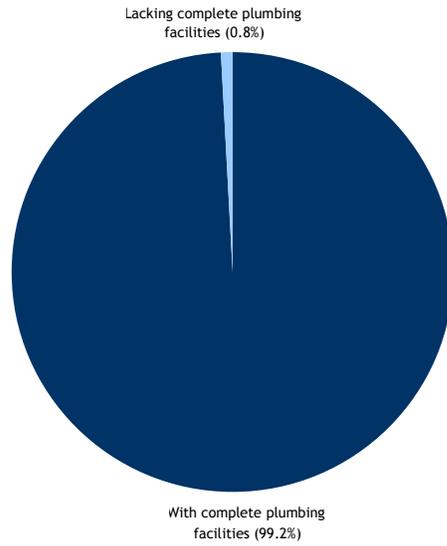


Figure 5.15. Availability of plumbing facilities in housing units as a percent of all housing units in South Wilmington.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Most South Wilmington housing units had complete plumbing facilities.

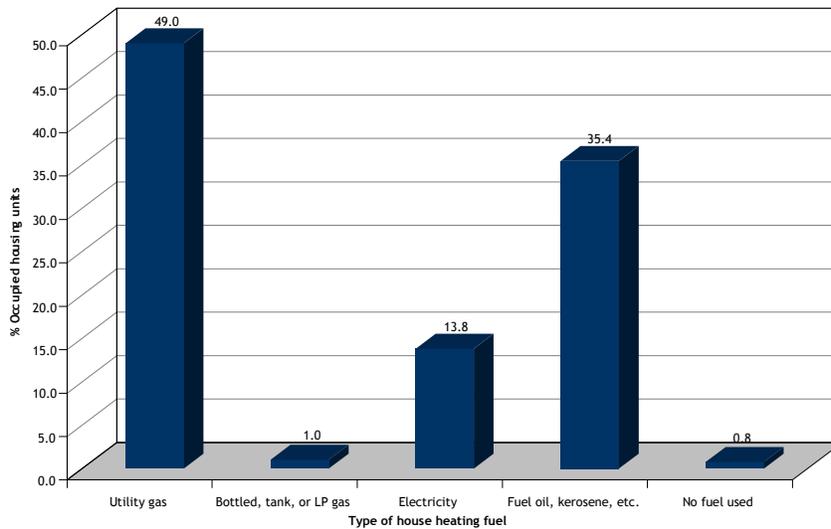


Figure 5.16. Type of fuel used to heat occupied housing units in South Wilmington.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ The majority of occupied housing units were heated using utility gas.
- ◆ The second most common heating fuel was fuel oil or kerosene.

Total occupied housing units	1,824
<i>With telephone service</i>	1,759
<i>No telephone service</i>	65

Table 5.3. Availability of telephone service in South Wilmington housing units.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Telephone service availability in renter-occupied housing units

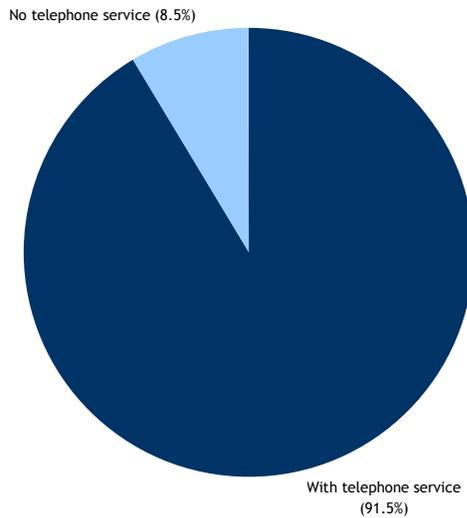


Figure 5.17. Availability of telephone service in rented housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Most South Wilmington renter-occupied housing units had telephone service.

Kitchen facility availability

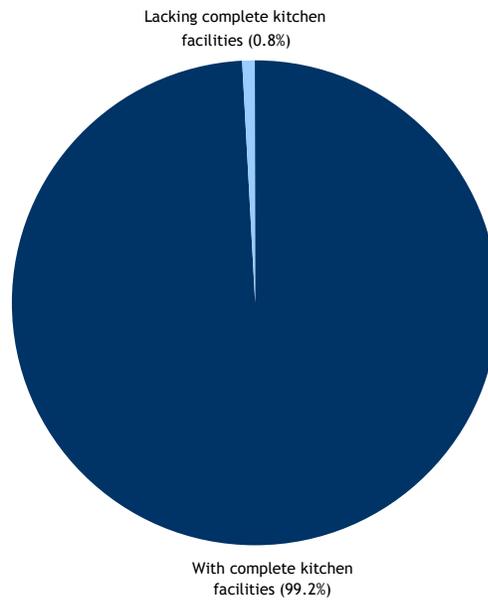


Figure 5.18. Availability of kitchen facilities in South Wilmington housing units.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Most South Wilmington occupied housing units had complete kitchen facilities.

5.g. Residential Vehicle Availability

The section presents information on the vehicles available to South Wilmington residents for household use. The U.S. Census Bureau defined vehicles to include passenger cars, vans, and pickup or panel trucks of one-ton capacity or less which were kept at home and available for household use. Rented or leased vehicles, company vehicles, and police and government vehicles that were kept at home and used for non-business purposes were included in Census counts; dismantled or immobile vehicles and vehicles kept at home but used only for business purposes were not counted (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005).

In 2000, most occupied housing units in South Wilmington had access to one vehicle (Table 5.4). About one-quarter of occupied South Wilmington housing units did not have a vehicle present; most (73.0 percent) housing units with no vehicle present were renter-occupied (Figure 5.19). Owner-occupied housing units were more likely than renter-occupied units to have multiple vehicles.

Number of vehicles available per occupied housing unit	Number of occupied housing units	Percent of occupied housing units
0	463	25.4
1	690	37.8
2	430	23.6
3	186	10.2
4	35	1.9
5 or more	20	1.1
<i>Total number of vehicles available</i>	1,824	100.0

Table 5.4. Availability of vehicles in housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

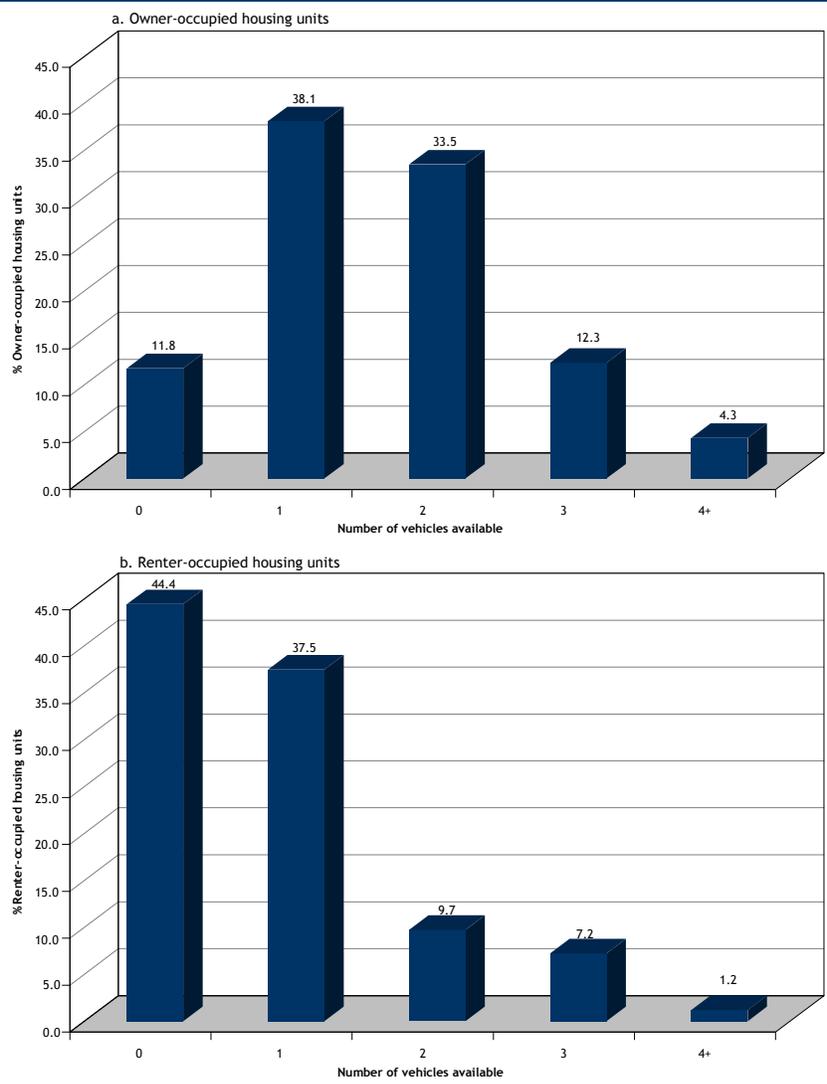


Figure 5.19. Vehicle availability in owner- (top) and renter-occupied (bottom) housing units in South Wilmington.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Most South Wilmington occupied housing units had one vehicle available.
- ◆ Most housing units without access to a vehicle were renter-occupied units.