



GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS GUIDE

Government documents can serve you in many, often unanticipated ways when it's time to write a paper or finish a research project. Current and informative, documents cover a broad spectrum of topics.

The Collection—Federal, State, Local, and Canadian Government Documents

Bowling Green State University became a selective federal depository in 1933 and we receive about half of the government publications distributed--approximately 1,500 documents--each month. Our collection of 700,000 publications is rich in both historical and current material. We hold the census reports from 1790 to present, the *Foreign Relations of the United States*, the treaties, the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set*, and many other important historical research sets. We currently select a broad range of topics that support the information interests of both the university community and the congressional district.

The department receives all Ohio agency publications distributed through the state depository program. Our Ohio collection which began in 1953 numbers about 20,000. The collection includes agency publications such as reports, directories, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, newsletters, and journals. We began receiving Bowling Green City government documents in 1984. These include department reports and City Council minutes.

In October 1999, BGSU became a Canadian Government Documents Depository. Our collection focuses on business, environment, Great Lakes, Native Peoples, and social issues. It includes journals, reports, and CD-ROMs. We also collect some of the important statistical reports produced by Statistics Canada. The Collection is arranged by Canadian Documents Classification Number and is shelved along the back wall of the Documents stack area.

Services

You can get reference help, whether your question is general or specific, at the Jerome Reference and Information Desk and at the Science Library Reference and Circulation Desk. Reference and Science staff can also help you to locate and identify government documents online resources. For more in-depth research assistance, please contact the Government Documents staff to schedule an appointment. Tours and library user presentations are available on request, 372-7826.

If your research needs include very current material, search our public workstations, located just outside our office by the Reference indexes. These computers provide guided access to government and government-related World Wide Web pages via the BGSU Documents Home Page as well as hundreds of government agency CD-ROMs.

Most government documents (including CD-ROMs) can be checked out of the library for one or more weeks. Users who are not affiliated with Bowling Green State University may purchase a courtesy card (\$25.00) at the circulation desks in Jerome and Science Libraries. Users who are not affiliated with Bowling Green State University and who want to check out ONLY GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS may do so without purchasing a courtesy card. You will need some form of picture identification such as a driver's license.

Locating Documents

Federal documents published after 1986 are cataloged and can be searched in our online catalog, BGLink. We are working on several projects to add earlier publications to the online catalog. BGLink is the first place to check when trying to locate government documents. Indexes, as well as the catalog, will provide the SuDoc number that has been assigned to individual documents. This number is used to locate the document in the government documents stacks, microfiche or CD-ROM cabinets.

Indexes: *Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications* provides author, title, and subject access to documents issued from 1895 to present. A number of other specialized indexes, including *Congressional Universe* and *Statistical Universe* are available on OhioLINK Research Databases. Most government information is migrating from traditional print to digitized formats. Use the Documents Home Page to identify and link to federal and state agency home pages.
<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/services/govdocs/index.html>

HOW TO FIND YOUR GOVERNMENT DOCUMENT ON THE SHELF

Government documents are arranged on the shelf by an alphanumeric system called the Superintendent of Documents Classification Scheme (SuDocs). The number is composed of two parts: the stem which designates the issuing agency and type of publication; and the book number which identifies each document in the series as a unique publication.

How it looks:

IN THE INDEXES

HE 20.8216: 88
 | \
 stem bk. no.

ON THE SHELF

stem → HE 20.8216
 book no. → 88

IN BGLink

gdoc HE 20.8216: 88
 / | | |
 prefix stem book no.

Ignore the prefix "gdoc" when searching for a document in the stacks.

How to find documents on the shelf:

The first part of the number is a letter(s) reflecting the publishing department.

<u>A</u>	1.75	Agriculture
<u>C</u>	3.2	Commerce
<u>HE</u>	1.28	Health and Human Services

The number following the letter(s) is shelved numerically.

C 3.
 C 55.
 C 61.

The number following the period is a whole number, not a decimal.

HE 20.9	<u>nine</u> comes before
HE 20.44	<u>forty four</u> which comes before
HE 20.221	<u>two hundred twenty one</u>

If you cannot find the document:

Government documents come in a variety of formats (such as pamphlets, books, microfiche, and CD-ROMs). They are sometimes shelved in special locations, or they may be misfiled on the shelf. For these reasons, documents may be difficult to locate. If you cannot find a document, ASK FOR ASSISTANCE AT THE REFERENCE DESK.