

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. How do you get this rent data?**

A. The rent data is based on *market rate* openings advertised on [www.housinglink.org](http://www.housinglink.org). Typically, that represents between 15,000 and 20,000 openings per quarter, including openings owners and managers directly list openings on HousingLink, as well as openings from other publically available sources.

### **Q. Why did you choose median rent? I'm used to an average.**

A. One quick reminder: median is the middle number where half of the sample falls below this number and half of the sample is higher. Some cities & neighborhoods represented in *Twin Cities Rental Revue* have a small amount of rental housing. Using median is more reliable for these areas where rent amounts can vary widely. In order to produce a consistent report, we chose median.

### **Q. Where did you get the pet policy, background check, utilities residents pay, application fee, & security deposit information?**

A. This information comes from openings directly listed on HousingLink. It is not currently captured from other publically available sources.

### **Q. How do you decide what searches are counted in the *Demand Index*?**

A. Search data is based upon searches conducted on [www.housinglink.org](http://www.housinglink.org). Renters search in two ways:

1. *Map Search* –In order for a map search to count, the renter has to zoom in on the interactive map two times (covering a 14 mile by 10 mile area). Any city within that radius is counted as a search. [See a map search demo here.](#)
2. *Search by city* – Here renters see a list of all the cities in the Twin Cities metro area. They check the box next to the city they want to live in. When a city is checked it is counted as a search.

### **Q. How does “Searches by Market” work?**

A. HousingLink’s website gives renters the option to choose which building type they want to live in (apartment, condo, duplex, house, townhome, mobile home). Anytime a renter selects ‘apartment,’ a search is counted for the apartment market. When any of the other building types are selected, a search is counted for the shadow market. If both apartment and one of the other types are selected, a search is recorded for each market.

### **Q. What is the shadow rental market?**

A. Condos, duplexes, single-family homes, mobile homes, and townhomes for rent.

### **Q. Why is it called the “shadow market?” Should I be scared?**

A. It is called the Shadow Market because up until now there was very limited information about rents and other amenities in non-apartment rentals. Now that *Twin Cities Rental Revue* exists, that is no longer the case. Maybe we can change its name to something less mysterious in the future.

Do you have more questions that were not addressed in this riveting document? Email Josh at [jdye@housinglink.org](mailto:jdye@housinglink.org) or call 612-522-2500 ext. 221.