Minnesota Public Library Report Key Statistics

The following are statewide totals for public library resource and service measures during 2017.

In 2017...

Minnesota had twelve regional library systems, 141 public libraries, 355 library locations, and eight bookmobiles.

Seven out of 10 Minnesotans had a library card. There were more than 3.8 million registered public library customers. 3,083,824 registered customers lived within the legal service areas of the libraries, and 775,582 lived outside the service areas.

Public libraries employed 2,233 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members. Library services were provided by 826 librarian FTE and 1,407 other staff FTE.

Public libraries were open 15,181 hours per week and welcomed customers during more than 23.3 million visits.

Minnesota libraries owned almost 17 million items for loan to customers.

- 13,773,932 print materials, mostly books
- 1,087,925 videos, mostly DVDs
- 834,421 audio materials, mostly audiobooks and music CDs
- 35,581 multi-format materials, such as kits
- 111,231 other physical materials, such as tools, cookware, sports equipment, mobile devices and mobile hotspots
- 24,779 magazine subscriptions
- 707,417 ebooks
- 183,373 downloadable audiobooks
- 3,602 downloadable videos
- 1,642 downloadable magazines

Libraries subscribed to 426 licensed information databases.

Customers borrowed or downloaded 49 million public library materials.

- 43,312,405 physical materials, mostly books, magazines, DVDs and CDs
- 5,679,032 electronic materials, mostly ebooks and downloadable audiobooks

Minnesota public libraries provided 1,229,673 interlibrary loans to other libraries and received 1,242,624 interlibrary loans from other libraries nationwide.
Librarians engaged with customers 3.4 million times to provide information, readers’ advice, technology help and referrals in-person, by phone and online.

Librarians provided 6,702 internet computers—5,739 desktops and 963 mobile devices—for public use. Ninety-nine percent of public libraries offered wireless internet service. Customers went online during 10.9 million computer and wireless sessions.

Libraries sponsored 69,790 programs such as author visits, book clubs, storytimes, and arts and culture events as well as training on digital literacy, starting a business, basic job skills, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) programs for kids.

- 42,841 children’s programs
- 19,727 adult programs
- 7,222 young adult programs

Library programs attracted more than 1.6 million diverse individuals of all ages.

- 1,230,068 children
- 317,221 adults
- 97,177 young adults

Libraries had 241 meeting rooms available for public use. There were 74,209 public meetings held in libraries.

Public libraries received $242,054,556 in operating revenues mostly from local government.

- $140,119,952 from counties
- $61,085,864 from cities
- $695,105 from other local government agencies
- $17,571,146 from the state
- $95,707 from the federal government
- $22,486,782 from other sources

Public libraries spent $236,957,415 in operating expenditures

- $147,012,607 for staff salaries and benefits
- $26,374,211 for library collection materials
- $63,570,597 for other operating expenses

Public libraries received $12,724,531 in capital revenues.

- $10,095,381 from counties
- $1,752,089 from cities
- $877,061 from other sources

Public libraries spent $14,811,358 for capital expenditures.
Minnesota public libraries are required by Minnesota Statutes, section 134.13, to submit annual reports to the Minnesota Department of Education. Data is also submitted to the Institute of Museums and Library Services for the Public Libraries in the United States Survey.

Statistics include input and output measures related to facilities, services, programs, collections, staffing, hours of operation, and income and expenditures. Statistical information is used by public libraries and policymakers to plan and implement services that meet the needs of their communities.

Data for 2017 was submitted February through April 2018 using an online survey. All regional library systems and 99 percent of public library administrative entities in Minnesota completed the survey. (Watonwan County Library did not report.)

For information about the 2017 Minnesota Public Library Report or historical data, please contact Joe Manion:

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