

RECEPTIVITY TO EARTH SHELTERED HOUSING
IN McDONOUGH COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis identifies attitudes and information levels associated with a posture of acceptance toward earth-sheltered housing in McDonough County, Illinois. Residential location, knowledge of earth-sheltered housing, socio-economic factors, energy costs, and present housing satisfaction were examined in their relationship to receptivity to earth-sheltered housing.

Results of the analysis indicate some definite associations between receptivity to earth-sheltered housing and certain characteristics of the population of McDonough County. It was found that satisfaction with one's present housing situation was inversely related to receptivity to living in an earth-sheltered house. Hypothetical increases in energy costs appeared to be a minor factor associated with increasing one's receptivity to the idea of earth-sheltered housing. Familiarity with the earth-sheltered housing concept, on the other hand, was clearly associated with an attitude of acceptance toward living in such a structure. Some socio-economic factors, such as age and sex, showed a great degree of association with receptivity, while educational levels and occupational prestige rankings showed a low level of association. Geographic location of respondents also exhibited some relationship to receptivity. Isolated rural residents showed the highest level of

receptivity, while those who lived in subdivisions indicated the least receptivity to the concept.

The study revealed that there appear to be some apprehensions about living in earth sheltered houses, but the concept is one that is relatively acceptable to a high percentage of the McDonough County population. One implication of the study is that both psychological and institutional barriers to earth sheltered housing must be addressed and eliminated if earth sheltered houses are to command a greater share of the housing market.