

**(S.D.)-South Dakota Population Grows As State Becomes More Urban**

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RAPID CITY, South Dakota (AP) - Census data shows that the Black Hills region is the fastest growing part of the state.

Eric Abrahamson with Black Hills Knowledge Network tells the Rapid City Journal that the population in the Black Hills has increased 10.9 percent from 2000 to 2010, while the state population grew at a rate of 7.9 percent.

South Dakota is also growing faster than the rest of the nation.

U.S. Census data shows South Dakota's population has grown 2.4 percent from 2010 to 2012, while the national growth rate is 1.7 percent.

Overall, the state had 833,354 people at the end of 2012, compared to 754,844 in 2000.

Abrahamsom says the data shows that the state is becoming more urban, older and racially diverse.