

Data Library Guide: 2011 GeoSearch

Using 2011 GeoSearch to Understand your Census Geography

The goal of this exercise is to get you familiar with using the 2011 GeoSearch tool to understand how your area of interest is covered by census geography and to figure out a dissemination area's unique ID. For this example, you will use the 2011 GeoSearch to look up the city of Williams Lake and find out how census geography covers it. You will then use the tool to find out what dissemination area a particular address falls under.

1. Let's start by going to the Census Program website: google "Statistics Canada" to find the main Statistics Canada website. From the main page, under the **Features** menu, select **Census Program**.
2. From the Census Program website, scroll down to the **Information and Services** section and click on **Geography**.
3. Under the **Maps** section, click on **GeoSearch**. Click on **2011**, to select the 2011 version of GeoSearch.
4. From the **Search** tab, select **Place** and search for "Williams Lake". Select **Williams Lake, CY [CSD], B.C.** from the drop-down menu of options. *Note: CY means City.* Click on **Update map and data table**. The map should centre in on Williams Lake.
5. From the **Boundaries** Tab, select **Dissemination Areas** from the first drop-down menu, select **CSD** from the optional second drop-down menu, and then select **Display Boundaries**.
6. Select **DA** and **CSD** under labels and then click on **Refresh labels** to see all the IDs and area names labeled on the map. This map can give you a good idea of how your area of interest is subdivided.
7. Next, let's look up a particular place to find out what DA it is in. Go back to the **Search** tab, select **Street Address** and search for the Vancouver Public Library Central Branch, using its address "350 W Georgia St, Vancouver, BC V6B 6B1". You will be prompted to clarify what city you mean, select **Vancouver, CY [CSD], B.C.** from the drop-down menu of options. The map should then centre in on your location. *Note: Unfortunately, your exact location marker will disappear when you add information to the map in the next step, so make a mental note of where it is (on Georgia Street, between Homer and Hamilton streets).*
8. From the **Boundaries** Tab, select **Dissemination Areas** from the first drop-down menu, and then select **Display Boundaries**.
9. Choose the **Select** tool (looks like an arrow icon) just at the top of the map and then click on your location (on Georgia Street, between Homer and Hamilton streets) for more information. The dissemination area that contains your location should be highlighted in green, displaying the DA unique ID, 59153844, and the table below the map should update with census data for this particular area.

Choose the **Help** menu (looks like a question mark icon) just at the top of the map for more help using this tool. There is a GeoSearch tool for the last 2 censuses (2011 & 2006). For older censuses, you will have to look at static reference maps to find this information.