

# Around the House

Volume 4, Issue 1

March/April, 2007



## Spring Into Action!

### Housing and Community Services Department Mission

... to provide housing and related services to benefit the citizens and neighborhoods of Wichita



#### Inside this issue:

From the Director	2
Free Prekindergarten Classes	2
Behind the Scenes	2
Section 8 Landlord and Client Services	3
HAP Payment Schedule	3
Scholarship Opportunities	4

The spring season is just around the corner and that brings thoughts of spring cleaning. This newsletter highlights a new slant on this annual spring ritual—HUD’s annual inspection.

One of the Department of HUD’s goals for FY 2007 is to reduce the average number of observed safety hazard (exigent) deficiencies per property by 10 percent among public housing authorities. The Wichita Housing Authority (WHA) has been notified that HUD’s contract inspector will be inspecting Public Housing’s rental unit inventory in March and April of 2007 for physical deficiencies.

Your property managers and maintenance staff are aggressively working to reduce the number of safety hazards in our rental units. It is the WHA’s goal to have no safety hazards at any-time. To help achieve these goals, staff ask that if you observe the following conditions, please take the necessary steps to correct any deficiencies:

1. access to your electrical panel must not be blocked by furniture or other items;

2. open breaker ports in the panel must be covered by the WHA electrician;
3. exterior door hardware locks or latches must work as designed;
4. cooking stove burners must work as designed;
5. clothes dryers must be properly vented to the outside from your house;
6. sanitary sewer caps located in the grass on the exterior of the house must be in place;
7. electrical switch plate and receptacle covers must not be missing or cracked;
8. windows must not be broken, cracked or fogged and they must open, close and lock as designed;
9. smoke detectors must be in place, work and test as designed; and
10. all rooms must have two ways to escape a fire – furniture or other items that will prevent occupants from emergency egress must be moved to allow escape through the window.

Residents can resolve many of the above problems; however, if a mechanical deficiency is normal wear and tear, maintenance

staff will make the corrections without any charges to the resident. Working together the WHA can continue to provide a safe living environment for its residents and reach everyone’s goals.

So let’s “spring into action” and get those properties in tip-top shape for your safety and so that we pass the upcoming inspections!

## Results That Matter

This issue’s ‘Results That Matter’ will focus on Information Technology Services (ITS). Several weeks ago it was necessary for ITS to shut down our office phones to perform maintenance on the equipment. The first option was going to be to shut down the main phone line for one hour—that would have been very bad customer service! We continued to work with ITS and finally came up with a solution that provided no phone outage. If you called that day, you probably didn’t even know our main line was out of service!

Results That Matter means putting customers first!





## From the Director's Chair Mary K. Vaughn

**March** is "National Nutrition Month<sup>®</sup>" and the 2007 theme is "Fad Free". This means that if your goal is to lose weight (remember the suggestions in my January/February newsletter 'resolutions?'), you should do it using sensible eating habits and no "fad" diets. Instead of looking for a 'quick fix' like special pills and drinks, the American Dietetic Association recommends a balance of a healthy eat-

ing and regular physical activity (exercise), as the way to lose weight the healthy way. So don't be fooled by the "fads".

Continuing this look at the calendar, **April** is just around the corner and for many people, April is **tax time**. This is a good time to remind everyone that filing for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a good idea and may result in a tax refund which is revenue for your house-

hold. Note: this income does not count toward the income you report to the Housing Authority for eligibility—you will not lose your housing benefits as a result of receiving the EITC. Assistance in filing tax refunds and the EITC, is available at a number of locations throughout the community, including the Neighborhood City Halls. Please call the United Way 2-1-1 Information Line for more information or to schedule an appointment.

## Free Quality PreKindergarten

Dear Parents,

The Wichita Public Schools offers free prekindergarten programs for children who:

- \* Reside within the Wichita Public Schools district boundaries
- \* Will be four years old on or before August 31, 2007

Program Requirements:

- ✓ Have an educational need
- ✓ Meet guidelines determined by the program
- ✓ Complete food form
- ✓ Transportation provided by the family
- ✓ Regular attendance required
- ✓ Child must be able to take care of personal needs

- ✓ Proof of address may be required
- ✓ Proof of income

If you are interested and would like to enroll your child, please call 973-4708 to request enrollment information.



**Parents (and other adults) who are residents of Public Housing or who have Section 8 Vouchers!**

Don't forget that the City of Wichita wants to provide you with opportunities to work in various City departments. Even if you have not completed an interest form, you are encouraged to visit the City's website, [www.wichita.gov](http://www.wichita.gov), to check out job openings. When you apply, indicate at the appropriate place on the application, that you are a Public Housing or Section 8 participant. This does not automatically guarantee you a job, but your status with the Housing Authority will give you preference for consideration for certain positions for which you are qualified. If you have questions, contact Anne Warren in Human Resources, at 268-4724.

## Behind the Scenes ...

Congratulations to our employees who received compliments from citizens recently. Two different citizens complimented **Edey Leslie** on her service delivery in her job as inspector for the department's home repair program. One citizen mentioned that she had run into difficulties with other City services but when she got to Edey everything worked like a charm. They specifically mentioned her



We're proud of our people!

going out on an icy, cold day with little advance notice, to make the inspection so the repairs could be made. Going out of their way was also the compliment given to Section 8 staff: **Kendra Walker, Katherine Laws** and **Vicki Liguori**. Although all staff were complimented, the citizen specifically mentioned how Vicki was on her way home at the end of the day, but stopped to help the citizen complete her application paperwork.

All are examples of the kind of customer service we strive for.

We recently added 2 new employees to our high performance team: Maintenance Workers, **Mike Roth** and **Ameer Mutazammil**. In addition, **Lee Converse** was promoted to a Neighborhood Inspector position.

# Section 8 Landlord and Client News

## Section 8 Landlords - Take Note!

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION Regarding Plumbing and Heating Inspection Deficiencies

#### Plumbing Failures:

In the event of repairs, replacements and maintenance the owner-occupant of a detached single - family dwelling must obtain a permit to repair, replace or maintain the existing plumbing system or water tank in a single-family dwelling, provided such owner-occupant performs all such plumbing work and that the plumbing work so performed is in accordance with City Code and verified by an inspection requested by the owner-occupant and performed by the Office of Central Inspection. The owner-occupant will be required to provide documentation to the Section 8 office of compliance.

#### Heating System Failures:

In the event of heating system failures on Section 8 units such as inoperable or heating systems red tagged by the local utility company the owner will be required to have the heating system inspected and repaired by a licensed heating contractor and provide documentation to the Section 8 office of compliance.

## Section 8 Clients - Take Note

### 2007 FSS Workshops

- March 15.....Becoming a Homeowner Part 2
- April 5.....Adult Education
- April 19.....Employment
- May 10.....Physical Fitness Field Trip
- July 12.....Career Placement/Career Fair
- October 11.....Domestic Violence/Substance Abuse
- November 8.....Understanding Your FSS Escrow

**Meeting locations to be announced. Meeting time: 6 pm.**

### 2007 CreditSmart Workshops

- April 28 .....Your Credit and Why It Is Important
- May 19.....Managing Your Money and Goal Setting
- June 9.....Banking Services & Establishing/  
Maintaining Good Credit
- July 21.....Understanding Credit Scoring & Thinking  
Like a Lender
- August 18.....Avoiding Credit Traps
- September 15.....Restoring Your Credit & Planning for  
Your Future
- October 13 .....Becoming A Homeowner

**All meetings at Dellrose United Methodist Church, at 10 am.**

### 2007 Homeowners Alumni Calendar

- March 12.....Gardening & Landscaping
- May 14.....Home Maintenance
- July 16.....Safety (Personal & Home)
- September 17.....Budgeting/Foreclosure Prevention
- November 19.....Meeting

**All meetings at Atwater City Hall at 5:30 pm—  
for current Section 8 homeowners!**

## Current HAP Payment Schedule

<i>Month</i>	<i>Mail Date</i>
MARCH 2007	February 27, 2007
APRIL, 2007	March 30, 2007
MAY 2007	April 27, 2007

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
DEPARTMENT**

332 N. Riverview  
Wichita, KS 67203

Phone: 316-462-3700  
Fax: 316-462-3719  
Email: [www.wichita.gov/](http://www.wichita.gov/)



*Published by:*  
City of Wichita  
Housing & Community Services  
Department

Editor:  
Mary K. Vaughn

Contributors:  
Tom Byler  
Gail Lotson

Mailing Address Line 1  
Mailing Address Line 2  
Mailing Address Line 3  
Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5

*We're On The Web!*  
[www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Housing](http://www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Housing)



## COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS



Residents of Wichita Housing Authority public housing units or families holding Section 8 vouchers, may be eligible for scholarships to attend college. The scholarships are available through the Housing Authority Insurance Group.

To be eligible the applicant must be:

- A Public Housing resident or Section 8 participant for at least 6 months, and may be:
- A graduating high school senior or already have a high school diploma/GED.
- Currently attending or plan to attend a college, university or technical school.

You must also have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or greater.

If you are interested in applying for this scholarship, you must:

- Complete a Housing Authority Insurance Group application form. All applications must be legible. Wichita Housing Authority Property Managers and Leasing Specialists will have applications.
- Submit your most recent certified high school transcript, college transcript, and/or GED.
- Submit 2 letters of recommendation (one from a housing authority employee and one from a teacher/administrator)
- Submit a typed essay (no more than 300 words), on this topic:

***“The Person Who Has Made A Difference In My Life, and What It Has Meant To Me”.***

The deadline for submitting applications is **April 30, 2007**.

This could be just the help you need to follow up on suggestions made in the last newsletter, to identify ways that you can improve your life and that of your family. Note: this opportunity is available for teen-age students and adults!!



**Think About It!**