

Around the House

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Focus n Safety

Housing and Community Services Department Mission

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



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The Housing Authority recently received HUD's report on our operations during 2007. This annual evaluation includes a review of our administration and our property management. Part of the evaluation includes results of surveys which HUD sends to tenants. While our overall score was excellent, one area of concern to tenants as reported in their surveys, is safety. Now that the weather is getting warmer, all of us will need to pay closer attention to safety and security issues. Following are tips that should help.

Lock Your Doors. Even if you are going to be out for only a moment, you should always lock your house or apartment doors. It doesn't take much time for someone to enter your home and take your possessions or threaten you personally.

Keep Building Doors Locked. Residents of high rises should never prop open exterior doors.

While this may seem convenient so that your friends can enter to visit you, you are also making it possible for strangers to enter the building.

Report Suspicious Activity. If you notice someone in your neighborhood or in your building who seems out of place, do not confront them. If their behavior is suspicious call 9-1-1.

Report Burned Out Lights. On public housing property, tenants should contact maintenance at 462-3789 to report lights out in parking lots and common living areas. For outages of street lights, call Westar at 262-4343.

Know Where Your Children Are. Children can become victims of criminal activity or offenders, if their activities are not monitored by parents and responsible adults. Don't leave children alone for long periods and know who their friends are and where they go. Another

important tip for parents is to monitor your children's website activity to be sure they are not being targeted by predators.

Know Who Is At Your Door. Ask for identification if persons come to your door stating that they are utility or other service personnel. If you are not comfortable with what they tell or show you—do not open the door. Contact the agency they say they represent or call 9-1-1.

Results That Matter

Public Housing staff are recognized and congratulated this month, for their hard work over the past year which has resulted in the Housing Authority receiving a very high score on HUD's annual evaluation tool. Improvements were noted in all areas and that is due in large part to the extra effort of these staff, you are delivering results that matter to our tenants!





From the Director's Chair Mary K. Vaughn

The months of May and June are special ones for families—because they include special days of recognition for mothers and fathers. **Mother's Day** will be celebrated on May 11 and **Father's Day** is on June 15.

As these special days near, I encourage you to think about the importance of providing positive guidance to your children—and children you encounter.

I think most would agree that being a parent is not easy. It requires you to apply discipline, while at the same time reminding your children that you love

them. It requires sharing their interests but not to the point that they mistake you for a 'buddy' - you are the parent.

Being a parent means stressing the importance of education and learning, which often means establishing times for homework—and even checking to make sure assignments are complete.

Being a parent doesn't mean spending all your income on designer clothes for your children and then not being able to pay your rent or mortgage. Being a parent means not yielding to the temper tantrums thrown by a child to get their way. Instead it means mak-

ing sure your child knows yes is yes—and no is no.

Now if I have made it sound like being a parent is not worth the effort, read on:

Being a parent means having your child throw their arms around your neck, place a big sloppy kiss on your cheek—and tell you how much they love you. That's what I would do if my parents were still here—I hope this is how Mother's Day and Father's Day are celebrated in your homes this year!

*Happy Mother's Day!
Happy Father's Day!*

So You Want to be a Homeowner!

The City of Wichita has a program that just might be what you need!

The HOMEownership 80 program is designed to help first-time homebuyers with downpayment and closing costs, which is often the biggest hurdle for them to overcome. Last year, 49 families received such assistance. (A total of 900 families have been helped since the program started in 1993)!

HOMEownership 80 program assistance is in the form of an interest-free deferred payment loan. A second loan which is also interest-free deferred loan (but is forgiven following a period of 5 years), is available for minor rehabilitation of the home to improve building code compliance.

Upon request, we will provide you with an application, a detailed description of the program, and a map of the areas in which the program is available. You can also access the program information and application on the City's website:

www.wichita.gov/housing. Simply return the application along with some type of income verification such as a pay stub or benefit letter. Other information is required and detailed in the instructions.

In order to receive assistance through the HOMEownership 80 program, you must complete a homeownership training class with one of our designated providers. Feel free to contact one of these

agencies to make arrangements to attend a class: Community Housing Services (685-2656), Mennonite Housing Rehabilitation Services (942-4848), or Urban League of Kansas (262-2463).

HOMEownership 80 program assistance may be utilized in conjunction with other assistance programs, such as the Section 8 Homeownership program, and the Sedgwick County Mortgage Revenue Bond Program.

If you are interested in becoming a homeowner please contact the HOME program at 462-3766. It's never too early to get started!

Behind the Scenes ...

During the last week of April, the Housing and Community Services Department recognized all of its support staff, in recognition of Administrative Professionals Day. Staff were treated to chocolate roses, "light" refreshments, a shopping gift card and an hour off! The management team felt this was the least we could do to



We're proud of
our people!

acknowledge the hard work of this team. Even though the special month for recognition has passed, when you call or visit our offices in the coming weeks, please take a moment to thank the receptionists and those who answer the phones or provide you with assistance. They are key to our delivery of quality customer service to each of you!

WELCOME

In this issue we welcome **Vincent Mitchell**, the newest Maintenance Worker in Public Housing, and **Brad Snapp** who is the new Assistant Director for the Housing and Community Services Department. See the back cover for more information on Brad!

Section 8 News

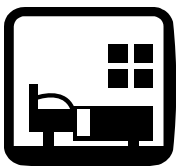
Section 8 Clients

It is only natural to want to get the most living space out of our homes. Some may see the basement as a way to increase that space. Often families want to convert a basement that was previously used for storage, into a computer room, or an open space as a family/recreation room. Others may see a room in the basement as a way to add another bedroom with some privacy.

Stop and consider the danger of this option!

According to published reports, 25% of all fatal fires start in the basement. No matter how small a fire may appear, its progress can be rapid and its power awesome. The manual further states that the exit to the stairway could be cut off in as little as six minutes. While some may die from flames, the majority are overcome by other fire related dangers-heat, smoke, or poisonous gases.

In selecting a bedroom space one should consider the value of their life, and the lives of the ones they love. Any room in a basement that is to be used for sleeping should have a Building Code approved escape window as a means of exit in case of an emergency.



Section 8 Landlords

During the winter, the Section 8 office granted landlords extensions from November 1, 2007 through May 31, 2008, to correct deteriorated paint cited at annual and special inspections.

Re-inspections will begin on June 1 for all units receiving the extension. Landlords who failed to make paint corrections during the extension period, will receive "Intent to Stop" payments notification from the Section 8 office. If corrections are not made within 30 days of the abatement effective date the Housing Assistance Payment Contract will automatically terminate and the client will be issued a voucher to relocate.

Other types of extensions are available for good reason and subject to the following guidelines:

1. Extensions will not be granted without just cause.
2. Verbal extensions will not be granted; all extensions must be submitted in writing, emailed or faxed to the Section 8 office.
3. Extensions will not be granted at initial inspections.
4. Extensions will not be granted for life threatening violations requiring corrections within 24 hours.
5. Extension requests must be received 7 days prior to any scheduled inspection.

Extension request forms are available in our office and on our website.

Landlord Meeting June 11, 2:00 pm

Housing & Community Services
332 N. Riverview
Please RSVP to Teresa Beacham
462-3786 or tbeacham@wichita.gov

2008 FSS Workshops 6:00 pm

Atwater City Hall
May 8
July 10
October 9
November 6

2008 CreditSmart Workshops 10:00 am

Atwater City Hall
May 10: Managing Your Money/Goal Setting
June 7: Banking Services/Establishing, Maintaining Good Credit
July 19: Understanding Credit Scoring/ Thinking Like A Lender
August 23: Avoiding Credit Traps
September 13: Restoring Your Credit/ Planning for Your Future
October 18: Becoming A Homeowner

2008 Homeowners Alumni Meetings 5:30 pm

Atwater City Hall
For current Section 8 homeowners!
May 12
July 14
September 15
November 17

Current HAP Payment Schedule

<i>Month</i>	<i>Mail Date</i>
JUNE, 2008	MAY 30, 2008
JULY, 2008	JUNE 27, 2008

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
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We're On The Web!
www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Housing

New Assistant Director!



Brad Snapp has been hired to serve as Assistant Director of the Housing and Community Services Department. Brad comes to the department following a 10-year career with Sedgwick County government, as Housing Director. At Sedgwick, Brad was responsible for the County Section 8 program as well as the state-wide Mortgage Revenue Bond program. He has been active in the New Communities Initiative program, as well, serving on the Housing Pillar Group. Brad's years of housing experience in

that setting as well as his commitment to and passion for community and human development issues, make him a perfect choice for this position.

Brad is a long-time Wichitan who is married to Ruth. In addition to his interest in community issues, Brad is also an excellent cook! He has won prizes for his pies in the County Fair.

Brad says of his new position: "I am excited to join a team of housing and neighborhood professionals who are working to make a difference in the lives of people in Wichita. This appointment provides me an opportunity to contribute to the local community and set standards for the rest of the state. I'm glad to be a part of the exciting things that are going on with this department and City government."

We are excited to have Brad on our team!

The Check is in the Mail!

By that we mean that the federal stimulus checks will be mailed over the next few weeks, to taxpayers who qualify. These payments will not be considered as income for calculating income for rent certification. You are encouraged to use it to improve your family finances— perhaps saving for next year's school expenses for your children!

