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OR
937.429.7736

GMHA's Homefront

SUMMER 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- IDA Statistics
- Project TOTAL Peer Group
- Applications Update
- Computer Software Changes
- Report Income Changes
- Cook Outs Scheduled

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Director's Corner

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds have come to GMHA! The funds are flowing through our Capital Fund Program, which provides money for major improvements to our public housing units. Since this is one time only funding, we decided to use it for energy and maintenance efficiencies and improvements.

We will replace all incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs in all 361 units, replace about 50 heating units and hot water heaters with energy star units, replace windows at Hawthorne Apartments in Fairborn, rehab 7 units, and insulate attics, basements, and crawl spaces. This work should reduce the utility bills for our residents and reduce maintenance for GMHA. Legal ads for the work items will be on our website gmha.net as well as in the county wide newspaper.

At the beginning of April, GMHA upgraded to newer software for our computer system. The software conversion was challenging to say the least. We discovered that much of our historical data did not convert. May 1st we discovered a problem with our Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher payments only going to property owners and none going to the owners' agents or their banks. We are sorry for this error and inconvenience. The problem should be corrected for June.

Our non-profit, Sensible Shelter, completed two Wise Manor III homes which are in the process of being sold. We hope to begin the last five homes of the development this summer. An open house will be held May 31st for these homes on Commonwealth Drive in Xenia. Wise Manor III will be the last opportunity for low-and-moderate income families to purchase one of these new energy efficient homes and to receive approximately \$40,000 State subsidy per home. Anyone needing more information on these homes should call Connie Paoliello at 937-352-0263.



Susan Stiles
Executive Director

IDA (an Individual Development Account)

The Individual Development Account (IDA) program helps individuals and families save money in order to purchase a home, start a small business, or continue their education. This is done by matching a participant's savings. If a participant reaches their maximum match they will have a total of \$6,000 (\$2,000 from the individual and \$4,000 match money from the IDA program) plus interest to use for their asset. While saving for an asset, participants are required to attend financial literacy classes which help prepare them for the purchase of an asset.

Since 1998, 279 households have participated in the IDA program:

- 33 Households have purchased homes
- 16 Households used their funds for post-secondary education
- 5 Households used their funds to start their own business

With 50 active participants, the IDA Program has allocated all of its funds. New positions become available when a participant is dismissed from the program or additional funding is secured for the program. When a position becomes available, a participant is chosen from the waiting list. If you are interested in the IDA Program or have questions, please contact Jessica Dorn at 352-0259 or jdorn@gmha.net.

Applications Department

The Application Department would like to encourage Applicants to report changes in their contact information and in their preferences within 10 days of any change. Reporting these changes will ensure that you receive all needed correspondence from GMHA. Application change forms can be obtained any of the following ways:

1. Come to the office and pick up a form
2. Call and request a form be mailed to you
3. Email us at applications@gmha.net and we will email the form to you

Due to the fact that the GMHA Wait List is ranked by the number of preferences a family has in combination with the application date, it is not possible for a numbered position on

the wait list to be given out to applicants. The ranking could change several times a day when each applicant is added or removed from the list. Please feel free to call and check on the status of your application and to report changes.

The Wait List for the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program is still closed at this time. GMHA is only accepting applications for Section 8 from transitional housing participants and the homeless.

The Wait List for our Public Housing units remains open.

Public Housing Department

New Forms

Have you noticed new forms from GMHA to inform you of your rent changes? GMHA recently converted to a new software program and this has resulted in new forms. If you have difficulty understanding the format of these forms, or need an explanation of your rent change, please contact your asset manager.

Community Service

Just a reminder: It is very important that you are fulfilling your Community Service requirements. Most of you have been contacted by your asset manager or have been reminded at your recertification appointment about this continuing requirement for Public Housing. It is your responsibility to track and verify the hours that you need to complete. This has been a very big concern with HUD and we will have no choice but to evict tenants who have not fulfilled this requirement. Please be sure you are in compliance. If you have any questions about this Community Service requirement, please contact your asset manager.

Resident Advisory Board (RAB)

We need your help! The Resident Advisory Board is looking for new members to be active on both the Family and Senior Advisory Boards. We encourage all residents to participate. Your concerns, ideas and opinions are important to us and will assist us in planning for you. If you are interested in participating on the Advisory Board, please contact your asset manager at 376-2908.

Cook Outs

If you live in the following rental complexes, please come join us at 12:00 noon for food and fellowship on:

Lawson Place (all)	June 11th
Maggie McKnight	July 30th
Maple Terrace & Hawthorne	August 13th
At Maple Terrace	

From our Maintenance Staff

If you have a maintenance problem, please don't wait to call it in to us. Delays on your part may make the problem worse. When calling in a work order, give a complete description of the problem and it's location. Please be sure to leave your current phone number.

- If you install a window air conditioner, be sure to use the correct outlet and do not use the only window in that room. There must be a clear window or door for emergency egress.
- Check your smoke detector. They must work properly at all times.
- In the complexes where GMHA cuts the grass, remove toys and all other obstacles from the yard for the mowers.
- Do not barbeque next to vinyl siding. It will melt!
- Please call us if your screen door is not latching.

Family Units:

- Please check the condition of your downspouts and clean your gutter if you are able.
- Keep your grass cut at all times below 8 inches.
- Yard tools can be borrowed by our residents. Lawn mowers can be dropped off for a \$5.00 fee and picked up for another \$5.00 fee. We do keep track of tools and mowers. If not returned in a timely manner, you will be charged the cost of the tools or mower.

Section 8 Department

Landlords

GMHA is aware that several checks went out to property owners instead of their agents. This also means that landlords who had their checks going directly to their banks, instead received their checks at their home address. GMHA converted to new housing software and this generated the error. We have resolved the problems and this should not happen again in June. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused and thank you for your patience and cooperation!

Our new computer software will also generate different forms for our inspection procedures. Please review them closely to make sure you understand them so you can avoid abatement of your rent due to this new form. Please call our staff if you have any questions.

Clients

HUD regulations require that all changes in income be reported within 10 days. Income includes, but may not be limited to, employment, child support, OWF, unemployment, social security, SSI, and SSD. Failure to report income in writing could result in the termination of your assistance by GMHA.

Please do not report income changes in your annual recertification packet. Any changes in income must be reported on a "Change Reporting Form". This form should be used for all changes.

Please be advised that you must allow 24 hours for GMHA to complete a household verification for another agency. We are unable to process these requests *on the spot*.

Landlord Meeting

Section 8 will be hosting the landlord meeting on June 9th at 2:00 p.m. in our GMHA board room. Please bring all of your questions regarding our program for staff to answer.

Contacts for Section 8

Marilyn Bruce: General Program Information	352-0273
MaryAnn Angi: General Program Information, Fraud and Forms	352-0250
Connie McPherson: Questions regarding Verifications for Recertification and Move-ins	352-0261
Susan Caudill: Housing Manager	352-0260
Nora Myers: Housing Manager	352-0266
Cheryl Porter: Housing Manager	352-0252
Angela Shockley: Section 8 Supervisor	352-0256

If you have questions regarding an inspection, please contact the front desk at 376-2908 and you will be directed to the appropriate staff member.

Project TOTAL

Project TOTAL (Teaching Our Tenants and Landlords) has been working hard these last few months to help families and single individuals obtain and stabilize in permanent housing and to help those at risk of eviction from losing their housing. The program is currently working with 60 families. It has been a challenge this past year as the Section 8 Waiting list has only been open to homeless individuals. Families are working harder than ever to obtain housing, very often having to pay more than 50% of their income for rent until they can obtain Public Housing or Section 8 voucher assistance.

The Peer Group has been working on a special project for families in the local shelters. The Peer Group is made up of women who have successfully stabilized in permanent housing but have withstood the trials of homelessness and now want to help others who are going down the same path they walked. The group is making tote bags from recycled denim jeans and filling them with some items which they feel would be especially nice for families undergoing homelessness. Some things have been donated but one special item is a hand-made book of encouragement with many uplifting thoughts and words of wisdom, assembled and

decorated into a personalized book to be included in the tote bags. The GMHA staff came to a Sew-In Day on February 4th at the Ohio State University Extension Office sewing room to lend their creative abilities to the Peer Group. We plan to have 25 bags completed soon. A special thanks is owed to Jean Clements, OSU agent, retired, who designed our project and has inspired us with her creativity and abilities.

Landlord meetings held these last few months included topics such as Inspections 101, Winterization, Fair Housing Updates, and other topics of interest to landlords. We appreciate the attendance of landlords this year and encourage more landlords to come and see what these informative meetings are all about!

Project TOTAL is open to anyone who is a Greene County resident and has income below 35% of median income. At risk families are those who have received a notice of eviction and want to resolve the problems and remain housed.

More information can be obtained by coming in to the offices at GMHA or calling 352-0270.



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Marsha Bayless
Cecil Brown
Esther Mills, Resident Board Member
Susan Stiles, Executive Director

Housing That Works to Enhance Life in
Greene County.



Homefront Notes of Interest

We Wel come:
Mia Davis, Applications Resident Initiative
Katie McKee, Public Housing Resident Initiative

GMHA will be closed
June 9th
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon