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GMHA's Homefront

WINTER 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Bed Bugs
- IDA Sign-up Open
- Project TOTAL Intake Changes
- Applications Update
- American Recovery & Reinvestment Act
- The Cost of Fraud
- Maintenance Reminders

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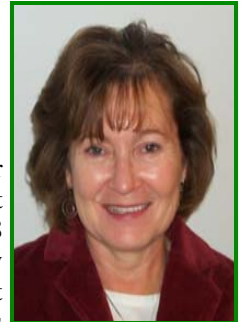
Director's Corner

In the last few months, there have been a number of issues for our landlords in the Section 8 Program with the inspection process. This past April GMHA upgraded the computer software. Although the Section 8 Dept. tried to plan and prepare for it, they weren't as prepared as they should have been. The staff has been working very hard to implement changes. We hope by the end of December to have the inspection process working smoothly and there should be a significant improvement. We appreciate everyone's continued patience and understanding.

November 1st marked the beginning of a transformation of how Greene County works with homeless individuals and families. With funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) called Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP), Greene County began a Central Intake for all homeless individuals and families. Community Action Partnership is the recipient of the funds and has the Central Intake at their office.

Project TOTAL will provide case management for individuals and families receiving Rapid Re-housing funds through HPRP. Funding for HPRP is for three years and we hope in the next three years to move most of the homeless families and individuals into permanent housing as quickly as possible.

Speaking of ARRA funding, GMHA has begun spending our ARRA Capital Funds on our public housing units. Two homes in Beavercreek have been rehabbed, 18 energy efficient furnaces and hot water heaters have been installed in units, and GMHA began replacing all light bulbs in public housing with compact fluorescent bulbs. In November, GMHA will be rehabbing a house in Fairborn and replacing windows at Hawthorne a senior development in Fairborn



Susan Stiles
Executive Director

IDA (an Individual Development Account)

The Individual Development Account (IDA) Program is actively recruiting for Greene County Residents who are looking to fulfill their American dream. If you are looking to own your first home, start a small business, or go to college, let the IDA Program help you with \$4,000 that you NEVER have to pay back!

How can the IDA Program help you fulfill your dream?

- By matching all money you save at a rate of 2:1, up to \$4,000
- Financial and asset specific education to teach you techniques to better your finances
- Case management to help guide you through the process and answer your questions
- Assist you in raising your credit score

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

Space is limited, so call Jessica Dorn at 937-352-0259 or e-mail jdorn@gmha.net to see if you qualify!

Applications Department

GMHA is currently experiencing a high volume of calls and walk-ins to our agency. Please be patient with us. If you are coming into the office to see your housing manager you must first stop at the reception desk. If you are bringing in verifications or forms please have them together neatly and ready to be presented to the receptionist. Please note: any documents that do not appear to be sanitary will not be accepted by the receptionist.

The Application Department would like to encourage all applicants to report changes in their contact information and in their preferences within 10 days of a change. Reporting changes will be the best way to ensure you receive all needed

correspondence from GMHA. Application Change forms may be obtained any of the following ways:

1. By coming into the office to pick up a form
2. Calling and requesting a form be mailed to you
3. You may e-mail us at applications@gmha.net and request the form be emailed back to you

Please be respectful of our agency and other customers. If you are sick with a cold or the flu, please call or e-mail us with your requests.

Public Housing Department

From our Housing Managers

Greene Metropolitan Housing Authority would like to remind tenants of Public Housing to be certain that all residents report any and all changes in income. Residents must report income changes of all household members within 10 days from the occurrence. The amount of subsidy a resident receives from HUD is based upon family income and accurate reporting of that income for all household members is essential. When residents fail to report income, the rent is not calculated correctly and the subsidy amount received from HUD is not correct. This is considered fraud. Failure to report your income may result in termination of your housing. If you have questions regarding this practice, please contact your Housing Manager for clarification.

Bed Bugs

In August, we mailed out a notice to all Public Housing tenants regarding bed bugs. Bed bugs are brown to reddish-brown, oval shaped, flattened, and about 1/5 of an inch long. They become larger after feeding. Bed bugs hide in cracks and crevices of mattresses and in couches/upholstered furniture. They are nocturnal blood feeders and will feed at night. Residents may recognize signs of bed bugs by blood stains from crushed bugs or by rust spots of excrement on sheets and mattresses, bed clothes, and walls. If you suspect you have bed bugs, GMHA asks you to immediately contact us for further instructions. Together we can eliminate the spread of bed bugs.

From our Maintenance Staff

Fall is here and winter is just around the corner. We are asking all residents that have outside water faucets to detach hoses and store them away for the winter to prevent the freezing of your water line causing a leak inside your home. You will be charged for any unnecessary damage.

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. Call maintenance at 352-0265 between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. After hours call 352-0284.

Reminders:

- Check your smoke detector. They must work properly at all times.
- Check all of your windows to be sure they lock.
- If you have a fluorescent bulb break, open a window for 15 to 20 minutes to air out the room.

Family Units:

- Please check the condition of your downspouts and clean your gutters, if you are able.
- When it snows, try to remove it from sidewalks before it gets walked on. (It will make the job much easier)

Elderly Units:

- When it snows, try to remove your welcome mat by your door. The snow blower will eat them!
- Don't pull your car up too close to the sidewalk when you park. Leave room for the snow blower to clear the walks.

PLEASE let the maintenance staff know ahead of time if someone in the household is sick. You may be asked to reschedule the appointment UNLESS it is an emergency.

PLEASE don't be shocked or offended if you see the maintenance staff wearing gloves and/or a mask. It is to protect their health.

Flu Season Alert

If you have the flu, do not come into the GMHA office or allow GMHA staff to enter your unit unless it is absolutely necessary. If you have an appointment with someone at GMHA, please call to reschedule. In short, please try to be considerate of others if you are ill. The staff at GMHA wants to remain healthy so we can assist you with your needs without delay. Have a great season and stay healthy!

Section 8 Department

Thank you for your patience!!!

GMHA has issued several hundred vouchers in Greene County this summer and fall. We would like to thank you for your patience while they are being processed. We have been moving through them as quickly as possible to insure clients are being housed and landlords are receiving their payments.

To Better Serve You

To better serve you, GMHA Inspectors will be leaving a card in the unit to inform you whether the inspection passed or failed. Paper work will follow in the mail.

GMHA's Policy on Information to Landlords

HUD regulations state that GMHA will provide certain information to a landlord who asks for it (CFR 982.307). GMHA must give the family's current address and we must give the name and address of current and past landlords, if known. According to GMHA policy, we will give, if requested, other information in the family's file about tenancy history matters, or about drug trafficking or violent criminal activity by family members. On the Section 8 program, landlords have a right to screen applicants for tenancy. The above information may be given to assist landlords with the screening process.

A Few Reminders to Landlords:

Don't be late to your Move-In Inspection Appointment. It may be difficult to reschedule you again quickly.

If you have changed the responsibility of ownership for the stove and/or refrigerator, or have changed who is responsible for any of the utilities, please submit in writing prior to the

annual recertification date.

For new Move-Ins, please return completed contracts as soon as possible in order to start the Housing Assistance Payment from GMHA. We only issue checks twice a month.

Please contact the Housing Authority immediately if you find that one of your tenants has vacated the unit.

A Few Reminders to Tenants:

In case of extenuating circumstances and you need to re-schedule your inspection, please call the inspector; and you **MUST** follow-up with the request in writing and get it to GMHA.

If you need copies of paperwork or need a household verification completed you must give us a 48 hour notice.

If you have been scheduled for an appointment in our office and cannot make the scheduled time please call to reschedule for the next available appointment.

The Cost of Fraud

Section 8 does investigate fraud cases. Money owed to GMHA because of fraud may be reported to the court. Tenants will be terminated from the HCV Program and landlords may be banned from the Program as well. Tenants: Don't move additional people into your unit without prior approval from GMHA. Landlords: Don't ask tenants to make side payments.

Section 8 Landlord Meeting

A Section 8 Landlord Meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. This is a chance for landlords to get questions answered by the Section 8 Department.

Project TOTAL

Project TOTAL (Teaching Our Tenants and Landlords) currently has almost 50 families working with Case Managers to obtain and/or stabilize in permanent housing. This program assists families who are currently homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless. They work hard to overcome barriers which caused homelessness and obtain the supports they need to remain in housing. These issues cover a wide range but are critical for reaching stability in housing. Learning how to handle the family budget, obtain work skills, maintain freedom from domestic violence, and/or deal with mental health issues are just a few of the areas which our families and individuals set as goals for themselves. Working with community resources and a supportive Case Manager on a weekly basis for up to a year are typical for the Project TOTAL client. Many rely on help from several Greene County agencies for assistance and work in collaboration with Project TOTAL.

Our part-time Case Manager, Sondra Guenther, left the program on June 30th due to cutbacks in PRC funding through Greene County Job & Family Services. We were very sorry to see her go and wish her the best in her endeavors.

On June 5, 2009, the Peer Group and Staff participated in the United Way Day of Action at the OSU Ext. office in Xenia.

Jean Clements, OSU agent (retired) designed tote bags and helped instruct volunteers. Volunteers recruited through the Voluntary Action Office assisted the Peer Group and Project TOTAL staff in sewing the tote bags made from recycled denim jeans. The tote bags will be filled with comfort items and given to new families when they arrive in area shelters.

Landlord Meetings held in the last few months included speakers from: Greene County Veterans Services, Animal Control, Legal Aid, and Scope Weatherization.

Project TOTAL will also be providing case management to families in a new program called Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing (HPRP). This is an important change in Greene County where all homeless individuals and families, and those at risk of eviction, will be screened by a Central Intake Specialist at Community Action Partnership. This is a statewide program for homeless families with low to moderate barriers to overcome. Project TOTAL will work with those eligible for Rapid Rehousing to obtain housing as well as families and individuals who fall under 35% of median income and are in shelters and/or have chronic homelessness issues.

Please call Bernice Brett at 352-0270 if you have questions regarding our new intake procedure. You may also call CAP at 376-7747.



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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

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- Nancy Hadley, Vice Chair**
- Marsha Bayless**
- Cecil Brown**
- Esther Mills, Resident Board Member**
- Susan Stiles, Executive Director**

**Housing That Works to Enhance Life in
Greene County.**



Is it time to Walk a New Path in Life?

**Let the IDA Program
Get You Started down
that New Path!**



Would you like to earn money for a
Down Payment on a Home,
Start a Small Business, or
Go to College?

This program will match your savings at a rate of 2:1, up to \$4,000 that you **NEVER** have to pay back!

The IDA Program is open to all Greene County residents that income qualify.
Space is limited, so call today!

937-352-0259