



Giving back to the community during the holiday season

With Summer long gone and winter quickly approaching, the holidays are fast underway. It is a time of year to which everyone looks forward and also dreads. We get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the season, and sometimes we forget why we are putting in all the holiday effort. If the holidays put you in a giving mood, consider volunteering at a local homeless shelter, nursing home or hospital. Please remember community service can always be done around this time of year. For more information on giving back during the holidays, please contact Florence Cole, Resident Counselor.

Community Service

HUD requires all adults (18 years or older) living in public housing who are not working to complete 8 hours of community service each month. The only exception are to, elderly (62 years or older), disabled (as defined by HUD), or those enrolled in school or a qualifying training program.

If this requirement is not fulfilled it is a lease violation. Public Housing residents are required to complete community service hours monthly. All community service hours must be turned in no later than the 30th of each month.

See Florence Cole, Resident Counselor/ FSS Coordinator for Volunteer Time Sheets and a list of agencies that need volunteers. If you are not able to complete service hours or should you have any questions about how many hours you might owe, please contact Ms. Cole as soon as possible at 301-424-6265 ext 311.

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Special points of interest:

- Community Service hours due at the end of each month to Resident Counselor, Florence Cole.
- Homework Club is every Tuesday and Thursday at David Scull Community Center.
- Resident Council meetings are the first Tuesday of each month.
- Home safety tips you should know.

Seasons Greeting from the FSS Program

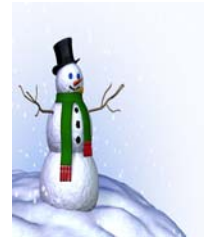
Jean Caraway
FSS HCV Coordinator

Florence Cole
FSS Public Housing Coordinator

Saving Money This Holiday Season

As the holidays approach, it is very easy to allow ourselves to get caught up in the spirit of giving. Yet as our bills will tell us, giving can become quite costly. We must all be careful not to spend beyond our means. So often we tell ourselves things such as “Christmas comes but once a year”, and “ I will pay these bills off after the New Year”. These are very dangerous attitudes that can land us in financial hot water. It is very tempting to use our credit cards or to spend money that we know we shouldn’t during holiday season. Here are just a few tips that might make gift giving a less expensive prospect:

- Consider making gifts for friends and loved ones
- Think about sharing the holidays with friends in a “potluck supper” instead of taking on all the shopping and cooking yourself.
- Agree ahead of time with friends and loved ones to shop for gifts when Christmas prices go down.
- Instead of giving expensive gifts, volunteer at a shelter or soup kitchen.
- If gift giving is something you feel you must do, try to start shopping for gifts as early as possible. This will allow you to spend more time comparing prices and you will not be forced into last minute, desperation shopping which tends to be much more expensive. If you have a large family, consider a family grab bag. Pull names from a hat, set a limit on spending and everyone in the family gets one special gift.



Even though Christmas is over a month away, it is never too early to think about your finances. If you begin now to prepare for the spending that is right around the corner, you will find that the holidays can be almost worry-free!

FSS PROGRAM

If you are a Public Housing Resident or a Housing Choice Voucher Resident

If you are single, married, a parent, or elderly

If you want to own a home, open a business, or even go back to school or
accomplish something else,



The FSS Program can help you make your goals and dreams come true.

Call RHE at (301) 424-6265. If you are a Public Housing Resident, ask to speak with Florence Cole.

If you are a Housing Choice Voucher Resident, ask for Jean Caraway.

For Section 8 FSS participants Congratulations

Tonya Hughes for her new job as a County Community Connections guide and for her daughter, **Makayla's success in the French Immersion Program.** **Cynthia Knott** on her new job with Lab Corps. **Deborah Shaw** on her MPDU certificate for rentals AND homeownership. **Wendy Moten** on her B.S. in business accounting from the University of Phoenix. **Kandice Frenche** whose children all take advanced classes. Great Job Ladies! We would also like to thank all the participants in both Section 8 and Public Housing who came out to the FSS networking workshops. It was a great success. Stay posted for all future workshops, and if you need more information contact Florence Cole or Jean Caraway, FSS Coordinators.

Recognition for Good Grades

Rockville Housing Enterprises wants to invite all parents to let the FSS staff know of any of our children who have at least a **B average (3.0)** in the current grading period. Please let us know so that the hard work of these good students (and their parents) can be recognized. We have certificates for them. Call Jean Caraway or Florence Cole at (301) 424-6265. We know how important education is and want your son or daughter to shine for their efforts.



Cold and Flu Season

As the weather becomes colder and we stay indoors more, people often catch colds or other viruses. The cold and flu season can begin as early as October and usually ends sometime in April. While there is no way to cure the common cold or the flu, healthy eating during cold and flu season can help you avoid getting sick. Colds and flu are spread from person to person through coughs and sneezes. To prevent getting a cold or the flu this season, **WASH HANDS** with soap and running hot water or use a hand sanitizer. This is the single most important method to prevent illness. Always eat a well-balanced meal and drink plenty of water. And finally if you do get sick always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. For more information on this please check the CDC (Center for Disease Control) website at www.cdc.gov



From the Homeownership Coordinator

On Saturday, October 24th, we held our 2nd Annual Workshop for RHE Housing Choice Voucher homeowners. This event has been held in the fall for the last two years and is a wonderful opportunity for our homeowners to share experiences, to learn something relevant to homeownership and to update their homeowner financial documents here at RHE. This year's special presenter was Emilie Crown from the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Squad. Ms. Crown is an emergency nurse by training, but now works for the County. Her husband is a fire fighter and paramedic for Montgomery County, as well. She shared many important tips with us having to do with safety in the home. Although all our homeowners live in new homes built in 2007, safety issues are always a concern.

Ms. Crown discussed fire safety in the kitchen and how to use a fire extinguisher. If a fire starts in a pot on your stove, cover it with the lid to suffocate the fire, because without oxygen the fire will go out. If someone's clothing catches on fire, STOP, DROP and ROLL. Buy the type of fire extinguisher that works on multiple types of fires and when using the extinguisher aim it in a sweeping back and forth motion. If a large fire starts, do not try to use the extinguisher, but rather exit the home and call 911. She also discussed the importance of developing an escape plan for your family. Have a floor plan diagram that shows the proper route for exiting the home from each room in the dwelling. Go over it with each member of the family and have an agreed upon meeting place outside the home so you can immediately make sure all family members are safe. Do not reenter a burning house for any reason. Also, remember to maintain your home smoke detectors. Test them regularly and change the batteries when needed.

We also discussed the importance of getting a credit report once a year in order to make sure all the information is correct. The national website for your free annual credit report is: www.annualcreditreport.com. In addition, we went over the procedures for and importance of the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections. After all the discussions, we played a couple of games for fun. Winners took home some Crocus or Daffodil bulbs to plant in their gardens. For more information on this and other home safety tips please contact Susan Cheney, Homeownership Coordinator.

From the Housing Choice Voucher Program

Housing Choice Voucher Program Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections

The federal government will not provide rental assistance in any unit that is not decent, safe, and sanitary. To assure that units meet HUD's Housing Quality Standards (HQS), RHE inspects units before move-in, at least once each year after move-in, and whenever there is a complaint by the tenant or the landlord regarding the condition of the unit. Program participants must cooperate in the inspection process or face possible termination from the program. If a unit fails inspection, the landlord or tenant, whoever is responsible for the failure, is given notice that repairs must be completed within 24 hours for life-threatening violations or 30 days for less serious violations. Following this period, the unit is re-inspected and if it fails once again then assistance is stopped and no payments are made until repairs are completed. If repairs continue not to be made, the contract between RHE and the landlord will be terminated. If the HQS violations are not the tenant's fault and the landlord is refusing to complete repairs, the HCV participant will be issued a voucher to move.

7 For Section 8 FSS participants Congratulations

During the winter months, turn down your thermostat from 72°F to 68°F for 8 hours a day and you'll save as much as 10% on energy costs. Every degree you lower your thermostat could save you about 3% on your heating bill. It is recommended that you set the thermostat to 68°F when you're home and 55°F when you're sleeping or not at home. Using a microwave to cook meals uses about half the energy of a conventional oven. Washing clothes in cold water instead of hot is another energy saving tip that can save you about \$50 per year.

Another way to save energy in the laundry room is to put a dry towel in the dryer with each load of wet clothes. The towel will absorb dampness and reduce drying time, saving energy and money. Replace incandescent light bulbs with more efficient, compact, fluorescent ones. Besides saving energy, you will also save money in the long run, since the life span of a fluorescent bulb is substantially longer.



More Home Safety Tips to Know

Families, this is a just a reminder from RHE: you should turn off all heat producing appliances before leaving your home (e.g., clothes dryers, irons, curling irons, stoves, coffee makers). Know the location of your gas, electric, and water shutoffs. Keep these areas free from clutter. Dispose of all household hazardous waste properly. The transfer Station in Rockville will accept oil and car batteries. Call the Department of Environmental Protection at 301-217-2770 to schedule special trash pickup or to obtain dates that they will accept other hazardous waste.

Resident Council Corner

Residents in both Public Housing and the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) program, please come to the Resident Council meetings. We have great attendance each month and would like to see more people. The meetings provide an opportunity for all residents to express concerns to management and work together to improve their communities. Meetings are held on the First Tuesday of each month at the David Scull Community Center. All new residents that have moved into Public Housing or into Housing Choice Voucher units, the Resident Council Meetings are a great opportunity to meet other residents as well as to meet management. If you would like more information about the Resident Council meetings please contact Lydia York, President, or Tosha Dyson, at (240) 715-5685. Or contact Florence Cole, Resident



Thanks again to all the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher residents that came to the Resident Council meetings this fall. It's great to see residents come and support their community. At the most recent meetings we talked about neighborhood safety and reporting any suspicious activities in your neighborhood. We also discussed upcoming events that will be happening at the David Scull Community Center. Residents were reminded of the Holiday Drive that will be going on from November to December. Residents of RHE should have received applications for the Holiday Drive and turned them in to be put on the list to receive a Holiday Basket for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. We also reminded residents that they are able to rent out David Scull Community Center for any special events i.e. (birthday parties, baby showers, etc.) For more information on this and other information that was discussed at the resident council meetings please contact resident counselor, Florence Cole at (301)424-6265 or contact Vice President, Tosha Dyson at (240) 715-5685.

Maryland Community Services Locator

Need community resources?

Let the Maryland Community Service Locator (MDCSL) help you find services, maps, and directions at: www.mdcs.org

Resources in Conflict Resolution, Disability Services, Family Assistance, Food Assistance Programs, Health Services, HIV/AIDS Resources, Job Readiness/ Adult Education, Legal Assistance, Mental Health Services, Support Groups and so much more.

For more information on this and other resources call MDCSL at 301-405-9796 or call Florence Cole, Resident Counselor at 301-424-6265.

From Public Housing Program

David Scull Renovations

Rockville Housing Enterprises is taking this opportunity to use stimulus grant money to upgrade the David Scull Courts. Based on conversations with tenants and the number of work orders we have received over the years, it was decided that renovating the kitchens and bathrooms and re-painting the entire unit would be a good use of the money.

In the kitchens, the cabinets, sink and the appliances will be replaced and garbage disposals and dishwashers will be added. In the bathrooms, the tubs/shower heads, toilets, sinks/vanities and medicine cabinets will be replaced. The floors will be replaced on an as needed basis. We are starting with the vacant units, then onto the occupied units. The occupied units have been chosen based on those that were vacant at the time we solicited bids from contractors. Next are units who have tenants that have been here the longest AND are in good standing in terms of rent and house-keeping. In the course of the next year, all units in David Scull will be renovated.

When it is time for your unit to be renovated, we'll be sure that you have use of your kitchen and bath at the end of each day. Any other arrangements will be made on a case by case basis. You will be expected to cooperate by moving items to allow access in various areas. The notice will instruct you on what needs to be done. As a tenant, you will be required to take care of these items so be sure you follow the instructions and learn how to operate the new appliances. RHE will be here to assist you in the transition. For more information on this please contact RHE and ask to speak with Stacy Brooks, Director of Asset Management.



November 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Resident Council Meeting	4	5 Homework Club	6	7
8	9	10 Homework Club	11 Veterans Day Office Closed	12 Homework Club	13 Video Gaming Night 5:30- 7:00 pm	14 Financial Management Workshop
15	16	17 Homework Club	18	19 Homework Club	20	21
22	23	24 Homework Club	25	26 Thanksgiv- ing Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28
29	30					

December 2009



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Resident Council Meeting 5:30pm-7:00pm	2	3 Homework Club	4	5 Money Management Workshop
6	7	8 Homework Club	9	10 Homework Club	11	12
13	14	15 Homework Club	16	17 Homework Club	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Office Closed	26
27	28	29	30	31		



Benefits of Paying Rent On Time

With Holidays around the corner, it's easy to get sidetracked with buying gifts for family and friends. However, RHE would like to remind all residents of the importance of paying the rent when due. A good rent paying history is crucial when applying for other housing owned by RHE or on the private market.

It also becomes part of a resident's credit history when applying for any type of credit.

Occasionally, RHE has public housing scattered site units for rent. These are lovely detached houses in quiet neighborhoods.

A twelve-month history of no late rent payments is part of the requirement to transfer to these units. If you would like further information about scattered sites, please contact RHE.

Homework Club Tuesdays and Thursdays at David Scull

Often when your children get around to starting their homework, distractions from television, computers, friends, and family make studying a challenge and help is not available. Well, if that is the case, the Resident Council has started a homework club at David Scull Community Center every Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30pm to 5:30 pm. Children can come to the community center and get assistance on any of their homework assignments. For more information on this contact Tosha Dyson, resident Council Vice President at (240) 715-8565 or Florence Cole, Resident Counselor at (301) 424-6265.

CITY OF ROCKVILLE COMMUNITY SERVICES



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A FREE WORKSHOP ON:

BASIC MONEY MANAGEMENT HOW TO BETTER MANAGE YOUR UTILITY AND OTHER BILLS

When: Saturday December 5th, 2009

Where: **30 Courthouse Square, Suite # 100**
Rockville, Maryland

Time: 10:00 A.M to 12:00 PM

Topics will include:

Spending on what my family needs, not what they want.

How can I have a budget when I have no money?

How to eliminate, postpone or reduce expenses

Short term solutions to emergency situations

Prioritizing bills – What bills do I have to pay first?

How to manage holiday expenses

Registration is not necessary, but is encouraged.

To register or for additional information please call Alfred Thompson
at (240) 314 8319

Rockville Housing

Enterprises

621-A Southlawn Lane

Rockville MD 20850

Phone: 301-424-6265

Fax: 301-217-5857

Website: www.rockvillehe.org

RHE OFFICE HOURS

8:30 am-5:00 pm

Monday– Friday

RHE Staff

Ruth O'Sullivan
Executive Director

Mary Ellen Jones
Director of Administration

Brenda Smith
Director of Finance

Christine Bernstein
Accounting Assistant

Public Housing Department

Stacy Brooks
Director of Asset Management

Florence Cole
Resident Counselor/FSS Coordinator

Gerry Peete
Public Housing Specialist

Maintenance Department

Michael Green
Director of Maintenance

Ron Brown
Maintenance Technician

Charles Johnson
Maintenance Technician

Adam Johnson
Maintenance Technician

Housing Choice Voucher Program

Meta Lim
Housing Choice Voucher Specialist

Jamila Michael
Housing Choice Voucher Specialist

Jean Caraway
Housing Choice Voucher FSS Coordinator

Susan Cheney
Homeownership Coordinator