

Around the House

Volume 3, Issue 4

July/Aug, 2006



**Housing and
Community
Services
Department
Mission**

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



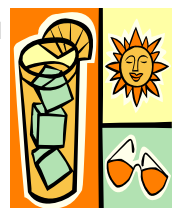
Inside this issue:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <i>From the Director</i> | 2 |
| <i>Housing Authority 5 Year Plan</i> | 2 |
| <i>Behind the Scenes</i> | 2 |
| <i>Credit Questions and Answers</i> | 3 |
| <i>FSS Workshop Schedules</i> | 3 |
| <i>HAP Payment Schedule</i> | 3 |
| <i>Section 8 Applications</i> | 4 |

Play It Safe & Cool This Summer

Now that summer has officially arrived—according to the calendar and the thermometer—the following summer safety tips are provided to help you and your family enjoy the season. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) offers the following tips for child safety.

- One of the best ways to stay safe this summer is to wear a helmet and other safety gear when biking, skating and skateboarding, and when riding scooters, etc. Studies on bicycle helmets have shown they can reduce the risk of head injury by as much as 85 percent.
 - Never bring charcoal grills indoors. Burning charcoal produces deadly carbon monoxide.
 - When cooking outdoors with a gas grill, check the air tubes that lead into the burner for any blockage from insects, spiders, or food grease. Check grill hoses for cracking, brittleness, holes, and leaks. Make sure there are no sharp bends in the hose or tubing. If you ever detect a leak, immediately turn off the gas at the tank and don't attempt to light the grill until the leak is fixed. Newer grills and propane tanks have improved safety devices to prevent gas leaks.
 - Use softer-than standard baseballs, safety-release bases and batting helmets with face guards to reduce baseball-related injuries to children.
 - Don't allow a game of hide-n-seek to become deadly. CPSC has received reports of numerous suffocation deaths involving children who crawled inside old cedar chests, latch-type freezers and refrigerators, ice-boxes in campers, clothes dryers and picnic coolers. Childproof old appliances, warn children not to play inside them.
 - Summer also means yard work. When mowing, keep small children out of the yard, and turn the mower off if children enter the area. If the lawn slopes, mow across the slope with the walk-behind rotary mower, never up and down. With a riding mower, drive up and down the slope, not across it. Never carry children on a riding mower.
- *****
- The following tips from the Red Cross for preventing heat-related illness, apply to people of all ages:
- **Dress for the heat.** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy. It is also a good idea to wear hats or to use an umbrella.
 - **Drink water.** Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which dehydrate the body.
 - **Eat small meals and eat more often.** Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat.
 - **Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.**
 - **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
 - **Stay indoors when possible.**
 - **Take regular breaks** when engaged in physical activity on warm days. Take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you, or someone else, is showing the signals of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place. Remember, have fun, but stay cool!





From the Director's Chair Mary K. Vaughn

The summer season is a great time to get out and enjoy the weather with family and friends. However this summer we are facing a problem I hope you will help us with. Our Public Housing make-ready crews are working hard to get properties ready for new tenants to move in but neighborhood vandals are working against them. As soon as we get new windows installed, vandals

break them out. In addition, aluminum guttering is being stolen, apparently for resale. These are examples of actions which are not only against the law, but also have negative impacts on our programs. First of all, it wastes taxpayer money. Each time we have to replace a vandalized or stolen item, we are spending money for the same item twice. This reduces the amount we have to repair

other homes. Secondly, it makes a new Public Housing tenant have to wait longer before they can move into their home because the crews have to keep repeating the same repairs.

Please help us stop this behavior by reporting any type of vandalism to the police. And parents, please do your part to make sure your children are not guilty of any of these acts!

Housing Authority 5 Year Plan Available for Comment—August 15, 2006



On October 21, 1998, the *Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998* (QHWRA) was signed into law as part of the FY 1999 Appropriations Bill. One provision of the Act is the mandate for public housing authorities to prepare a five-year plan showing the needs and goals for that period (update every five years) and a more detailed annual operating plan. The annual plan must include, among other things, information on the housing needs of the locality, population served, method of rent determination, operations, capital improvements, unmet housing needs of families with low to moderate incomes and

efforts to coordinate the program with local welfare agencies. These plans cover the administrative policies and anticipated subsidies for both Section 8 and Public Housing Programs.

Section 511 of the QHWRA requires the board of directors of housing authorities to conduct a public hearing to discuss the housing authority plans and to invite public comment regarding the plans. If the board receives public comment, written or oral, which is deemed significant enough to amend the plans, the board may amend the plans and certify the plans as amended.

The 5-year and 2007 Annual Plans will be available for public inspection starting on August 15th at the Housing and Community Services Office located at 332 N. Riverview, and will continue to be available for one year. Written comments regarding the Plans can be mailed to 332 N. Riverview, Wichita, KS 67203 and must be received by October 1, 2006. The public hearing will be held in the City Council Chambers at the City Building, 455 N. Main, following the City Council Meeting which commences at 9:00 a.m. on October 3, 2006.

Behind the Scenes ...

Behind the scenes, **Mark Stanberry** recently completed the Wichita State University MiniMPA program. The program is taught over 16 weeks at the Hugo Wall School and provides executive development in Public Administration.

We also salute other department staff college graduates:



We're proud of
our people!

Kathy Pewewardy, Charis Parks and Nancy Murdock (2006); **Shreda Johnson** (2005); **Pearl Harmon** (2004). These persons pursued their degrees while working full time! Congratulations to all—and may this serve as encouragement for clients and staff alike—that where there is a will, there is a way to improve your education!!

WELCOME!

We also welcome **Katherine Laws** to the Section 8 program as a Housing Leasing Specialist and congratulate **Lee Converse** on his promotion to the position of Maintenance Mechanic.

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

332 N. Riverview
Wichita, KS 67203

Phone: 316-462-3700
Fax: 316-462-3719
Email: www.wichita.gov/



Published by:
City of Wichita
Housing & Community Services
Department

Editor:
Mary K. Vaughn

Contributors:
Tom Byler
Shaun Davis
Gail Lotson

We're On The Web!
www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Housing

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

Section 8 Program Signs Up New Applicants

Very soon, over 100 low-income families will be moving in to safe, affordable housing as a result of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program.

During the last week of June, the Section 8 application process was re-opened for the first time in four years. This was made possible primarily because of the number of Section 8 clients who achieved their goals of self-sufficiency and therefore no longer need the assistance. Once the vouchers became available, staff contacted persons on the existing waiting list to update their information and offer vouchers. However, vouchers remained even after that process so the

application period was opened in order to identify new applicants for the remaining vouchers.

Over 3,000 applications were received during the one week application period. Staff have now begun the process of going through all the applications, entering them into the computer system according to the date and time the application was received, and sorting through the applications to identify persons who meet preference priorities. Those persons will be scheduled for an appointment to bring in documentation to complete the formal application. Assuming all documents are provided, the staff will provide successful applicants with a Housing Choice Voucher which they can

use to locate and lease safe housing in the Wichita community.

Unfortunately, however, due to the limited number of vouchers available, most of this year's applicants will end up on a waiting list, to be called when vouchers again become available.

The Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program, allows very low-income families to choose and lease or purchase safe, decent, and affordable privately-owned rental housing. The vouchers are provided to public housing authorities by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

