

2010 Census

Summer and fall are ideal times to spread the word about the upcoming Census. Take advantage of the good weather to talk to neighbors and friends, and tell them: *Census Day is April 1, 2010. The Constitution requires that a Census be taken every 10 years – and that everyone be counted. Census is easy, safe, and important!*

Counting everyone is no small task, and that's why we're starting early. The 2010 Census operation will be the nation's largest peacetime mobilization. To get the word out, the Census relies on thousands of workers and volunteers.

Census is vital to our community. By law, \$435 billion in federal funding must be distributed according to Census counts. That's \$1,400 per person, per year! That means if a person doesn't get counted, our community loses \$14,000 (per person) or for the next decade. That could easily add up! For 100 local people missed, we lose \$1.4 million! Census numbers determine how many representatives our state gets — as well as Congressional, state, and school district boundaries. Some Pacific Northwest states could gain or lose a representative. We need to ensure everyone is counted!

This year's Census form is the easy – 10 questions, 10 minutes. Not since the first Census in 1790, have so few questions been asked. Questions basically ask for name, gender, address, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity and if the home is owned or rented.

All answers are kept private. The Census Bureau does not share information with anyone else – even federal agencies. Not even the President can get information about an individual home. All Census employees take a lifetime oath to safeguard information – punishable by \$250,000 and/or five years in prison. Information is kept private for 72 years.

Although Census is still a few months away, it is not too early to get out the word. Here are four ways.

1. **Spark conversations.** People now are spending more time outdoors. Take this opportunity to talk to those you meet about the importance of the Census and its benefits to your community. For example, your neighbors may have recently seen Census workers in the area. Explain that they likely witnessed address canvassing, an operation in which Census workers walk through neighborhoods gathering information to update maps and address lists. Tell them this recent activity, completed in record time, will help ensure the accuracy of the 2010 Census when it is conducted next spring.
2. **Host a census picnic or barbecue.** Start or continue grassroots outreach by hosting a census-themed event, such as a picnic or barbecue for members, employees or other constituents. Talk with attendees about the census and its impact on the community. Provide Census promotional information.
3. **Participate in Census outreach efforts.** Census staff in our state have been at dozens of fairs and festivals. Good weather in the Pacific Northwest is always accompanied by lots of neighborhood events -- block parties, cookouts, parades, neighborhood walks, safety fairs, contests, rallies and more. Connect with the organizers in your area and incorporate census information when you can. For example, consider making 2010 Census signs or visit www.2010census.gov/partners to download literature.
4. **Start or join a Complete Count Committee (CCC).** CCCs operate year-round and are always eager to involve new members and inspire new thinking to drive participation.

For more information, view www.census.gov.