

Supervisor John Gioia's Weekly E-Update

March 19, 2010

Completing Census Forms Means Vital Federal Dollars for Our Community

Like millions of us, I received my census form in the mail recently, asking a few simple questions such as how many people live in my household. It takes only a few minutes to complete.

I hope everyone will join me in filling out and mailing in their census forms. **Census data is more important than many people realize:** it's used by the federal government to determine how much funding to distribute to schools, libraries, hospitals, police and fire departments, transit agencies, and other important local government services. The census is taken every ten years.

In short, the more residents counted by the Census, the more federal funding for local services. The federal government contributes about \$3,000 annually per person counted. Let's not lose any of this critical funding by not returning our forms!

There's another important reason to complete the Census forms. This data is also used to determine the number of congress members from California. The only way to insure Californians are adequately represented in Washington D.C. is with an accurate population count from the census.

Let me clear up a few myths about the census:

- Answers are totally confidential.
- Immigration status isn't an issue. The census counts residency or where you live, not your legal status.
- It doesn't matter if you don't live in an actual home or house. Homeless residents count on the census and should complete a form.

If you're confused, have questions or need forms, a couple of census activities are being held this Saturday, March 20 in West County:

- **Richmond Block Party;** 10 am to 2 pm, at the Nevin Community Center, 598 Nevin Avenue, Richmond.
- **Reach Out San Pablo,** 10 am to 3 pm, a martial arts, music and entertainment community event **including census assistance,** Gymnasium and Parking Lot 6; Contra Costa Community College, 2600 Mission Bell Drive, San Pablo.
- Drop-In Assistance Centers – use this link <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/take10map/> on the 2010 Census website to find locations near you, or call the toll free number below.

For more information contact the U.S. Census Office at 1-800-923-8282, or visit www.2010census.gov.

Let's make sure we're all counted!